



Security Council

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Letter dated 6 July 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, during the Greek presidency, the Security Council will hold a debate on the subject "The role of the Security Council in humanitarian crises: challenges; lessons learned; the way ahead" on Tuesday, 12 July 2005.

Greece has prepared the attached non-paper to facilitate the discussion on the subject (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Adamantios Th. **Vassilakis**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 6 July 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

**GREEK PRESIDENCY, JULY 2005
SECURITY COUNCIL THEMATIC DEBATE:**

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

**THE ROLE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES:**

CHALLENGES; LESSONS LEARNED; THE WAY AHEAD

On July 12, 2005, H.E. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic Mr. Petros G. Molyviatis will preside over an open debate of the Security Council on the subject "The Role of the Security Council in Humanitarian Crises: Challenges; Lessons Learned; the Way Ahead". H.E. The Secretary General and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno are expected to address the Council on the issue.

1. The 1990s witnessed a series of violent humanitarian crises that caused death and immense suffering to millions of people around the world (Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Former Yugoslavia).

The UN made many efforts to improve its system and respond effectively to these challenges. The Security Council (SC) became the principle organ for organizing the international efforts in crises management and peacebuilding.

The number of UN peacekeeping operations increased considerably and became multifunctional as they have a broader mandate than ending hostilities. Their mission is a combination of military and civilian tasks with the aim to build long lasting peace in conflict torn societies and to prevent further outbreaks of violence or its escalation. This is because in most cases a country coming out of conflict has a very big chance to relapse into conflict within the first five (5) years. The reasons behind this are worthy of investigation in order to better understand which elements promote lasting peace and which either inhibit it or are simply ignored.

A greater involvement of regional organizations to meet the rising demands became soon an urgent need and many regional organizations enhanced their capacities in these areas. The United Nations themselves had to make some institutional reforms to deal with the new realities.

2. The proposed thematic debate can focus on recent SC efforts to break the conflict cycle in conflict affected societies and prevent them from relapsing to such crises.

SC Resolutions on East Timor, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Haiti, Liberia, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, among others, as well as peace agreements and peacekeeping (PK) mandates, contain elements for long term peace and stability.

In recent years, the SC has recognized that the prevention of a return to conflict often hinges on the extent to which three key pillars of post-conflict security are adequately addressed, namely: The promotion of the Rule of Law; Security sector reform; and the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (and repatriation if applicable) of ex-combatants. Yet, the approach being taken in these three areas varies considerably in many places where UN operations have been established in the past 5-6 years.

-The Rule of Law: The promotion of democracy and good governance in conflict affected countries could open political space and help alleviate many of the ethnic tensions. Promotion of human rights, constitution-making, transitional justice mechanisms, legal and penal reform are important rule of law aspects in post conflict environment.

Transitional societies must be supported in their efforts to reform their institutions in order to establish a more human, just and democratic order. In this respect, the breaking of impunity through prosecution, trial and punishment as well as the exclusion of perpetrators of human rights crimes from the newly reconstituted institutions are essential elements for creating long lasting peace. To these ones should also add the ultimate objective of achieving reconciliation within those societies.

-Security Sector Reform: Military, Training of police forces.

It has been recognized that security in post conflict environment is crucial for peacemaking and peace implementation. However, security sector reform is one area that has not been focused on; its linkages to the other two areas, the requirement to work with bilateral partners on reform, and the continuum in which security sector reform should take place i.e. from the outset of peacekeeping work through to the development phase. Discussion could focus on the "best practices", "lessons-learned" and inherent challenges in this area which the Security Council should take cognizance when mandating future UN and related peacekeeping operations.

Discussion could also address the restructuring of security institutions such as the military and police. Police operations and activities should provide legal protection to individuals (accountability). Civilian oversight in order to secure democratic control and (police) accountability is also important component of such reforms.

-Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR):

DDR are crucial components of peace agreement. There are many actors involved in DDR programs (national authorities, UN agencies, International Financial Institutions etc.). However, national ownership of the process is very important (see Mozambique).

DDR programs should be included in peace agreements and be part of an overall recovery strategy that encompasses economic development, security sector reform, the integration of refugees and internally displaced persons, and justice and reconciliation.

The reintegration of ex-combatants in the civilian life should be given special attention as they pose serious threat to peace and security. There is an ongoing debate as to whether ex-combatants should be prioritized over refugees and internally displaced persons (Sierra Leone).

3. Lessons learned: Assessment on the effectiveness of the above measures and need to reinforce them in the future.

Although, the above mentioned three pillars are contained in the majority of the SC resolutions, with different degree of emphasis depending on the specific country situation, their implementation is not always successful. The mandate and the strength of the peacekeeping mission, the follow up of the SC and the full cooperation by the respective government are important elements for an effective process.

Likewise, lasting peace is not exclusively dependant on SC initiatives, but on a variety of other factors such as: the actual involvement of regional organizations, the quality of the peace agreements, the history and the nature of the conflict, the involvement of regional organizations or the neighboring countries in the peace process, the support by international and local actors and the consistency in the flow of donor aid (concerns regarding cases in which the flow is initially good – yet the absorbing capacity of the conflict area may be poor – but then tends to be minimized over time, or in South Sudan, where the infrastructure is inadequate to welcome returning IDPs).

4. The way ahead:

- The importance of further strengthening the above three pillars in achieving long lasting peace.

- Has the Security Council given adequate attention to security sector reform, or to the inter-linkages between rule of law, DDR, and security sector reform? If so, in which cases? If not, how might it do so better in future?

- Is a more active engagement of the Security Council required in war affected zones for the early prevention of conflicts or further outbreaks?

- The role of international and local actors in implementing the above pillars.