

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

Statement by H.E. Mr. William Habib, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations

Mr. President, I wish to thank you for having organized this debate. I convey our gratitude to His Excellency the Secretary-General and to the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Germany for their statements, which were invaluable.

A great many regions throughout the world continue to be devastated by conflict, which is proof of the need, on the one hand, to strive to contain tensions and, on the other, to assist States emerging from conflict to move to the phase of lasting peace and to achieve development. Here we wish to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2010/386), and we agree with him that the main challenge facing the international community is peacebuilding.

We support the plan of action drawn up by the Secretary-General to bolster the United Nations response to post-crisis situations. We welcome the positive measures adopted and implemented thus far, and we consider that in future we should focus on a faster response, more in line with the needs of peacebuilding. We wish to make some comments in that context.

First, we welcome the measures adopted to back the role of the leadership on the ground and to strengthen cooperation between United Nations Headquarters and country teams through systematic communications, offering expertise and strengthening accountability.

Secondly, we should establish an integrated strategy for rapid peacebuilding, a strategy that would incorporate a great many priorities in various fields — political, security and development. That strategy should be based on an impartial analysis of the root causes of conflict and its dynamics. It should also build bridges between short-term results and preparation for structural, long-term objectives. The strategy should be implemented through dialogue and coordination with stakeholders at the local level. It should be based on an assessment of existing local capacities and potential in order to utilize them as successfully as possible.

Thirdly, national ownership is critical to ensuring the success of peace efforts. Therefore national authorities should discharge their primary responsibility, which is to rebuild institutions for security, governance and economic revival, with the assistance of the United Nations and international partners.

Fourthly, the United Nations should bolster relations with all partners to provide the necessary financing in a timely way, in accordance with national priorities for peacebuilding. In that regard, increased contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund since 2009, the Fund's undertaking the process of accurately assessing the results of its actions, and the confirmation of its impact are positive contributions. Lebanon believes that a number of local infrastructure projects are insufficiently financed, despite their positive impact in changing the course of the conflict. All of that impedes the peacebuilding process.

Fifthly, we believe that peacebuilding is an effort that is collective in nature, one in which a great many United Nations agencies and international partners participate. To ensure greater effectiveness, it is imperative that roles be clearly defined and the division of labour in the area of peacebuilding clearly mapped out, based on technical expertise and the direction that the peacebuilding process takes on the ground.

Sixthly, women and children are the main victims of conflict. In the post-conflict period, women should be given the opportunity to participate in reconstruction and peacebuilding, as well as in peace negotiations. Those factors serve to promote the agreements that the parties are working to reach. Furthermore, including women in positions of power reduces the likelihood of a resumption of conflict. That is why we concur with the Secretary-General's statement that greater efforts should be made to meet women's needs in post-conflict situations and to increase their participation in the peacebuilding process.

Lastly, we welcome Mr. Wittig's briefing on the Peacebuilding Commission, and we hope it will lead to increased coordination between the Commission and the Security Council.

It is often said that the end of a conflict does not always mean that peace has been achieved. Quite often, building genuine, lasting peace after a conflict is a complex and arduous road. It is, however, one that should be taken, because it is the only one that will lead to the stability and development of societies.