Security Council Open Debate on Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict
Wednesday, October 13, 2010

Statement by H.E Mr. Rose, Representative of Australia to the United Nations

There has been much discussion about the importance of peacebuilding in different forums throughout the course of this year. Member States have been engaged in the review of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we commend Ireland, Mexico and South Africa on their leadership of our efforts in that regard. The Peacebuilding Commission has been actively engaged not only in consideration of the peacebuilding challenges in the countries on its agenda but also of broader, cross-cutting questions, including its relationship with the international financial institutions and regional organizations.

The g7+ group of fragile States and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State- building have been active, including in the margins of last month's General Assembly summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in highlighting the negative impact that conflict, fragility and armed violence have on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals — a point we expect to be reiterated with the release of the World Bank's *World Development Report* in 2011.

Importantly, the Security Council has also been actively considering these issues, with its consideration of transition and exit strategies from peacekeeping operations in February (see S/PV.6270); the debate convened by Japan on post-conflict peacebuilding in April (see S/PV.6299); and most recently, in a more holistic fashion, through the summit convened by the Turkish presidency last month (see S/PV.6389). Today's debate is a timely continuation of those discussions. It brings together important strands of work, which, collectively, should put the United Nations in a better place to address the needs of conflict-affected communities.

The first of these strands is the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (S/2010/386). We welcome the progress that has been made in implementing the ambitious agenda for action set out in the Secretary- General's 2009 report (S/2009/304), and we appreciate the honesty in this year's report in acknowledging that there remain areas in which further work needs to be done.

We urge the continuation of this work as a matter of priority, especially in relation to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors in relation to security sector reform and the rule of law, and in strengthening the relationship with the World Bank. The report's central message, as we read it, is that peacebuilding is a collective effort that requires a coherent, consistent and integrated approach not only from the United Nations, but from the broader international community. This is a message we endorse.

The second strand of work under consideration today is the recently released report of the Secretary- General on women's participation in peacebuilding (S/2010/466). Not only must women's rights be protected in conflict-related situations; women must also be able to fully and effectively participate in all aspects of conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding activities if we are to build a durable peace. We welcome the detailed action plan set out in the Secretary-General's report, which, if implemented, will make a substantial contribution towards that end.

I would also like to take this opportunity to discuss a related strand of work which is under consideration by this Council, namely, the report of the co-facilitators on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (S/2010/393, annex). To paraphrase the co-facilitators, the report proposes a series of recommendations addressed to a range of actors that, if implemented, would lead to a more relevant, flexible, empowered and better understood Peacebuilding Commission. Such an outcome is in the interests of all Member States.

Of particular interest to the work of the Council, the report notes, unsurprisingly, that peacebuilding needs to be considered at the inception of a peacekeeping mission. This point has been repeatedly made by the Council, most recently at the end of its summit-level meeting in September (see SPV/6389).

This demands a multitude of voices — political, humanitarian, development and security — in the mission mandating and review processes. A closer and more organic relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission throughout the Council's consideration of a situation could provide a forum within

which these voices could be heard. It could also help to affect the mind-shift that is called for in the report, away from the current, predominately peacekeeping one. Peacekeeping should be seen as a part of a broader peacebuilding and stabilization effort rather than as an end in itself.

These three reports demand our attention. Together with the eagerly anticipated report on the review of civilian capacities, they have the potential to transform the way in which the United Nations conducts peace operations. The Council is to be commended for placing a spotlight on this issue and for driving many of these processes forward. It is equally beholden now on the Council to sustain its focus on these issues in order to ensure that the good ideas reflected in these reports are translated into action.