

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

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for holding this debate. We are grateful to the Secretary-General and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for their briefings today.

The Progress Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict is encouraging for two main reasons. The first is that it puts the right emphasis on the multifaceted nature of sustainable peace and therefore that of peacebuilding. Gone are the days where peace could be seen as the mere absence of armed conflict. The report is also encouraging because it makes clear that the senior management of the Organization is engaged in a serious effort to adjust institutional practices and mechanisms to that concept of peace. We thank the Secretary-General for leading this process within the system.

Among the initiatives now underway I wish to single out two of particular importance, namely integrated planning, which is critical to ensure that a truly holistic approach to peacebuilding prevails, and the establishment of unified teams of civilian experts to assist the heads of missions. Such units must themselves be comprehensive in scope and include experts not only in rule of law, human rights and security sector reform, but also in public administration and socioeconomic development. Without staff in these latter areas, our support for UN action in them will tend to be merely rhetorical.

Mr. President,

My delegation could not agree more with the Secretary-General when he emphasizes national capacity development as the cornerstone of peacebuilding efforts. Several of the protracted crises the UN faces today are to a large extent fueled, if not caused, precisely by weak governance and lack of institutional capacity. We also concur with the view that support to capacity development must be a system-wide priority. The ultimate goal of several parts of the UN system should be to work themselves out of business. Member States are also a key piece in this puzzle. We must – once and for all – move away from supply-driven cooperation and focus on finding the right way to support partners without stifling ownership. In so doing, we will be serving our own long-term interests.

In this regard, we reiterate our support for ongoing efforts aimed at establishing pools of civilian capacity to be expeditiously deployed to the ground. Needless to say, such pools should not replace existing local capacity, ought to resort to experts from developing countries as much as possible, especially from the region of the country concerned, and must help to develop national capacity in post-conflict countries, even in the immediate aftermath of conflict. The current review of civilian capacities should also be consistent with the holistic approach to peacebuilding and present recommendations on all the areas set in the report of Secretary-General of last year, including provision of basic services and economic revitalization.

Another key issue is the interaction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The emerging consensus that they are not sequential forms of engagement must now be made operational. In those cases where peacekeepers can be early peacebuilders, it is illogical not to use some of their existing capacities to start laying the ground for peacebuilding. This is especially true for civil affairs components of peacekeeping operations, in particular with respect to the consolidation of state authority. The area of job creation – which is key to stability – is also potentially relevant for the interaction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. As indicated by the Secretary-General, greater synergies between peacekeeping operations and the activities financed by the PBF may contribute to broaden the reach of projects.

Mr. President,

As we near the anniversary of resolution 1325, the importance of involving and empowering women in all stages of the conflict is very much on our minds. In this area, as in others, our main concern is sustainability.

Our goal must be to help permanently improve women's place in society.

It is with this in mind that we are studying the Secretary-General's report on women's participation in peacebuilding, for which we are grateful. Today, I wish to make a few preliminary comments on one of the plan's key commitments, namely women's participation in economic recovery.

Although Brazil is not a post-conflict country, our experience suggests that there are significant long-term social and economic benefits in steering social programs towards women. A similar approach may be fruitful in peacebuilding. This is not merely a question of distributive justice, but of inducing meaningful change. Ensuring women's economic inclusion has the potential to permanently transform their role in society, regardless of cultural and historical particularities. This should be our collective goal.

Mr. President,

Finally, I wish to say a few words on a related report, that of the co-facilitators of the PBC review process. We thank them for their work. The document is quite comprehensive, although more could have been said about the work of the country-specific configurations. The report also brings recommendations that deserve careful consideration at the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Among such recommendations, I would single out those concerning support to national capacity-building; the developmental aspects of peacebuilding; the emphasis on youth employment; coordination and coherence; and the strengthening of the relationship with the General Assembly, the Security Council and ECOSOC.

Mr. President,

Our peacebuilding efforts are a key element of our strategy, both as an Organization and as individual governments, to move from a simplistic and fragmented approach to peace to a more complex and integrated way of consolidating peace. One that fully understands that peace, security, development and human rights are closely linked and that peace will not be sustainable without simultaneous and coordinated action in all four aspects. The challenge is to translate that concept into practice and above all in a new mentality, in capitals, in New York and on the field.

Thank you.