



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations

135 East 36th Street, New York, NY 10016

Tel: (212) 685-2003 . Fax: (212) 685- 1561 . E-mail: namibia@un.int

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE

AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

**74TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

AT

THE SECURITY COUNCIL

ON

**THE OPEN DEBATE IN CONNECTION WITH THE
AGENDA ITEM “PEACEBUILDING AND
SUSTAINING PEACE: THE ROLE OF
RECONCILIATION IN THE MAINTENANCE OF
INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY”**

**NEW YORK
19 NOVEMBER 2019**

Madame President,

1. I congratulate you on the assumption of the United Kingdom to the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of November 2019 and thank you for organizing the debate on the important topic of the role of reconciliation in the maintenance of international peace and security.
2. I would like to thank the briefers for their informative statements.
3. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement to be delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Madame President,

4. If one looks at the never-ending list of unresolved conflicts and the amount of time this Council spends annually on debating and seeking resolution to conflicts, then please forgive me for drawing the conclusion that “peace must be boring”. Otherwise how do we explain the persistent presence of conflicts. Of course, we recognize the seriousness of this matter and therefore we want to begin our intervention by highlighting that for peace to prevail conflicts should have been prevented in the first place. Therefore, early warning and intelligence gathering are most crucial. And for this to be successful the need for dialogue between aggrieved parties must always be the first step. We recognize that the success of dialogue is linked to the parties desire to resolve conflict. Maintaining peace after such negotiations would require ongoing dialogue to assist with reconciling the parties.
5. Reconciliation has long been recognized as an essential step that countries must take in their path to achieve full peace and stability after violence and conflicts. If we want to guarantee that conflicts do not reemerge or reignite, some form of reconciliation between parties must take place. Reconciliation is part and parcel of any peacebuilding process. Reconciliation requires that structural injustices in the political, social, judicial and economic spheres be addressed.
6. Reconciliation can take different forms, most notably truth and reconciliation commissions and court systems. The United Nations has long taken a leading role in promoting and ensuring reconciliation.

Madame President,

7. At independence, Namibia had a daunting task of reconciliation and nation building, subsequent to the fall of the Apartheid system that thrived on the divide and rule principle. Namibia was fortunate to have had United Nations Special Representatives in the persons of Sean Macbriht, of Ireland and Marti Athisaari, of Finland, among others, who together with the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), worked tirelessly to bring an internationally acceptable transition to independence for Namibia.
8. My country had to go back to the basics to ensure that Namibia enjoys freedom, peace and stability, while holding hands as one Namibia, one Nation. Today we are proud that out of two waring factions during our liberation struggle, Namibia has succeeded to integrate those who were fighting on the side of the Apartheid South African government with the People's Liberation Army of Namibia into one unified national defence force.
9. With the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2005, the United Nations further cemented the importance of peacebuilding and reconciliation. The aim of the Commission is to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, to bring together all of the relevant actors and to marshal resources. The Commission notably advocates for and ensures the inclusion of youth and women in peacebuilding processes, two essential actors in peace and reconciliation processes.

Madame President,

10. Namibia wishes to caution however that while the need to promote dialogue in reconciling parties cannot be overemphasized, the impact of external parties in such processes should not be ignored. There are real dangers that vested interests from external parties could jeopardize reconciliation processes in some cases.

Madame President,

11. As Namibia prepares to mark 30 years of independence in March next year, we take pride in the steps we have taken to ensure our smooth transition to an independent, free State. With the essential help from the United Nations and the international community at large, our reconciliation process has by and

large been a successful one. This success is notably demonstrated in the fact that we will hold our 6th Presidential elections next week.

12. While some countries continue to be plagued by conflict and violence around the world, notably in the Middle East and on the African continent, others are emerging from them. Reconciliation processes should form an essential element of any peace process and should include women. Reconciliation, taken in different forms, allows for wounds to be healed and truths to be spoken. It remains a fundamental step to take to ensure a country's peace, security, harmony and prosperity.

I thank you.