

**Security Council Open Debate on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security,
Security Sector Reform: Challenges and Opportunities, April 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mrs. Perceval Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations.

I thank His Excellency Mr. Aminu Wali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for organizing this open debate on a topic concerning which Argentina has been very active since the organization in 2009 of the seminar of Latin America and the Caribbean on regional perspectives on the United Nations approach to security sector reform and, since December 2012, through our participation in the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform, co-chaired by the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and South Africa. Your presence here today, Mr. Minister, and that of Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon are a testament to your country's leadership on this issue, which Argentina recognizes and values.

Argentina attaches great importance to recent developments on the issue of security sector reform in the framework of the United Nations. We recognize that the close relationship between security sector reform and the strengthening of the rule of law contributes to the prevention of conflicts. As the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/480) states, reforming the security sector depends on the political climate in which it is carried out, and therefore such reforms are not only related, but are part of broader transformation processes, in particular in conflict and post-conflict societies. In that regard, security sector reform involves a broad range of public policies aimed at promoting effective, democratic and accountable security policy of the State, leading to greater economic and social development and promoting the trust and participation of the community. It is therefore a question of ensuring that security institutions carry out their functions effectively in a framework consistent with democracy and strict respect for human rights.

Security sector reform is increasingly one of the key elements in the multidimensional mandates of peacekeeping missions, which have become more complex and comprehensive, and of special political missions, when circumstances require, in support of national authorities in conflict and post-conflict situations. Such support requires not only the proper implementation of protection measures for the civilian population, in particular those at imminent risk of physical violence, but also the coordinated inclusion of security sector reform with other aspects related to the rule of law, such as cooperation in institution-building in general; the holding of free and transparent elections; the implementation of inclusive political processes; the design and implementation of effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plans; and the effective implementation of gender-based guidelines, and sometimes even leading to the adoption of a new constitution. However, it is clear that only dialogue and the political commitment and involvement of rule of law institutions on a sustained basis can lead to long-term reforms that contribute to conflict prevention. In that regard, in order for such reform to be sustainable, the education and training of civil servants and members of the security forces are needed.

Effective and coordinated security sector reform can only benefit the national Governments of the countries concerned, as well as local human rights groups and institutions, in their

efforts to promote and protect the human rights of vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, contribute to the eradication of impunity, and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law will be held accountable before the law. They also provide advice and assistance to national Governments in the investigation of such atrocities. For that reason, security sector reform is also closely related to the reform of the legal system.

Thus, the reform process cannot be perceived as an imposition, as we have often said. We must ensure national ownership of the reform process by taking into account the real and effective particular needs and circumstances of those countries and structure it according to national decisions. The United Nations must not impose solutions, but instead it must help the societies that so require to rebuild, based on their own experiences, cultures, needs, desires and expectations, and to establish the institutional foundation for achieving a just and peaceful development.

In developing that endeavour, we believe that there should be greater coordination between the entities of the Organization entrusted with reform, and we therefore encourage the Secretary-General to establish concrete operational ties between the inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force, the Rule of Law Unit and the “Rights up front” initiative. It is also important to implement the instruments developed by the Organization, such as the Secretary-General’s principles to guide activities in support of security sector reform and human rights due diligence policy in the context of the United Nations support of security forces outside the Organization. We agree with the Secretary-General’s reports on the issue when it comes to the importance of focusing on regional arrangements in this area as well as on the primary task to be played by the various regional and subregional organizations in supporting security sector reform processes carried out at the national level by individual countries.

Finally, the work of the Organization also requires that, in order to implement new, complex multidimensional mandates when appropriate, peacekeeping missions increasingly depend upon the possibility of deploying specialized personnel, in particular related to police and civilian tasks of varying types, such as experts in human rights, gender, comprehensive treatment of victims of sexual and gender-based violence, security sector reform and institution-building for the rule of law. We have seen positive developments in that regard with the important potential for innovation in technical cooperation and in strengthening South-South cooperation. We should also underscore the importance of security sector reform in peacebuilding processes, preventing a relapse into conflict, and the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in defining an inclusive national approach to security sector reform.

In conclusion, we must move from societies living in fear of instability towards societies free of fear. The recent historical experience of countries in Latin America, as well as in Africa, tells us that they have much to offer to the international approach of the United Nations on this issue. Important lessons have been learned on security sector reform: from

strengthening political governance over the security sector and ensuring effective security for people, to the professionalization of personnel and strict compliance with human rights as a priority. In the particular case of Argentina, since democracy was restored, and since 2010, with the establishment of the Ministry of Security, security is based on the principles, values and public policies that underpin strict compliance with the rule of law.

I would like to conclude by recognizing the remarkable work done by Nigeria as President of the Council in the month of April. We are pleased that we will be adopting a draft resolution on the issue this afternoon. We would have liked for that process to have been more clearly inclusive, as we see security as part of an overall set of reforms. In any event, we convey our congratulations and support as well as our conviction that we must continue to work in this area.