



STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON 'POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING' AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON MAY 20, 2008

Madame President,

Let me begin by adding India's heart-felt condolences at the loss of life sustained in two of our close neighbours – the People's Republic of China and Myanmar – as a result of natural calamities. Let me also record our appreciation for the leadership of the Security Council by the United Kingdom Presidency for the month of May.

It was in recognition of the international community's less-than-stellar record of securing lasting peace, after more successfully stopping conflict, that we established the Peacebuilding Commission as the centerpiece of an international effort to promote post-conflict peace consolidation. In that context, Madame President, our delegation aligns itself with the statement by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of NAM.

Madame President,

I shall try to address the questions posed in the concept paper. The roots of peacebuilding go deep into the Security Council mandate on peacekeeping. It is therefore important to implement Article 44 of the UN Charter and involve Troop Contributing Countries in shaping the mandate. For instance, our armed forces have effective "winning minds and hearts" programmes.

National ownership is essential in peacebuilding. This is not just a question of sovereignty but a functional matter. For instance, schools and clinics have on occasion been constructed by multiple agencies and NGOs in post-conflict situations, which later were found unsustainable, leading to duplication and wastage. National ownership mitigates this. While the paper correctly points out the need for better operational coordination among international agencies on the ground, empowerment of SRSGs is not necessarily the solution, especially if such concentration of authority is achieved at the expense of nascent national leadership—which is often an inevitable if unintended consequence. It is national

ownership that has to assess critical requirements and gaps, and share this assessment institutionally with those who have the ability to deliver on these gaps. This will also help us answer the problem posed by the inadequacy of international resources to help stabilize post-conflict countries "when everything is urgent".

As for the "planning and running of operations", including the International Financial Institutions, the Peacebuilding Commission has the mandate to bring together and mobilize all actors, especially in marshalling resources. Above all it signals the commitment of the international community to the State concerned, unique as a hedge against political risk to private capital. Bretton Woods Institutions need to be brought into an optimal agenda. They advised Cambodia to reduce its civil service by 20% after Pol Pot had already decimated it (the downsizing was apparently not enough for the BWIs). Four countries in Africa that collapsed into civil war were in the preceding ten years 62 to 83% under an IMF programme. Mining companies sometimes leave next to nothing to government for expenditure on social infrastructure. IMF pressure to privatize makes such imbalanced contracting more likely. It would be useful for World Bank or another expert body to develop model auction procedures and model contracts.

The concept paper touches upon factors that hamper efforts of the UN and the international community in country. The UN contractual system needs to be streamlined and conditions of service of the Secretariat staff in the field harmonized with those of funds and programmes to get better quality personnel and retain them.

The concept paper outlines the need to establish a rapidly-deployable civilian capacity. This idea must be elaborated through open, inclusive and transparent negotiations, to give the end result greater legitimacy. India hopes to participate fully in discussing this concept, which potentially holds the promise of a new paradigm of cooperation between developed and developing states. Once the concept is fully elaborated, recruitment of those who can deploy the appropriate talents, skills and technologies would greatly help in peacebuilding.

Madame President,

In conclusion, I would like to underline our support for the notion that post-conflict peace consolidation remains one of the most serious challenges that the UN faces collectively. We cannot however produce more creative and flexible approaches to address this challenge unless we are willing to move beyond fixed positions. Outside these walls, the world sees only one United Nations, not its constituent organs or member States. Our effort must therefore be based on a more collective and inclusive approach, one that justifies the first word of the title, the United Nations.

I thank you.

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