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Venue : [s.l]
Date : 7 SEPTEMBER, 2000
Title : SECURITY COUNCIL SUMMIT MEETING ON "ENSURING AN EFFECTIVE ROLE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA"

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

I am privileged to participate in this historic Summit Meeting of the Security Council on "Ensuring an effective role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa" coinciding with the Millennium Summit. The consideration of this important subject is most timely in the context of the many challenges facing the Security Council in the twenty-first century.

2. Clearly, for the Council to be more effective in discharging its responsibilities, there must be, first of all, that all-important ingredient of success - the necessary political will on the part of members of the Council to take the necessary measures to resolve conflicts around the world, particularly in Africa where, given the number and intensity of armed conflicts there, a concerted and comprehensive response is required. Such political will should be manifested irrespective of where the conflict occurs. Each conflict situation must be treated in an even-handed manner, lest the Council be accused of being selective in its approach. It is particularly important on the part of the Permanent Members of the Council to manifest this political will, without which the Council will be rendered ineffective. A paralysis in the Council must be avoided at all costs if it is to fulfill its Charter-mandated responsibilities. For this purpose, members of the Council, especially the Permanent Members, who can block a consensus, must put aside their narrow political interests and join the consensus, in the larger interests of the international community.

3. Equally important is the need for strong and sustained support on the part of the members of the international community for the actions of the Council. This is particularly pertinent in respect of Council decisions in sanctioning peacekeeping operations, whose success is predicated on the willingness of member states to contribute troops and other personnel as well as equipment. To generate such support, the Council and the Secretariat should make every effort to engage member states particularly potential troop contributors at the planning stage and at every subsequent phases of the operation. Indeed, peacekeeping operations should only be established when there is assurance of adequate and well-trained and equipped personnel from member states, as dispatching peacekeeping missions at less than their required strength and with inadequate equipment can result in tragic consequences, as was the case in the early phase of the peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone.

4. Undoubtedly, continued and sustained financial and material support by member states are essential in ensuring the operational success of peacekeeping operations. All member states must unconditionally fulfill their obligation so that the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions is not jeopardized on account of a lack of the necessary funding. At the same time, every effort should also be made for the early reimbursement of the costs of peacekeeping operations borne by developing countries. Delayed reimbursement, which often lasted a number of years, may have a negative impact on member states' willingness to participate in future peacekeeping operations.

5. Another challenge that must be addressed is the lack of institutional capacity on the part of the UN Secretariat, both in planning and managing peacekeeping missions. It is imperative that the Secretariat, particularly the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which is seriously understaffed, be further strengthened to commensurate its enormous tasks. Particular areas that warrant immediate attention are those relating to information gathering and analysis, planning for future operations and operational support for on-going peacekeeping operations. Equally important is the need for quality staff in order to ensure high standards of professionalism upon which much of the success of peacekeeping missions depends. Clearly, sound decisions can only be made by the Council on the basis of prompt and quality information and analysis by the Secretariat. Such information and analysis should be presented to the Council in an objective and unvarnished fashion so as to enable the Council to arrive at the most judicious decisions on the basis of the objective facts of a particular conflict situation. Briefings on the military aspects of a peacekeeping operation, to be given whenever possible by the commander of the Operation, would be of tremendous value to Council members as well as to troop contributing countries.

6. Beyond the deployment of peacekeeping missions in existing conflict situations, there is a need for the Council and the United Nations as a whole to develop strategies for peacemaking and peacebuilding, including those for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants in a post-conflict situation as concrete measures to consolidate and sustain peace.

7. More importantly, there is a need to develop strategies for conflict prevention, perhaps in close coordination with regional or sub-regional organizations, particularly in Africa. In this regard, the Secretary-General's recommendations on conflict prevention contained in his Millennium Report and in his statement to the Council's debate on conflict prevention in July 2000 are most pertinent and should be seriously followed up. My delegation also commends the bold recommendations of the Brahimi Panel on UN Peace Operations which deserve serious and early consideration.

8. The Council has to face the challenge of translating its pronouncements into concrete action. This unique and historic meeting of the Council would be best served, if following this Summit, serious and prompt follow-up measures are taken, specifically, to implement a positive and tangible contribution by this Council to the objectives of the Millennium Summit.

Thank you, Mr. President.