

Security Council Open Debate on UN Peacekeeping: A Multidimensional Approach, January 21st 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Vilić, Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations.

First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate around the issues that lie at the very heart of the Organization, namely, its efforts to establish and pursue the most efficient way to maintain and rebuild international peace and security. At the same time, our appreciation goes to the Secretary-General for his useful briefing on the subject.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union earlier in the debate. However, allow me the opportunity to share a few additional remarks in my national capacity.

In our view, peacekeeping and peacebuilding represent but two sides of the same coin, closely intertwined and deeply interrelated. The durability of established ceasefires and signed peace agreements depends to a large extent on the determination and readiness to rebuild the national fabric and basic institutions, as well as the ability to address the root causes of the conflict.

The route that countries emerging from conflict take at the very beginning of their recovery will significantly determine their trends and prospects for future success. My country has contributed its share in overall peacekeeping efforts. At one point, Croatia was participating in 15 different peacekeeping operations simultaneously, and it is ready to continue to play its part in the future.

While recognizing the primary responsibility of national authorities in identifying priorities and strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding, Croatia strongly supports a comprehensive, coherent and integrated approach to those efforts. That of course first of all implies close cooperation between the host Government and the international community, but at the same time it entails efficient coordination among all stakeholders in the process. In that context, Croatia welcomes endeavours to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of key actors in this field, in particular within the United Nations family.

It is useful to bring to mind here the fact that the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established with the aim of supporting countries emerging from conflict by bringing together all the relevant actors, marshalling the requisite resources and providing strategic and concrete recommendations in order to improve the coordination of peacebuilding efforts within and outside the United Nations. In addition, the PBC is there to fill gaps that often exist between security and reconstruction, through an innovative yet coordinated, coherent and integrated approach directed at post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and institution-building. Institution-building in key areas, such as the security sector and the rule of law, which have been identified as conditions sine qua non, is the most essential prerequisite for any recovery and sustainable development.

In that context, Croatia strongly supports efforts to broaden and deepen the pool of civilian capacities for peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, and an efficient exchange between the seekers and providers of services with particular emphasis on promoting cooperation among countries with similar needs and experiences.

Croatia welcomes the Council's commitment to regularly assess, together with other relevant actors, the mandate and composition of peacekeeping operations with a view to making the necessary adjustments, according to the progress achieved on the ground, thereby allowing for, on a case-by-case basis, the reconfiguration, transition or withdrawal of the operation.

More specifically, in accordance with the outcome of the Security Council's and the Peacebuilding Commission's thorough deliberations in July 2012, Croatia strongly supports the calls for more dynamic relations between the Council and the Commission. The window of opportunity for that is open wider when the Council is establishing and renewing the mandates of United Nations missions, and it should be properly utilized. We believe that the best practices developed since the establishment of the Commission should be used more systematically in the countries on the PBC's agenda.

It is clear that the success of operations aimed at keeping and rebuilding peace requires timely, sustainable, predictable and flexible resources. Croatia recognizes the critical part that peacebuilding funding plays as an early investment towards sustainable peace and development. In that context, Croatia notes with appreciation the special roles that the Peacebuilding Fund and the international financial institutions have been playing in peacebuilding efforts, particularly in helping to design poverty-reduction strategies and economic development policies.

Finally, let me conclude by seconding the call that we have heard so many times today for the adequate participation of women at all stages of peacebuilding efforts and for their full inclusion in decision-making processes.