

Security Council Open Debate on Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict
Wednesday, October 13, 2010

Statement by H.E. Mr. Pedro Serrano, Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

Mr. President,

Thank you for allowing the European Union to take the floor during today's important debate devoted to peacebuilding in post-conflict situations.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. President,

In July last year, we emphasized in this chamber the critical importance of post-conflict peacebuilding as the foundation for sustainable peace and development in the aftermath of conflict. On that occasion, we warmly welcomed the Secretary General's "report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict" as a central reform agenda for a more effective and coherent international response, and we encouraged the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts to improve the United Nation's overall response to tackle post-conflict situations.

Today, we are gathering to take stock of the progress achieved so far.

In this context, the following questions arise:

Are the UN and the wider international community better equipped today to support more effectively the efforts of post-conflict countries to achieve enduring peace?

If so, how do we translate these improvements, at headquarters level, into concrete results on the ground?

Mr. President,

Let me try to respond, by touching upon both the: Secretary General's progress report on peacebuilding, and his report on women's participation in peacebuilding.

Whilst the European Union fully acknowledges the steps which have been taken in certain areas, (leadership, civilian capacity, financing), there is still a long way to go.

Predictable and timely funding aligned with national peacebuilding priorities, swift deployment of high-quality civilian experts to help building national capacity, and strong partnerships with International Financial institutions and regional players, represent some of the areas where much more remains to be done.

The United Nations cannot achieve these goals in isolation. The European Union is more than ready to work hand in hand with the UN system.

The deployment of international civilian expertise is one of the areas where the EU is already strongly involved. Over the last ten years, civilian aspects of European Security and Defence Policy crisis management have seen exponential growth. The EU now has nine civilian ESDP missions with around 2000 seconded personnel, concurrently deployed in eight different theatres of operation. We look forward to the outcome of the civilian capacity review early next year, and in particular how we can broaden and deepen the pool of experts involving the "Global South".

In a similar way, common Assessments, Planning, and Strategies are also of paramount importance. Since early 2007, the European Commission, the United Nations and the World Bank have worked together in setting-up a platform for cooperation on post-crisis need assessments for natural disasters (PDNA) and conflict scenarios

(PCNA). This tripartite partnership has played a key role in recent difficult scenarios, such as Haiti and Pakistan.

The EU warmly welcomes the report of the Secretary General on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding and congratulates the Secretary General for setting out a strategic seven point Action Plan. As we mark this month the tenth anniversary of SC Resolution 1325 we need redouble everyone's efforts to increase women's participation at all stages and all levels of peace processes and peacebuilding efforts. The EU agrees that the three pillars of lasting peace (economical recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy) cannot be achieved without the active engagement of women. According to UN figures, women accounted for less than 6% of formal peace negotiators. How can we reach lasting peace and security in any country when only half of the population is represented at the negotiating table or in talks on post-conflict reconstruction? The SG report proposed Action Plan offers useful and practical suggestions on how to address the present challenges and we look forward to these being taken forward, as appropriate.

The European Union has a comprehensive strategy to implement UNSC Resolution 1325 and the EU Council adopted in July this year indicators to measure the progress in achieving our commitments. The comprehensive strategy is complemented by the Action Plan to promote gender equality in development cooperation which, i.a. commits the EU to promote capacity building in fragile States for the implementation of SC Resolution 1325 and 1820.

Mr. President,

Let me turn now to the final step of the 2010 review of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). From the outset the EU has been a strong supporter of the UN peacebuilding architecture and has worked tirelessly within the country specific configurations. During the past months, the European Union has also been strongly committed to make the 2010 PBC review a success.

The European Union would like to commend the extraordinary work done by the three co-facilitators and we look forward to the adoption of an appropriate resolution at a later date.

The most recent placement of Liberia on the PBC's agenda, with a sizeable peacekeeping mission in the country, is a good opportunity to implement several of the recommendations contained in the report. It is also a good case to prove the PBC's added value by fostering earlier linkages and coherence between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities.

In this regard, we welcome the Council's resolve to enhance interaction with the PBC and make greater use of its advisory role, as reaffirmed in the PRST adopted today.

The EU also firmly believes that the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role in helping to champion the two reports brought to our attention today, and in doing so enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nation's peacebuilding efforts.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

The latest Secretary General's reports on peacebuilding and on the participation of women in peacebuilding, as well as the review of the Peacebuilding Commission, have all generated renewed political momentum to collectively engage on how better to assist countries emerging from conflict.

Our duty now is to make a difference on the ground. The European Union is ready to assume its responsibilities.