

UN Security Council Open Debate

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

“The role of reconciliation in maintaining international peace and security”

INDIA STATEMENT

by

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Madam President,

1. I thank you for convening this debate on the importance of reconciliation in the process of peacebuilding. We appreciate the comprehensive and insightful briefings on the subject by the Secretary-General and the other briefers.
2. Reconciliation is a crucial step in stopping the cycle of violence and insecurity in post-conflict situations, and in building sustainable peace.
3. Given the immense complexities and unique local context of each post-conflict theatre, there can be no one-size fits all template for such dynamic situations. Reconciliation is a long and arduous process, and artificially imposed standards or timelines are unlikely to achieve success.
4. My delegation is of the view that reconciliation has to be a truly **home-grown process**. The inherent limits on the breadth, depth and duration of any external peace-building mission suggests that deep-rooted, sustainable change of the kind peacebuilding seeks to bring about requires the long-term support and commitment of a critical mass of domestic actors, including civil society, youth, women and religious leaders.

5. Well-meaning reconciliation efforts of the UN or the wider international humanitarian community may not be in tune with the realities on the ground. Expecting domestic actors to uncritically embrace external norms and ideas as inherently superior to domestic ones is unrealistic.
6. Conflict corrodes and destroys human, infrastructural and institutional capacities. Such capacities need to be rebuilt if national actors are to exercise a meaningful degree of ownership over events in the post-conflict period. While it would be a mistake to overlook domestic institutions and practices as sources of peace building, it would be erroneous to uncritically romanticize them. It is, therefore, necessary that adequate capacity building resources are made available for building robust institutions and state structures.
7. Peace and justice are interlinked facets in any post-conflict scenario. India supports enhanced international cooperation for the development and codification of **international criminal law** and to strengthen the **rule of law** as a whole. We also believe that for a truly effective and credible international justice system, we must avoid selectivity, partiality, and double standards in the application of rule of law at the global level.
8. In this context, our view is that the UN must play a **supportive and facilitating** role, which is **non-prescriptive**. The UN must ensure inclusiveness, ownership and participation of all stakeholders in the reconciliation process. Equally important is UN's support for humanitarian assistance, protection and promotion of human rights, and facilitation of political reconciliation processes, in accordance with the principles of neutrality and impartiality.

Madam President,

9. We reject an unwarranted reference by the delegation of Pakistan, earlier today, to the situation in an integral part of India. Let me recall that both sides have solemnly agreed to resolve such issues through means as agreed to by the parties.
10. In conclusion, Madam President, if peace building is to move beyond being an exercise in social engineering, we must acknowledge that

peace-building resources exist within conflict-affected societies themselves.