

Security Council Open Debate on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Institution Building
21st January 2011, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by Mrs. Uche Joy Ogwu, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations

I want to commend your delegation, Mr. President, for bringing the focus of our peacebuilding discussion on institution-building for the first time. I extend our thanks to the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing, and we especially wish to welcome Deputy Prime Minister José Luís Guterres for sharing the experience of his country with us in this debate.

We owe a great debt to Peter Wittig speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). We believe that his dual role is a valid sign of the Security Council's deepening relationship with the PBC, from which we can only benefit.

Institution-building, an integral part of peacebuilding, encompasses more than establishing and nourishing organizational structures. It includes the value systems that underpin such organizations. Indeed, many civil conflicts erupt or recur not because of a lack of organizational structures such as courts, police and other security services, but because of deep disagreements over the sharing of political power and economic resources among different groups. The task of post-conflict institution-building revolves as much around rehabilitating organizational structures as it does around restoring the norms and values that guide the effective functioning of the economy, society and politics.

Although the work of the various actors in the United Nations system is to be commended, the restoration of core institutions cannot be outsourced, and accordingly it is imperative that, from the inception of each peacebuilding exercise, the United Nations be mindful of its role as a facilitator. National actors should always take the lead in articulating the needs of their countries, with the United Nations providing necessary assistance in addressing those needs.

As speakers before me have already stated, the fundamental need for people to own their own peace cannot be ignored. Every post-conflict society must be the author of its destiny. Any peacebuilding project that is not rooted in local knowledge, local expertise, local engagement and local will is doomed to fail right after the departure of the Blue Helmets. It is equally true that building a sustainable peace is the primary responsibility of the nation State. The Government and people of each country must assume the task of longterm institution-building.

We are gratified that the early findings of the civilian capacity review of the Peacebuilding Support Office point to the need to assess local needs and existing local capacities, including the capacity to absorb assistance, before we set about deploying international capacities. It is encouraging to note that the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are reviewing both their needs and capacity assessment methodologies to better calibrate their work on the ground.

Despite a degree of progress, more predictable long-term financing for institution-building must remain high on our agenda. As Nigeria has previously stated, the lack of pre-mandate funding can slow progress in implementing important transitional mandates, and we therefore call for further consideration of how the Organization might resolve this very important issue. The two new funding facilities and the revised funding ceiling for urgent peacebuilding support from the Peacebuilding Fund are very welcome innovations. We encourage donors to participate in this and other multilateral funds that support institution-building and post-conflict recovery activities.

Regional actors also have an important role to play in this context, and we note in particular the African Union's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework. For its own part, Nigeria provides support for regional and international peacebuilding efforts. Across Africa, particularly West Africa, we support activities such as security sector reform. In addition, since 2004 all three arms of Nigeria's armed forces have been working assiduously with civil society to mainstream peacebuilding into international peacekeeping operations. The integration of peacebuilding into the training curriculums of a number of Nigeria's military institutions is aimed at equipping the armed forces with skills that will allow intervention supportive of a more lasting peace within communities following the cessation of hostilities.

If properly managed, with a clear division of labour, predictable funding and an exit strategy, the expertise of the international community can be invaluable in rebuilding institutions, particularly in the security and rule of law sectors. We eagerly anticipate the completion of the civilian capacity review so that the United Nations can draw from it lessons on better coordination, better cohesion and more effective partnerships with national, subregional and regional actors. In this way we can help post-conflict countries restore security, accountability and legitimacy, all of which lie at the very core of responsible statehood.

Every nation aspires to stand on its own two feet. Let us use every means at our disposal to make that aspiration a realizable one. I want to reiterate Nigeria's commitment to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. As an active and responsible member of the PBC, we will continue to lend our support to the efforts of the United Nations in assisting post-conflict societies.