

20 February 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,  
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Security Council Debate on the “Maintenance of International  
Peace and Security: Role of the Security Council in Supporting  
Security Sector Reform”**

President of the Security Council,  
Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, the Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic for inviting me to address the Security Council on the important issue of Security Sector Reform.

The Security Council, as the Charter body mainly responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, has an essential role to play in addressing security sector reform. I warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, for this timely initiative.

I welcome today's meeting, which follows recent debates in the General Assembly and Security Council on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In many resolutions, the General Assembly has reaffirmed the United Nations leading role in supporting countries emerging from conflicts to build and strengthen institutional capacities, which promote coexistence and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The General Assembly has also stressed the importance of strengthening the role of the international community, in dealing with countries emerging from conflict, in order to prevent them from sliding back into conflict. The role Security Sector Reform can play to promote this agenda cannot be underestimated.

We should recognize that the United Nations has a comparative advantage over others in this area. It is uniquely positioned, due to its universal legitimacy, to play a leading role in policy formulation and capacity building.

In this context, the organization has already developed a great deal of expertise and best practices in recent years from United Nations peacekeeping operations, which we can draw on to benefit the debate on security sector reform.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Security sector reform in countries emerging from conflicts is a very complex issue. The security apparatus of every country lies at the heart of its national sovereignty and identity.

The core institutions of state - the police, army, and judiciary - are crucial to national stability and justice, good governance and the rule of law. The impartiality of these institutions reflects the strength of a country's democratic values.

Without these institutions functioning effectively and with the confidence of the people, economic development and democratic values are undermined. A competent, law abiding and well governed security sector, with effective civilian oversight is vital for overall peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts, and sustainable development that can benefit the poor.

This is why national ownership of any process of Security Sector Reform is extremely important.

In post-conflict situations the consolidation of peace and stability is dependent on a nationally-owned process of socio-economic and political development, including Security Sector Reform that is swift and effective.

The United Nations can play an important capacity building role, particularly, in the aftermath of a conflict. Security Sector Reform, beginning with peacekeeping operations, is an integral part of the transition from conflict situations to long term stability and economic development.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Better coordination of our collective efforts at the international level and across this organization is necessary to ensure that much needed assistance to countries emerging from conflict has a greater impact.

We need to adopt a common policy within the framework of the General Assembly to define such concepts and coordinate the efforts across the Organization, and its departments and agencies in the field.

In this regard, the Peacebuilding Commission can play a very important coordinating and substantive role in view of the increasing demand for the support of the United Nations, especially given that most conflicts now tend to be within states and not between states.

I would like to emphasize the important contribution the General Assembly - as the chief deliberative and policy making organ of the United Nations - can make to this emerging debate.

Working together with the Security Council and ECOSOC, we can all contribute towards a substantive policy framework in an open and transparent debate involving all Member States. I

therefore welcome the opportunity for the General Assembly to discuss the Secretary-General's forthcoming report on Security Sector Reform.

Thank you very much.