

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

Statement by Mrs. Alice Mungwa, the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union

I would like to begin by presenting the apologies of the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, His Excellency Ambassador Tête Antonio, who has travelled to Addis Ababa for the meetings of the upcoming African Union summit and was therefore not able to attend this meeting in person.

We join previous speakers in commending you, Mr. President, for initiating consideration of the well-focused theme of this debate, which is extremely pertinent for Africa. We are grateful to the Secretary-General, the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, and the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission for attending this meeting in person, and for their pertinent remarks delivered to the Council earlier today. Thank you also, Mr. President, for the concept paper (S/2011/16) that you provided for the guidance of this debate, and also for the presidential statement delivered early in the meeting today.

As a matter of high priority to Africa, postconflict reconstruction and development as a whole is one of the issues addressed in a range of policy instruments of the African Union, beginning with its Constitutive Act and including the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

In their remarks in the debate this morning, representatives of various African States mentioned the African Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, which was adopted by the Executive Council during its 7th Ordinary Session, held in Sirte, Libya, in July 2005. We would like to note that this was one of the very first policy instruments adopted by the African Union, just three years after its establishment in 2002, to indicate the importance of the issue at the level of the African Union. This Policy Framework details the concepts, principles, approaches and even the benchmarks that are concerned with the important topic of post-conflict reconstruction and development as a whole. A significant amount of the content is devoted to the question of institution-rebuilding and building.

Previous speakers have mentioned the concept paper. We are very pleased to note that the international community has mentioned a lot of the elements contained in the concept paper and in the African Policy Framework to which I have referred.

I do not think that I can do justice to presenting the Policy Framework. In the interests of time, we would simply highly recommend that policy instrument to members of the Council and all stakeholders.

In adopting the Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, the Executive Council of the African Union indeed addressed the need to build the institutions of the African Union, which would then drive the task of post-conflict reconstruction and development, including institution-building. This included a ministerial committee on post-conflict reconstruction and development, to be established to provide political support and resource mobilization for implementation of the Policy Framework. It is also envisaged that the ministerial committee will interface with the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission at the highest level.

Various member States of the African Union are also leading key efforts for post-conflict reconstruction and development through the establishment of institutions such as the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism, based in Algiers, and through the commendable initiative to establish an institution for post-conflict reconstruction and development announced by the Permanent Representative of Egypt in his intervention in the Council today.

While building necessary continental institutions — which I have just mentioned — to support the task of post-conflict reconstruction and development as a whole, the African Union has also taken a number of concrete steps towards translating the Policy Framework into concrete actions at the level of concerned member States. These have included the establishment of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Committee on the Sudan, as mentioned by the Permanent Representative of South Africa in his remarks earlier today. We seize this opportunity to commend the outstanding leadership of South Africa on this issue.

The African Union also maintains field offices in a number of member States that are facing the complex situation of having to rebuild after conflict, such as Burundi, Chad, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, the Sudan and Somalia, in order to provide permanent support and to accompany them with the arduous tasks they face in consolidating peace and rebuilding the institutional, policy and human development fabric that is often devastated by conflict.

As others have today, we take this opportunity to commend the Peacebuilding Commission for its work on the five African countries under its consideration. We would like to take the opportunity to re-pledge and restate the support of the African Union and its intention to continue working closely with the Peacebuilding Commission. Please also allow me to take this opportunity to recall the sentiments expressed to the Security Council late last year by the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, regarding Somalia in particular (see S/PV.6409).

We would also like to underscore the importance of strengthening various institutionalized and interagency frameworks of cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations for effective institutionbuilding and recovery in post-conflict countries in Africa. The growing cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as well as frameworks such as the recently launched African Union-United Nations Joint Task Force on Peace and Security, will, we believe, play a crucial role in guiding institution-rebuilding in African countries emerging from conflict.

Furthermore, the African Union looks forward to the implementation of the outcome of the review of the Peacebuilding Commission. We are also very pleased with the ongoing cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations regarding the strengthening of international civilian capacities. We also look forward to the review of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union that is being implemented by the Peacebuilding Commission. We are convinced that all of these frameworks will contribute to strengthening the entire process of institution-building in the aftermath of conflict.

With these brief remarks, we again welcome the Council's consideration of today's theme, and we take this opportunity to reiterate the African Union's appreciation to the Security Council and United Nations for their unwavering support for post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa as a whole, among all the other areas to be focused on. The African Union remains ever grateful and looks forward to the continuing support of the Council on this issue, including on a number of initiatives launched within the context of the recently concluded Year of Peace and Security in Africa.