

Security Council Open Debate on the Cooperation Between the UN and Regional and Subregional Organizations, August 6th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Ms. Murmokaite, Permanent Mission of Lithuania to the United Nations.

I would like to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to Argentina, which holds the presidency of the Security Council for the month of August, for organizing today's debate. I thank the Secretary-General and representatives of the regional organizations present here for their briefings.

Lithuania associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union. In addition, allow me to make the following remarks.

In recent years, the relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the field of peace and security has evolved in terms of both ambition and scope. We welcome such developments because, as noted by numerous speakers before me, regional actors possess a unique local knowledge, can intervene more promptly through existing standby arrangements and mechanisms and can ensure regional ownership of conflict resolution and subsequent peacebuilding processes. Importantly, the geographical proximity of their members and the specific regional knowledge and experience of those organizations can play an essential role in the early identification of potential conflicts and thus in defusing crises before they occur.

Based on our own experience in preventive diplomacy, including Lithuania's chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we encourage the United Nations and regional and subregional actors to further explore and strengthen the preventive and confidence-building dimensions of cooperation.

No two crises or conflicts are identical. Therefore, as noted in the 2009 non-paper entitled "A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for United Nations Peacekeeping", the political and operational realities on the ground will continue to demand flexible, case-specific and creative United Nations partnerships with regional actors, building on their comparative strengths, ensuring consistency and complementarity of efforts, and avoiding duplications.

Nowhere has United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations evolved as much as on the African continent, with the African Union (AU), African subregional organizations, the European Union (EU) and occasionally other players, such as the International Organization of la Francophonie, taking part.

Lithuania is proud to contribute to such multifaceted efforts. Recently, our military advisers joined the EU training mission for Malian soldiers in the region of Koulikoro. Earlier this year, Lithuania deployed troops in an anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia, a country where the United Nations, the AU, and the EU have joined forces with an aim of restoring peace and stability to that long-suffering nation.

While welcoming the Council's continued dialogue and consultations with regional organizations, as well as joint actions on the ground, we would encourage an enhanced focus on issues of justice and accountability; tackling impunity for crimes against civilian populations, including sexual violence in conflict; and the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security, and children and armed conflict.

Regional and subregional organizations have a vital role in stemming the illegal trade in small arms

and light weapons, which are responsible for countless civilian victims and damaged lives. My delegation would like to point out in particular that the recently adopted Arms Trade Treaty expressly recognizes that regional and subregional organizations can play a role in providing implementation assistance through, inter alia, stockpile management; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; and developing model legislation.

In the past 10 years, Lithuania provided assistance to some 20 projects related to the destruction of small arms, anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and unexploded ordnance, carried out by regional organizations. Let me also stress the importance of subregional, regional and international cooperation in the field of non-proliferation. With that in mind, Lithuania organized last year a regional seminar on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). This year the Lithuanian chairmanship held a thematic OSCE forum on security cooperation dialogue, with the participation of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), Ambassador Kim Sook.

In order to achieve durable peace, it is essential that the United Nations and its regional partners continue to take a long-term view aimed at breaking the pattern of relapse into conflict, which still plagues individual States. In that context, we welcome consistent involvement by regional and subregional actors in, and their ownership of, institution- and capacity-building, implementing the rule of law and strengthening good governance and human rights protection mechanisms.

In conclusion, let me note that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is not an end in itself. It must lead to tangible improvements and prospects for a safe and dignified life for those suffering from violence and conflict. I am pleased that presidential statement S/PRST/2013/12 reaffirms the common determination of the United Nations and regional actors to work to that effect.