

Security Council Open Debate on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding
12 July 2012, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Menan, Representative of Togo

The importance of the debate being held by the Security Council today stems from the fact that peacebuilding remains at the heart of the work of the United Nations. I would therefore like to thank Colombia, Madam President, for deciding to put the issue at the centre of the Council's work for this month.

The annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on the work of its fifth session (S/2012/70) provides an illustration of the actions taken in 2011. The statements just made by the Secretary-General, the current and outgoing Chairs of the Commission and the representative of the World Bank serve to inform the Council about the work carried out and the challenges to be addressed. I congratulate the Chairs of the PBC and its country-specific configurations for their leadership.

Since the 2005 World Summit, peacebuilding has remained at the centre of United Nations efforts in countries emerging from conflict. Peacebuilding supports peacekeeping in order to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of the United Nations presence, which has the task of considering systematically and comprehensively all of the problems due to or exacerbated by an armed conflict, in order to build a viable State that respects fundamental freedoms and establish good political and economic governance.

Since the establishment of the PBC, the Security Council has also worked to develop and adapt its peacekeeping mandates, which now give pride of place to the rebuilding of a country after peace has been restored.

In that context, my country commends the reconstruction work carried out by the PBC country-specific configurations in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Guinea, the Central African Republic and Burundi. Although the results vary from one country to another, the new approach translates the will of the United Nations to ensure that countries emerging from conflict do not revert to violence due to a lack of appropriate support.

The Commission's report reviews the key actions of the country-specific configurations, which essentially concern establishing dialogue among the various political actors of a country in order to provide solutions to divisive issues, strengthen national capacities in order to establish a solid foundation for development and mobilize external resources to rebuild the country and foster strengthened coordinated efforts among the various development agencies aimed at consolidating real accomplishments.

It is comforting to note that many sectors of the concerned countries have experienced accelerated development resulting from the initiatives of the country configurations, which have established dialogue among the various actors participating in reconstruction and targeted priority tasks.

Among the priority actions, Togo believes that there should be emphasis on political dialogue among the various actors in a country, so as to ensure that the settlement of political issues will open a path towards democracy while establishing the rule of law and good governance and reforming the key sector of justice.

Nevertheless, Togo would recall that to ensure the long-term success of those actions it is important to continue to prioritize the participation of women and youth in all future initiatives.

The PBC's support for Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Guinea in West Africa with respect to their development programmes indicates that the issues of youth and women's employment, drug trafficking and security sector reform were particularly targeted because settling those issues is essential to the stability and sustainable development of those countries.

Turning to the issue of transnational organized crime in West Africa, we are pleased by the cooperation among the four country configurations, which have joined efforts to respond to the problem comprehensively based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, along with assistance from exterior actors.

In that regard, the call for cooperation among the PBC, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

and INTERPOL deserves support, not only in order to implement the relevant ECOWAS action plan, but also the West Africa Coast Initiative. In each case, it should be noted that awareness-raising, political support and resource-mobilization are key elements of the activities to be conducted.

While congratulating the PBC for its policy on mobilizing resources, we encourage it to strengthen efforts in that area. External financing should assist national authorities to cover all sectors, rather than targeting only a few areas, such as governance, justice sector reform, the preparation of elections and security sector reform.

In that context, my delegation commends the good cooperation established with such international financial institutions as the World Bank, the African Development Bank and other funds and programmes, which all participate in peacebuilding in their own way and according to their own capacities.

In spite of all of those efforts and the encouraging results achieved on the ground, much remains to be done. Other actions and initiatives should be taken to improve the performance of the PBC and the country-specific configurations. Togo believes that the Commission would provide added value in attracting greater appreciation if it were to synchronize cooperation and direct exchanges with local actors and their partners.

By visiting the field more often and meeting not only country authorities but national and international actors and other concerned United Nations bodies, the PBC would be able to see for itself what actions are needed to strengthen its action in the field. Such cooperation would have the added benefit of harmonizing the efforts under way with a view to avoiding duplication. In that respect, the Chair of the PBC should be given the opportunity to join the Security Council on its field missions when needed.

In the same vein, national ownership of development programmes provides another opportunity for the work of the United Nations to succeed in countries where it is involved. This involves, in particular, training for local stakeholders. In order to properly carry out its reconstruction mission, the PBC should also rely on subregional organizations, which have the advantage of knowing the fundamental needs of the people, with particular emphasis on the energy and basic development sectors.

Togo also believes that national reconciliation should be a major focus in efforts to ensure lasting peace. Even if reconciliation is based on the application of justice, the Commission should promote a justice that repairs and restores. In that respect, truth, justice and reconciliation commissions should be supported and encouraged, because they offer true reconciliation after having established the facts, determined who was responsible and provided reparations to the victims.

To conclude, Togo calls once again for greater support from Member States and all competent organizations for the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office.