

**Security Council Open Debate on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security:
Interdependence Between Security and Development**
11th February 2011, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Paul Bunduku-Latba, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon to the United Nations

Allow me first of all to pay tribute to you, Mr. President, and to your country, Brazil, for the initiative of holding this ministerial debate on the interdependence between security and development in the framework of the maintenance of international peace and security.

On behalf of the delegation of Gabon and its Government, I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General, for his steady commitment to peace and development in the world. I also wish to thank my friend, Mr. Eugene-Richard Gasana, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his statement, and Ms. Sarah Cliffe for the quality of her report on conflicts and for the relevance of her statement.

The end of the cold war announced a new era of international peace and security, but since then new forms of conflict have appeared. Those new conflicts have taken the form of internal crises to which are added threats to peace and security such as terrorism, drugs, international organized crime and the proliferation of small arms.

In that context, we wish to point out that during his term of office President Omar Bongo Ondimba spared no effort in devoting himself, through diverse mediation efforts, to resolving conflicts in the subregion of Central Africa and the Great Lakes. The success of his action was based on a consistent method of constant encouragement of dialogue, tolerance and peace. Moreover, Gabon, with its counterparts in Central Africa, has contributed to setting up instruments to prevent and resolve conflicts and build peace.

Following the same lines, the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, is continuing the work of his illustrious predecessor. In that regard, his social programme, based on the triad of peace, development and sharing, remains the perfect illustration of the inseparable link between security and development. It is illusory to imagine development without solidarity. Likewise, no State can achieve development without taking the concepts of peace and security into account.

As Pope Paul VI once stated, the new name of peace is development. This is therefore the opportunity to underscore that it is in the best interest of States to support social cohesion by promoting the well-being of populations and policies conducive to strengthening basic infrastructure and improving living conditions.

Indeed, the populations of the world aspire not only to live in peace and security, but also to a prosperous existence through their active participation in the economic and social development of their nations. The unemployment of young people, shortcomings in the education and health-care systems, and the absence of economic prospects and a reliable social security can become destabilizing factors in the long term. Equally disturbing, in many countries terrorism continues to feed on the distress of populations and today is one of the greatest threats to international peace and security.

Recent events clearly show the extent to which insecurity can give rise to demands for deep-seated social and political change. Thus, in many countries, we have seen hunger strikes degenerate into popular uprisings with destabilizing effects on peace and security.

Security and development are not therefore only requirements, but remain closely linked and are two sides of the same reality. In that regard, if we accept that poverty or the absence of development is the cause of conflicts, we can also assert that wide-spread destitution significantly increases the risks of instability and violence. Furthermore, while crises and violence alone do not explain the absence of economic and social development in nations, nevertheless they hinder development.

On behalf of the Government of Gabon, I am therefore delighted to note that the topic chosen here, the interdependence between security and development in the maintenance of international peace and security, is in line with the policy advocated by President Ali Bongo Ondimba, who also attaches particular importance to issues regarding the improvement of the status of women, widows, orphans and people with disabilities, the

fight against pandemics and the environment. In parallel, good governance, social justice, the rule of law, respect for national laws and human rights, freedom of expression, pluralistic democracy, the fight against corruption, as well as the acceptance of the results of free and transparent elections, are certainly essential factors for stable States and dynamic development.

With regard to State ownership in post-conflict situations, the conclusions of the debate on institution-building of 21 January, under the presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (see S/PV.6472), stressed its importance. Indeed, national ownership of the peace process is essential to restoring security and promoting development. The restoration of such States will be even more sustainable if it is based on the capacities of their populations and on the credibility of their institutions. Moreover, such States must ensure the effective control over their natural resources, since the illegal exploitation and trade of such resources hinder development and peace.

My delegation remains convinced of the need to include in political processes all national actors, public and private, including civil society. Likewise, close cooperation among all national and international actors is essential to the successful efforts of our States. That is why we are convinced that better coordination among all bodies of the United Nations system will enable States to achieve the economic and social development crucial to lasting peace.

Security and development are two concepts that share close dynamic links, both conceptually and in practice. One aims to increase the freedom of choice, while the other allows those choices to be made in a secure environment. It would therefore seem crucial for the United Nations to give a more central role to conflict prevention in their international policy and security strategy. Our debate today shares that logic. That is why my country, Gabon, remains firmly committed to conflict prevention as the preferred instrument to promote harmonious peace, security and development among nations.

Finally, before concluding, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for the draft presidential statement submitted for adoption and for which I reiterate my delegation's support.