

[Extract]

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[...]

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Mr. Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias

Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you for convening this meeting, Mr. President. First of all, allow me to welcome and thank Ambassador Takasu for his detailed presentation and to reiterate the support of my delegation for him as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Today we are examining both the form and the substance of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in carrying out the mandate given to it by the heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. As members of the Commission, we have witnessed the arduous work that has been carried out and the fruits of its first year of work. In this context, we feel it is necessary to recognize the work completed by the first Chair of the Organizational Committee, Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola, by the Vice-Presidents of the country-specific meetings for Burundi and Sierra Leone, Ambassador Johan Løvald of Norway and Ambassador Frank Majoor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as the work completed by Vice-Chair of the Group on Lessons Learned, Ambassador Carmen María Gallardo Hernández of El Salvador, and the support of Ms. Carolyn McAskie and her team. We would like to thank each of them for their excellent contribution.

Panama applauds the role of the Commission during the initial stages in developing coordinated, coherent and integrated responses to threats to peacebuilding, especially in the specific cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. It must be recognized that the Commission also made efforts to ensure the participation of civil society, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. That contributed positively to the development of the operational criteria for the work of the Commission.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there are many challenges for this body in its second session, in order to ensure that it has a true and lasting impact in the field. Among them, the Commission will have to redefine its working methods with a view to ensuring that they are sustainable. It needs to ensure concrete indicators to measure the implementation of integrated strategies. It also needs to increase the participation of regional and subregional organizations to its work.

Clearly, the Commission could usefully include more countries in its agenda, taking into account its capacities and the lessons learned from the two pilot cases. But it needs to define appropriate criteria for the process, ensuring that whichever country it happens to be is ready to benefit from the work of the Commission. On this point, I would support what was said by the representative of Indonesia, which I thought was particularly clear, precise and pertinent.

The work of the Commission is clearly urgent and should be recognized as such. For that we need to design a communications and information strategy that will ensure that its mission and achievements are known to all.

The responsibility of ensuring the success of the Commission is that of the entire Organization. The Security Council, together with the Commission, needs to decide on criteria and mechanisms so as to avoid duplication and ensure the complementarity of efforts deployed in the countries that are on their agendas. That will be an important step in redoubling our efforts during the second session to ensure that the countries being considered by the Commission achieve peace and sustainable and socially responsible development.

Finally, allow me to make a brief comment on our meeting today. I understand that the main objective of this meeting was to receive a report from the Peacebuilding Commission that would allow the Security Council to carry out its work in the next year. I share the opinion of the representatives of Italy and Slovakia that it would have been preferable to allow all persons directly linked or interested in the work of the Commission to speak to us. I would like to specifically mention the interest in doing so expressed by Ambassador Gallardo Hernández, and the evident interest in doing so expressed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the European Union. I also think that it would have been preferable to hear those people before the members of the Security Council gave their opinions on these issues.

