

**Security Council Open Debate on Preventive Diplomacy Tools: Prospects and Challenges in Africa**  
**Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)**

*Statement by Ambassador Anderson, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations*

The United States thanks Nigeria for organizing this meeting and welcomes Minister Odein Ajumogobia to the Council today. I would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and Ms. Sarah Cliffe for their remarks.

Conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes are among the founding purposes of the United Nations and the pillars of its Charter. They are an important focus for our work here in the Council. In our interconnected age, conflicts that start in fragile States can drag entire regions into violence, and such conflicts can turn already fragile States into incubators of transnational threats, including terrorism and trafficking in arms or drugs. Development and security are inextricably linked, and to stave off conflicts and bolster fragile States we must work with partners, including the United Nations, regional and subregional groups, development banks, donors and non-governmental organizations. In short, we must sharpen and strengthen our instruments to prevent conflict and settle disputes.

We must also tackle the underlying factors that fuel all too many conflicts: discrimination, corruption, lack of accountability, poverty, economic disparities and threats to the rule of law.

With this in mind, I would like to make five points today.

First, we need to continue to improve early warning capabilities and ensure that they inform and drive preventive action to prevent conflicts and save lives. This means enhancing both intelligence gathering and analysis, including monitoring trends, spotting triggers or accelerators of conflict and understanding local contexts and cultures. We are getting better at gathering this information, but there remain significant gaps between on-the-ground reporting, political analysis and decision-making. To close these gaps, we need to link the best available information to the best possible analysis. This will require having the right United Nations country team on the ground, with the right training and the right resources. It will also require better real-time communication and stronger coordination among reporting entities and political analysts so that decision-makers have a range of creative and credible options from which to choose. Lives could also be saved through closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional early warning systems, such as the one being developed by the African Union.

Secondly, multilateral mechanisms must be better equipped to respond effectively to potential and emerging crises. Among the most effective ways to prevent violence and halt escalation are international mediation and preventive diplomacy, backed by a readiness to use other tools. The United States is working to advance multilateral diplomatic initiatives to reinforce the foundations of peace, security, human rights and development.

For its part, the United Nations has produced useful innovations, such as the Department of Political Affairs Mediation Support Unit, and its standby panel of mediation experts. But these teams are not used enough, and they lack sufficient resources. They also need the full support of local and regional actors, as we saw in the effective international response to the violence after Kenya's 2008 elections.

Secretary-General Ban and his predecessors have used their good offices to help end many conflicts over the past 20 years. But regional and subregional organizations have important roles to play as well. The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States have helpful mediation capacities, and we encourage them to do more to resolve conflict. We also encourage such regional groups to deepen their cooperation with the United Nations.

**Thirdly, the recent creation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) remind us all of the struggles that women face in times of armed conflict, including rape and sexual violence. We must include women in peace processes and give them significant decision-making roles in conflict resolution. Mediation efforts that exclude women's perspectives are likely to neglect issues vital to securing a lasting peace.**

Fourthly, enhancing multilateral capacities to stave off conflict also means strengthening the international community's ability to support peace in fragile States or ones where newly reached peace agreements have yet to take hold. The most accurate means of predicting future armed conflict is looking at places where armed conflict has recently ceased. United Nations peacekeepers have proved that they can help prevent further violence in the wake of bloody conflicts, but only if they have adequate resources, proper training and clear mandates. Civil society has an essential role in building the institutions that make a society resilient at times of crisis including communities, churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, schools, a vigorous free media, human rights groups and other strong organizations.

But in some situations, atrocities will unfold so quickly or massively that they can be quelled only by the swift arrival of people to keep the peace. In such cases, the United Nations must continue to work with local Governments and regional organizations, including the African Union, the European Union and NATO, to ensure that it has both the political will and the logistical capacity to deploy quickly.

Finally, let me say a few words about peacebuilding. The past decade has witnessed important innovations here, including the creation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, but we still have much to do. We need more flexible development funds that arrive sooner, early investments in the core capacities of the struggling State and international support for national efforts to reinforce the rule of law, to demobilize ex-combatants and to reform State security services. We also need to provide lasting support to the victims of **sexual violence** and the victims of other human rights abuses. Just because an armed conflict stops does not mean it will not start again, and the international community must continue to enhance the tools at its disposal to prevent the recurrence of armed conflict and cement durable peace and lasting reconciliation.

We share a common responsibility to do everything in our power to develop the mediation tools, the warning mechanisms, the multilateral institutions, the effective peacekeeping forces and the strong communities to prevent conflict and avoid the shedding of the blood of the innocent.