

STATEMENT BY MR. MANJEEV SINGH PURI, ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
ON THE AGENDA ITEM 'POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING' IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL  
ON JULY 22, 2009

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me thank you for scheduling today's debate. It is a topic that is very relevant to the *raison d'être* of the United Nations. I also welcome the report of the UN Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, which underpins today's discussion.

Mr President,

The report collates several significant findings and recommendations. Key among these is the need for a more coherent and effective international engagement during the brief window between the cessation of conflict and the establishment of a peace process, and the more complex process of ensuring that such processes remain on track.

There are clearly two levels of intervention in support of a peace process. The first is at the national and local level, and the second is at the regional and international level. Both processes must move in lockstep.

However, having said that, there are several elements of detail that require attention. These include the need to ensure that the supporting external interventions focus on delivering a peace dividend, expanding national capacity and ensuring the expansion of basic economic capacity so that surplus labour—especially the youth—can be gainfully employed.

Such efforts need to be based on recognition of the complexity of post-conflict scenarios. Not all peace processes and agreements address the underlying causes of conflict. Similarly, not all local actors are untarnished by the rigours of conflict. Yet we need to work pragmatically with actors and circumstances as we find them, not as we would wish them to be.

From this standpoint, it is important to ensure that priority-setting is a local endeavour. It is both politically unworkable and strategically perilous for the international community to involve itself in determining national priorities. Sustainable peace requires genuine national ownership of the process, not a process that is nationally-owned only in times of difficulty.

It is therefore essential that from the outset, peace consolidation efforts are focused upon expanding the capacity and competence of the local government to deliver services. Without this, there can be no national ownership or development, and without either, there will be no sustainable peace. There is a particular contribution that the nations of the South can make in this context, both with regard to providing training and services, and with regard to providing appropriate technologies. These potentialities need to be explored further.

Mr President,

At the same time, there is also a need for greater efforts to align regional and international efforts in multilateral fora. Through better alignment and coordination, we can conceivably achieve more coherent interventions and inputs on the ground. This requires better horizontal as well as vertical coherence. That is to say, we need more coherent efforts by the international community to integrate sometimes disparate efforts in dealing with cross-cutting themes in a peace building context. Too often, the well-meaning efforts of the international community tend to be at cross-purposes, thereby undermining the collective effort.

Similarly, vertical coordination is also required, in particular, within the UN and its Agencies and Programmes, to ensure that a common objective is matched by a clear roadmap to that objective. Coordination and consultation between the UN and the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank, must also be expanded.

The report clearly recognizes that if the UN is to be a lead actor in the process of peace building in the immediate aftermath of conflict, more must be done to improve its efficiency. It is of course positive that the report recognizes such lacunae. It is also important that the report implicitly recognizes that of itself, the significant convening power that the UN brings to the table is not enough. Thus section V of the report dwells at length on the means by which the UN and its Funds and Programmes may be able to contribute more effectively to the process. Naturally, while practitioners on the ground would be able to better assess the potential efficacy of such measures, perhaps in time, more deep-rooted reform will be required.

Mr President,

I should like to conclude by highlighting the need for further consideration and discussion on the complex issue of post conflict peacebuilding. We need to be able to frame this debate within a conceptual framework that tries to answer certain larger

questions regarding the purposes and principles of international involvement in post-conflict peace consolidation. These include the question of where early recovery fits within the larger continuum of peace keeping and peace-building, and where the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, and from peacebuilding to peace consolidation and development begin. We also need to ask ourselves how international investment—both money and political will—can be expanded in support of peace building. In that context, there is clearly a need to expand the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and to deepen its strategic relationship with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the ECOSOC.

I look forward to a continuing dialogue on this subject in this and other fora within the UN.

I thank you.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)