

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**REMARKS TO SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE  
ON POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING  
New York, 20 December 2012**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I commend Morocco for its initiative in convening this open debate.

Peacebuilding is one of the main objectives of the United Nations. It brings together actors from across the UN system:

-- my envoys and representatives, whose negotiation and mediation efforts help to achieve and sustain political settlements;

-- political and peacekeeping missions, which assist in implementing peace and transition agreements and lay the foundations for sustainable peace;

-- and the agencies, funds and programmes, whose efforts deliver peace dividends, support recovery and kick-start development.

In my 2009 report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, I identified the first two years after the end of conflict as the key window of opportunity to begin building sustainable peace. I also laid out an action agenda for an improved response by the United Nations system during this period.

The United Nations has made significant progress in advancing this agenda.

United Nations missions and country teams are working more closely together.

The United Nations has also become more agile in deploying senior leaders, specialized experts and staff to the field.

We have strengthened and expanded our partnerships, including with the World Bank and regional organizations.

And through the CivCap initiative, we are broadening and deepening the pool of institution-building expertise in key capacity gap areas.

The outcome of these various efforts has been a more coherent, timely and effective response to immediate post-conflict priorities.

Our progress in supporting the participation of women in peacebuilding has been more mixed. There have been notable achievements in the areas of conflict resolution, gender-responsive planning, financing and rule of law. However, there has been less progress in governance and economic recovery. Much more remains to be done to implement the Seven-Point Action Plan in my 2010 report on women's participation in peacebuilding.

Mr. President,

Despite the strides we have made, major peacebuilding challenges remain. Many countries continue to experience instability years after the end of armed conflict, with high levels of relapse into violence. Ninety per cent of the conflicts between 2000 and 2009 occurred in countries that had previously experienced civil war.

The reasons for relapse vary by country, but there is a common thread: a deficit of trust in the wake of conflict – between different political parties and social groups, between state and society, and between the state and its international partners.

Experience has revealed three elements that are critical to preventing relapse and producing more resilient states and societies: inclusivity, institution-building, and sustained international support.

Inclusive approaches to peacebuilding begin with political settlements and convincing all parties to a conflict that their core objectives can be resolved through dialogue and negotiation, rather than a recourse to violence. Inclusive processes anchored in the rule of law also lower corruption and make public administration more transparent and predictable, and social service delivery more effective.

Our support to Yemen's transition shows how the United Nations is pursuing an inclusive approach. My Special Advisor has engaged a range of opposition groups, youth, women and civil society organizations, paving the way for their participation in the national dialogue conference and laying the foundations for subsequent stages of the transition.

Mr. President,

Functioning institutions are essential for establishing popular confidence in the State and preventing violent conflict. For the international community, a key challenge is balancing long-term support for institution-building with the need to demonstrate early and tangible outcomes that benefit people. There is a vital need for an early focus on restoring core administrative and financial management systems, and on delivering social services.

Strengthening institutions means strengthening the rule of law. Member States have recognized, in the Declaration on the Rule of Law adopted by the General Assembly in September, the importance of rule of law institutions that are accessible and responsive to the needs and rights of all individuals, and which promote trust, social cohesion and economic prosperity. Efforts in this area should include ensuring full and equal access to informal institutions, as well as strengthening the interface between formal and informal institutions.

Good governance and rule of law as well as effective, transparent, accountable and democratic institutions are critical for sustainable development. Member States recognized this at this year's Rio+20 conference, and the current discussions on the post-2015 development agenda offer an opportunity to take this recognition forward.

Mr. President,

Building institutions and other peacebuilding tasks can take a generation. This highlights the need for sustained international political and financial support. It also underscores the importance of mutual accountability over the long term, which creates a more balanced partnership between donors and recipient Governments. This approach is reflected in the Peacebuilding Commission's instruments of engagement and has been endorsed by the g7+ group of states and their development partners.

Transition compacts can provide a basis for improved trust and deeper partnerships between countries emerging from conflict and the wider international community. I encourage Member States to support their development and use. For development partners, this entails a greater willingness to use national oversight and financial systems, and to assume risk. Pooled funds such as the Peacebuilding Fund can help to reduce such risk.

Mr. President,

Post-conflict countries, development partners and the United Nations all have their part to play in translating these insights into practice. I stand ready to report further on this pursuit so that, together, we can get peacebuilding right.

Thank you.