



Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations

57 Park Avenue New York, NY. 10016 Tel. (212) 679-4760 Fax. (212) 685-8741

E-Mail: guatemala@un.int

(Check against delivery)

**Statement by the Delegation of Guatemala
Prevention of Armed Conflict**

(New York, September 7, 2006)

Mr. President,

We wish to thank the Secretary General for the presentation of his report contained in document A/60/891 regarding the prevention of armed conflicts. We are convinced of the need to strengthen the collective capacity within the United Nations for the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

We have taken note of the relevant recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary General, which we will examine to discuss and consider them during the upcoming session. Nevertheless, we do not want to conclude the 60th session by giving the impression that we are indifferent to the matter due to the lack of discussion in the General Assembly. On the contrary, through this brief intervention we wish to convey that Guatemala, as a post conflict country, is mindful of the importance of promoting a culture of peace and for that reason we highlight the urgent need to have mechanisms to prevent conflicts. Furthermore, we stress that we possess numerous experiences in this area that we have faced to conclude our multifaceted peace process.

Mr. President

If there is something we have learned through dialogue and the exchange of experiences is that the reduction of risk and preventive attention towards conflicts and outbreaks to the peace are the best way of mitigating, if not avoiding, irreparable damages and irreversible tragedies. Although we have achieved significant progress, the Guatemalan society at more than ten years of having signed the Peace Accords is still not totally reconciled. We still need to lay the foundations of a more participatory and equitable society, create development opportunities for all and rebuild the social fabric of our country. For that reason we embarked in a complex process of acknowledging the responsibilities of all the parties to the conflict, initiated reparation and retribution systems and allowed for the elucidation of the truth of past occurrences. All, with the view of opening a window of opportunity for economic growth and sustainable development within the framework of a multicultural society based on a democratic and inclusive system.

We agree, that the culture of conflict prevention is consistent with the very first article of the United Nations Charter, which is of a preventive nature, insofar in its first paragraph it calls upon to take effective collective measures to prevent and to eliminate threats to the peace and to bring about by peaceful means the settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace. Moreover, we respectfully dissent with your assessment Mr. President that article 33 of the Charter “is poetry”, on the contrary, many conflicts have precisely been prevented or deterred through these instruments, which we rarely hear of.

We also consider that the subject of conflict prevention must be approached from the perspective of the full safeguard of the Rule of Law, central notion for the legitimacy of every democratic State that guarantees and respects human rights and fundamental liberties of all persons.

In that sense we emphasize the importance of establishing dialogue mechanisms with all stakeholders. We also acknowledge the valuable contribution the civil society, religions and the private sector bring to the table. In Guatemala the experience of holding open dialogues has already brought upon its rewards, being the latest one the National Agreement for a Policy of Rural Development.

In that sense, the selection of themes for the holding of these dialogues is essential, and is a prerogative of each society to safeguard the right to establish its own priorities and identify its particular needs reflecting its natural and intrinsic idiosyncrasy.

Mr. President

We concur with the importance of acting with determination and resolution in our effort to strengthen the prevention capacities of the Organization, while also assuring our activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and International Law.

We encourage the Bureau for the Prevention of Crisis and Recovery of the UNDP to continue with its valuable work in the matter of conflict prevention. Also, we stress the importance of cooperation among the different components of the UN system, particularly through the joint program between the UNDP and of the Department of Political Affairs entitled “Building National Capacity for Conflict Prevention” from which Guatemala and other countries of the region have benefited. These constitute live examples that have proven to be useful and effective for Members States.

Mr. President,

Finally, allow me to take advantage of what will very probably be the last opportunity my delegation will have to express its gratitude towards the magnificent effort you have put into our work during this session, which we are now prepared to conclude. We will remember your dedication, commitment and strength as well that of all your staff. We acknowledge your urgent efforts during this important session that gave rise to the Peace Building Commission, as well as to the Human Rights Council, both valuable instruments at the service of humanity.

Thank you