

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

Statement by H.E.Ms. Stiglic, Representative of Slovenia

I would like to thank Nigeria for organizing this meeting and for the opportunity to present Slovenia's views on this subject, which is of paramount importance to the United Nations and its membership. This debate is both timely and needed. Over the years, security sector reform (SSR) has become an integral part of the efforts of the international community to holistically address various post-conflict situations around the world, especially in Africa.

I will be short and concise, since previous speakers have already outlined the main challenges that SSR faces in the near future. These challenges must be understood as an opportunity to enhance our common efforts, not just for a better understanding of the reform processes but also to agree on a set of tools and mechanisms that will enable us to deal better with post-conflict situations.

Security sector reform does not happen in a void. It always involves other issues, problems and questions that, more often than not, are linked closely together. That is my first point. Security sector reform can be successful only when it is properly integrated into the environment and linked to all the other efforts already taking place in the recipient State. In the light of that, I would like to stress the importance of the link between SSR and development activities.

The SSR process involves many issues that can be dealt with efficiently only by development instruments, including employment for youth and securing livelihoods for high-risk populations. Recognition of that link must be properly implemented by ensuring timely and constructive coordination between the two activities.

Slovenia understands SSR as a long-term conflict prevention tool. Successful reform of the security sector of any country is a prerequisite for irreversible stability and sustainable development. In that regard, SSR must not be confined within the specific timeframe of the conflict aftermath, but must be carefully placed within the entire framework of peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts in the recipient State. SSR can be efficient only when all of the actors in the process actively, transparently and in a coordinated manner strive to achieve the same goal.

While international actors have made important strides in ensuring coordination and transparency among themselves, there is still room for improvement, especially on cooperation among State actors and civil society or non-governmental organizations. Slovenia has openly advocated the early involvement of the recipient State in preparations for the SSR process, since that is the only way to ensure a locally owned, locally supported and locally tailored process, which is quintessential to any SSR project. We would also like to point out that a better level of coordination must be achieved with respect to local civil society, which has knowledge and understanding of the local environment and its needs and issues.

SSR has become an essential part of almost any peacekeeping operation or crisis management mission of the United Nations. This means that the missions are becoming more complex and more demanding. We should ensure that the training curriculum for staff of the various missions includes SSR-related subjects. It is also important to ensure the continuity of the mission's know-how in the recruitment processes and institutional memory of peacekeeping operations in the field.

The promotion of gender perspectives in SSR is of essential importance to Slovenia. Peacekeeping operations can also play a positive role in promoting gender-sensitive SSR and developing security services that better respond to women's needs, both through examples of deployed female peacekeepers and police to encourage more women to serve in the reformed security sector of the host Government, and through the provision of gender expertise in support of SSR processes.

The reintegration of child soldiers into society is another issue where Slovenia has played an active role over the years. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform offer complementary approaches that can link the reintegration of ex-combatants to enhanced community security. Child-specific reintegration in that regard must enable a child's access to education, a livelihood, life skills and a meaningful role in society. Last but not least, justice should be served in order to remedy past atrocities. There is no long-lasting peace and reform without justice.

Finally, let me reiterate once again that Slovenia will remain fully committed to supporting a profound dialogue among all stakeholders in developing effective SSR guidelines.