Security Council Open Debate on Security Sector Reform
October 12th 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Mr Lulichki, Representative of Morocco

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your choice of security sector reform as the topic of today's thematic debate and for your stress on prospects and challenges in Africa. We trust that today's discussion will give us a better understanding of that complex process and of the important support role played by the United Nations in post-conflict countries.

I thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his very clear and enlightening briefing, and wish him every success in his difficult and lofty mission. I also endorse the statement to be made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

When mandated by the Council, security sector reform is a critical process in the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The establishment of a security sector that is professional, effective and responsible is crucial to laying the foundations of peace, sustainable development and economic recovery. The key principle in security sector reform that has been underscored by most if not all of those who have spoken before me is national ownership.

Security sector reform is the primary responsibility of the State. The role of the United Nations is to provide support to national authorities in its implementation. Every country should have ownership of the security sector reform process. At the request of the host country, the United Nations should provide security sector reform assistance through a peacekeeping mission. That assistance should be adapted to the particular circumstances and needs of each country.

Reforms cannot be effective without the leadership of the authorities of the country hosting a peacekeeping mission. That leadership role first comes into play in evaluating the security situation to ensure that the subsequent reform has a chance of success. It is essential to involve security actors so as to identify dysfunctions and take the corrective action needed for security institutions to once again function normally.

That leadership then involves national authorities in the design and implementation of security sector reform programmes. Very often, security sector reforms unfortunately have been unsuccessful owing to the lack of involvement by national authorities. It is regrettable that attempts to set up security sector reform at the national level very often has not come from within a given country, but was instead recommended by external actors. This has discouraged national actors from taking part in the process.

Prior to security sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process plays a crucial role in the development of inclusive security bodies that are subject to effective control by political institutions. In many situations, it has been clearly shown that the success of any such reform is closely linked to the ability to successfully complete the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

In that respect, it is worth noting that security sector reform cannot succeed without taking into account the gender perspective. By deploying female military and police officials, peacekeeping missions can indirectly encourage host countries to include women in their security institutions. The deployment of female formed police units to peacekeeping missions in Africa has played an important role in guaranteeing women greater access to decision-making in security bodies. In Africa in particular, it has been shown that women's involvement has proven extremely useful, and even crucial, in peacebuilding efforts.

Coherence among donors is one of the key factors for the success of security sector reform. In the past, donor activities in security sector reform led to duplication owing to the lack of consultation and coordination. We are pleased to note that the experience of the country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission has made it possible to improve coherence. That has been accomplished mainly by establishing legal frameworks, such as statements of mutual commitment, which enable national authorities, donors and the United Nations to better channel aid and avoid duplication.

Security sector reform must be part of a larger effort to build the rule of law. It should help to bolster United Nations actions aimed at ensuring the rule of law in peacekeeping operations without duplicating activities or structures.

As an African country, Morocco has accumulated numerous years of bilateral experience with many nations, particularly in Africa, in the areas of technical assistance and the training of security forces. We continue to be willing to share our experiences and to enhance them with best practices. One of the lessons we have drawn from our own experience is not to content oneself with enhancing the operational effectiveness of security providers, but to also include justice administration system reform and, beyond that, to strengthen national capacity to handle the reform process in a framework of democratic control and monitoring in which human rights are respected. It is only by stressing effectiveness, sound management and open governance, as well as by ensuring that all of these elements are mutually reinforcing, that we will together be able to take up the challenge of security sector reform.