



STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MR. HAMZA, DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, DURING GENERAL DEBATE OF THE GENERAL SEGMENT ON THE AD HOC ADVISORY GROUPS ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES EMERGING FROM CONFLICT (ITEM 7(F) OF THE 2009 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (Geneva, 23 July 2009))

Mr. Vice-President,

The Group of 77 and China thanks you for inviting the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peace building Committee to the Council and welcomes this opportunity to dialogue with him under item 7(f) on African countries emerging from conflict. We listened with great care to his presentation how the Commission is addressing the challenges of peace building in the African countries on its agenda.

Mr. Vice-President,

The Group of 77 and China recalls the innovative experiment that had been tried by the Council in creating the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African countries emerging from conflict. This was the Council's attempt to ensure that there was a focused attempt to address the socio-economic causes of conflict and to ensure that there was an integration of relief - in the humanitarian phase - to development. Two of the countries considered by the Council, Burundi and Guinea-Bissau, are now being considered by the Commission as you have outlined, along with Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic.

Mr. Vice-President,

In addition to addressing political and security issues, including the security sector reform, the Group of 77 and China continues to believe that in order for peace to become truly irreversible, sustainable development must be at the heart of peace building. As suggested by the first report of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau in 2002, we need to start with quick-wins so that these countries can, with the support of the international community, deliver basic services to demonstrate the value of peace. I believe that the Commission has recognized the value of this approach and we support your efforts to help the countries deliver these "quick wins".

However, the Group of 77 and China also believes that it is important for the international community to support these countries in developing/preparing their longer-term national strategies for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Many of these countries are reliant on one or two crops for their export earnings. A comprehensive economic diversification strategy is indispensable to their ability to deliver higher and more equitable incomes to their population. We also recognize that conflict and instability would have led to the destruction and deterioration of their infrastructure, particularly in the key areas of energy, water, communications and transport. Targeted support to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of physical infrastructure by the international community, including by international financial institutions, is vital to the long-term recovery of these countries emerging from conflict.

Mr. Vice-President,

We are also aware that countries emerging from conflict face many simultaneous challenges that are not faced by other countries. They must build, or in some cases, rebuild political, economic as well as social institutions that would empower them to deal with challenges of socio-economic development. These challenges are particularly acute in today's environment of high food and energy prices as well as the impacts of global economic and financial crisis. We believe that these unique challenges require flexible reliable and adequate financing from all sources, in particular the donor community.

Mr. Vice-President,

It must be recalled that the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups had undertaken a review of their work and concluded that there were several core lessons to be learned. They include the following:

- (a) the need to have appropriate mechanisms to mobilize donors and promote the translation of pledges into disbursements in a timely and predictable manner (ensuring "effective donorship");
- (b) the importance of going beyond immediate problem-solving in the countries considered and defining a vision, from the very beginning, of longer-term rehabilitation and support;
- (c) the need to stay engaged over the long-term, even when the political situation (for example, an electoral process) would traditionally lead to a "wait and see" approach; and,
- (d) making good use of the work of United Nations entities to complement the policy approach of the intergovernmental body by strong support at the technical and operational level.

We hope that the Commission will consider these lessons as it implements its work programme.

Finally, Mr. Vice-President, the G-77 and China wishes to commend the work of the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peace building Commission and suggest that he may wish to use the development expertise of the Council and its subsidiary bodies on a range of issues, including drugs and crime, violence, public administration and tax matters, employment and decent work, among other issues that are of central importance to countries emerging from conflict.

It may also be recalled that the Council has a legislative mandate to coordinate the work of the Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies that will have to play a critical role in helping countries to consolidate peace, including in the early recovery stage. In this respect, we trust that the guidance of the Council provides to the UN system can be useful to the Commission.

I thank you all for your attention.