

Security Council Debate on the Situation in the Great Lakes Region: DRC and the Great Lakes, July 25th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Young Kim, President of the World Bank.

I would like especially to thank Secretary- General Ban Ki-moon, who is the leader of the entire multilateral system. His strong, visionary leadership on this issue is what is giving drive and impetus to our work together. We look forward to continuing to follow his lead and playing our role.

As a long-time resident of Massachusetts, I would like to thank you for your leadership over decades, Secretary Kerry. I also want to thank you for your extremely generous mentorship and support of me personally. Quite literally, I would not be in this job without your support.

I also especially want to thank the Secretary- General for appointing Mary Robinson as his Special Envoy.

For the people in the Chamber who do not know, I want to make a special point to make it clear that United States Special Representative Russ Feingold is a person who has been deeply committed to Africa. I remember warmly my years of working with Senator Feingold as he championed increased funding and support for AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria programmes. Senator Feingold is a true champion and friend of Africa.

It is an honour and a pleasure to take part in this briefing. I thank the Council for the invitation, as I recognize that our work at the World Bank Group has to be aligned with political realities at the global, regional, national and local levels. I shall focus my remarks on the development aspects of peace and security in the Great Lakes region, and outline what the World Bank Group is doing to support the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

As the Secretary-General noted, we visited the Great Lakes region together earlier this year. It was the first time in history that the President of the World Bank and the Secretary-General of the United Nations had travelled together on mission. The choice of our destination and the timing of our trip was not an accident. The Secretary-General's ground-breaking work and the commitment of all the countries of the region to the Framework Agreement provides all of us with an opening to end violence, secure peace and lay the foundations for more robust economic development. Those foundations will make a difference in lifting people out of poverty, creating jobs and providing access to health and education.

The Secretary-General and I delivered one message over and over during our trip, and I will repeat it now: we cannot have development without peace, and we cannot have peace without development. Conflict not only stops development, it can reverse years of development gains. The eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are a good example of a tragedy with an immense human cost that has gone on for far too long.

More than 3.5 million people are estimated to have died since 1998. Another 4.7 million people lost their homes. More than 2 million children cannot benefit from education due to the destruction of schools. The poverty rate is approximately 70 per cent. Overall access to economic services, including energy, is very limited. But let me also argue that long-term sustainable peace and stability will not be achieved without addressing the underlying key economic drivers of conflict and instability. Those drivers of conflict spill across the borders and therefore call for a regional approach to address issues such as insecure and insufficient access to land, population displacement and illicit exploitation in the mining of high-value minerals and timber.

Moreover, those problems are compounded by rapid population growth and a lack of economic opportunity. On our trip together, the Secretary-General and I demonstrated the commitment of the United Nations and the World Bank Group to collaborate and bring tangible benefits to the people of the Great Lakes region and to pursue peace, stability and development in a comprehensive manner within our national and regional programmes. We were heartened by the commitment of political leaders to implementing the Framework. We were also heartened by the interest in regional initiatives to promote development. That leadership is essential for the success of the Framework and for sustainable peace in the region. On our trip, we committed to increase cooperation between our institutions and with other partners, such as the European Union, the African Development Bank and the regional economic communities, to maximize the impact of our efforts.

We will strongly support the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region and increase our collaboration with the United Nations on the ground. We will use our convening power to encourage greater investment, including from the private sector in the region. I can also announce that the World Bank Group will provide an additional \$1 billion over the next 24 months for cross-border development issues. Of that, about \$500 million will be for hydroelectric power projects to increase energy access in several Great Lakes region countries, about \$350 million for transport linkages and border management, and about \$100 million for agriculture and rural livelihoods targeted at refugees and internally displaced persons. That is extremely important, given that the region has approximately 1 million refugees and more than 2 million internally displaced persons in a situation of protracted displacement.

I would like to add that all of our assistance will be informed by a gender perspective. We will provide additional resources for programmes to address sexual and gender-based violence, as well as assistance for basic health services for vulnerable women and children through networks of health centres. The economic empowerment of women, as well as the promotion and protection of their rights and increased voice, all have important roles in reducing violence. We will also expand our assistance for networks of regional public health laboratories to allow countries to develop and share specific expertise. That has been very successful to date. I am pleased to inform the Council that in two weeks our Board of Directors will consider the first project under the initiative, that is, the Rusumo Falls hydroelectric dam.

I am sure that progress in the areas just mentioned will create significant economic opportunities and help to generate jobs. I am convinced that the regional approaches outlined will help to promote greater cooperation and integration within the region and bring tangible benefits to all Great Lakes countries.

We are under no illusion that this support will be enough. Our assistance fits into a larger mosaic of development for the region and will focus on leveraging private-sector investment. We also understand that, while large energy projects will be critical for the long-term development of the region, we also need to move as rapidly and as efficiently as possible with smaller projects so that the people of the region feel the tangible benefits of peace. Indeed, in coming months, delivering on our promises related to agriculture, jobs, cross-border trading, education and health care will help determine whether those efforts will succeed.

We must deliver on our promises, and we must move with as much urgency as we can.

All that work will stem not from the priorities made in the World Bank Group headquarters in Washington, D.C., or the United Nations Headquarters in New York. It will be guided by the priorities set by African stakeholders, and their emphasis on both quick wins and medium- to longer-term results. I am pleased that, last week, we were able to co-host a meeting on regional approaches to development in the Great Lakes countries with the African Union Commission and the United Nations to further this agenda. At the meeting, participants agreed on the importance of those

approaches. They also agreed to collaborate immediately on several steps, including a mapping of country priorities and partner assistance, as well as to establish an accountability and follow-up mechanism. A report of the meeting will be presented to the 11+4 summit in September.

Finally, when the Secretary-General and I travelled to the HEAL Africa's hospital in Goma, to visit women who have suffered from the violence, and the health-care workers who care for them, we heard many painful stories. Those women's stories must be heard and must be remembered. Their words should steel us for difficulties that are sure to come, and harden our commitment to the Framework agreement, because we must not let this continue. What happened to those women has happened to the millions of people caught in the web of conflict in the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and is a stain on all of our consciences.

Outside the hospital, we also saw scores and scores of women, and even girls, holding placards with messages such as "We are tired of conflict", "We have had enough", and "Peace, peace, peace, please". I want to assure the Council, as I assured the women and girls we met, that the World Bank Group is in this for the long haul. With the Secretary-General's bold leadership, we are determined to stay the course for those women and all others who have been robbed of economic opportunity by these years of conflict. It is time for all of us to move together, to move quickly and to deliver on our promises.