

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON POST-
CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING: INSTITUTION BUILDING ON
JANUARY 21, 2011**

Mr President,

The sustained attention of the Council to peacekeeping and peacebuilding is indicative of the fact that the Council recognizes that the success or failure of peacekeeping and peacebuilding will determine the continuing relevance of the United Nations and of this Council to many troubled parts of the world.

My delegation would, therefore, like to thank you for organizing this debate to focus on what is probably the most critical component of the peacebuilding agenda, the building of political and governance institutions. We would also like to thank you for the concept paper, which has provided a very useful background of the issues involved and made suggestions on the way forward.

I am grateful that the Secretary-General has himself chosen to be here today. His remarks were particularly insightful. They have given us a clear idea of the problems and the opportunities.

Mr. President,

Peace cannot be restored to post-conflict societies and their citizens cannot be freed from fear and want unless national authorities are able to govern effectively. The capacity of effective governance, in turn, depends on the existence of institutions that enable these authorities to respond effectively to the aspirations of people. This general political aphorism is substantiated by the experience of the international community in its peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts during the last two decades.

Mr President,

Over the past two decades this Council made huge investments of manpower and resources in designing and running “multidimensional” PKOs mandated to operate in “fragile” states. These have shown, at best, mixed results. A handful have delivered

outcomes that may be termed satisfactory. Many have meandered as they attempted, over a decade or more, to be equal to the task of implementing their complex and ambitious mandates.

Unfortunately, conflicts remain and we are now in the midst of another paradigmatic shift in our efforts to contain and recover from conflict. One dimension of this shift, viz., the attempt to define the scope of peacebuilding is being increasingly clarified as “fragile” states define areas in which the international community can and is willing to support their nation-building activities. A second dimension, that of the relation between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, is also being clarified. A third dimension, the organizational context of peacebuilding, however, continues to lack uniformity. Some peacebuilding efforts are being managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, others by the Department of Political Affairs and yet others by the UN Resident Coordinator system.

At another level, the Peacebuilding Commission is working on expanding its effectiveness in a complicated multilateral context.

Peacebuilding, therefore, is very much work in progress.

Mr President,

India brings to this table the experience of almost sixty years of peacekeeping. We have contributed more peacekeepers to more peacekeeping operations than any other nation. We have also participated in every type of peacekeeping operation – from truce supervision to the current generation of complex PKOs.

Peacekeepers, Mr President, are early peacebuilders and Indian peacekeepers have been amongst the earliest UN peacebuilders.

Our experience in transforming a colonial legacy into a modern, dynamic nation that is both a democracy and a rapidly growing economy made Indian peacekeepers instinctively understand that no peace can be effective unless it is accompanied by growth of local institutions. Indian peacekeepers in UNTAC, UNOSOM II, MONUC, UNMIS, UNMIL, MINUSTAH and elsewhere have made conscious efforts to assist local authorities in restoring national structures that had collapsed during conflict. Our peacekeepers donned peacebuilding hats and attempted to restore administrative processes, strengthened local policing and activated judicial mechanisms in areas they have served. They always attempt to work through indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution and mediation in order to strengthen these local institutions so that they become viable political institutions. They have tried to get educational institutions to function and provided services such as livestock clinics to help local economies get going.

Mr. President,

Political and administrative institutions that decentralize governance are, in our experience the key to nation building. Institutions must be locally relevant and must include all stakeholders, particularly the weak and the under-privileged, in governance processes. India launched the largest ever exercise in democratic decentralization about two decades ago. Administrative and legislative powers were transferred to village and district level bodies and considerable thought and effort were devoted to making these institutions locally relevant.

The key to the success of these institutions, we have found, lies in what we call “inclusiveness”. Our process of democratic decentralization has ensured the election of about a million women to representative offices at all levels. Empowering those who have traditionally been at the margins of society has strengthened and transformed both democracy and governance in our country.

Mr. President, “inclusiveness” works in interesting ways.

The decision of the Government of India to aggressively recruit women police personnel allowed us to field a female Formed Police Unit, the first such formation composed entirely of women, in UNMIL. We understand that the presence of these Indian women police personnel has not only assisted in restoring faith in the local law enforcement system but has served as an example to Liberian women.

We believe that this is the type of institution-building that is required to bring stability in many of the conflict-prone areas that we are concerned with in this Council.

We have also built a significant capacity for training. Under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, we give training in some 5000 foreign students and experts in 220 odd courses from 158 countries across the globe. Similarly, through lines of credit, South-South Cooperation, and India Development Initiative, we have contributed to nation-building activities in various countries.

India has also contributed to peacebuilding through plurilateral mechanisms such as the India-Brazil and South Africa [IBSA] waste-management project in Haiti, where we also have police contingents deployed in MINSTAH.

Mr President,

No amount of international will can replace national will and commitment. Moreover, peacebuilding cannot be undertaken in a hurry. Our role as peacebuilders has to be to assist, through long-term and patient involvement, the creation of the environment where this local will is allowed to express itself. It is also to provide the resources and the expertise that is often lacking in societies struggling to re-engineer themselves.

All this thus requires the international community to make available a predictable and appropriate level of resources over extended periods.

Mr President,

UN capacity to help create institutions is contingent upon the Secretariat and the Funds and Programmes having skill sets and expertise that are relevant to these societies.

The move to create Civilian Capacities is a move in this direction. However, much more needs to be done.

It is hard to avoid the feeling that the UN presence on the ground is a ponderous bureaucracy rather than a lean institution that is quick to adapt and respond. Symptomatic of this malaise is the fact that the Secretariat takes upto 200 days to fill positions in the field leading to worrying vacancy levels.

The sourcing of these capacities must be driven by the needs of national authorities and not priorities of the donors. It also stands to reason that these capacities need to be sourced from governments of nations that have experience of relevance to these national authorities.

Serious consideration must also be given to the idea of an expansion of seconded staff to the UN. This would allow the UN to rapidly access necessary capabilities, deploy them swiftly and allow rapid scaling up and down. It is also likely to be more economical.

Mr President,

In concluding, I would like to stress that as a responsible global citizen India will not be found lacking in responding to challenge of maintaining international peace and security through the peacebuilding process. Under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, we give training in some 5000 foreign students and experts in 220 odd courses from 158 countries across the globe. Similarly, through lines of credit, South-South Cooperation, and India Development Initiative, we have contributed to nation-building activities in various countries. India has also contributed to peacebuilding through innovative plurilateral mechanisms such as the India-Brazil-South Africa [IBSA] initiatives in Haiti, Guinea-Bissau and other nations.

Thank you, Mr President.

[BACK TO SECURITY COUNCIL](#)