

Statement by Montenegro at the Open Debate of the United Nations Security Council

Conflict Prevention
21 August 2014
(Unofficial Transcript)

Mr. Šćepanović (Montenegro): We thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's important open debate and congratulate you on your country's presidency of the Security Council in the month of August. We also thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for their valuable briefings. We also welcome the adoption of resolution 2171 (2014) today. We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the High Commissioner for her outstanding work during her tenure in office.

Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

I would like, however, to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Conflicts have a devastating impact on the world. At least one fifth of the world's population continues to live in violent or conflict-affected countries. It is striking that conflict hits the most vulnerable the hardest. It is our duty to help resolve conflicts, and we must share the burden and provide new generations with a safer environment. Conflict resolution and the building and maintenance of sustainable societies are the greatest challenges of our time.

With the many real challenges that remain to be addressed in the current, ever more fragile international peace and security context, we must recognize that we have a long way to go before we truly have an effective system. Turning understanding into action and moving from a culture of reaction to one of prevention is a demanding task. We all know, from many examples across the world, that prevention and early intervention can and do work and is cost-effective. That is why I would like to underline the importance of United Nations early-detection and early-warning mechanisms. Our focus should definitely be directed towards preventive measures in order to prevent crises from developing and escalating and to mitigate the possible repercussions thereof. To that end, Montenegro, as a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation, advocates that mediation be truly established as a core function of the United Nations, as prescribed in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The responsibility to protect and its further operationalization must also remain a priority. In this era of accountability, perpetrators of crimes against humanity should not go unpunished.

Regional and subregional organizations could play a positive and valuable role in facilitating the beginning of dialogue and the establishment of a conciliatory tone when approaching conflict resolution, as we have seen in many instances in Africa. When the regional or subregional approach does not bear fruit, it is for the United Nations and the Security Council to step in and assert ownership. In order to make sure that the United Nations maintains its rightful place as the central mechanism for global governance, the Organization has to assume a modern, reformed profile that recognizes new geopolitical realities and the world's evolving and multifaceted conditions and environments.

Let me point out that threats today must be tackled through joint efforts and in an integrated manner across the entire nexus of development, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, the rule of law and human rights. Proceeding in that manner, we can achieve societies that live in enduring peace. Given its vast accumulated expertise and knowledge, the United Nations is well positioned to provide such holistic and tailored support to nationally led undertakings by Member States.

In order to have peaceful and conflict-free societies, there has to be an enabling environment for inclusive institution-building, which assumes the active engagement of national and local authorities, parliaments, communities, civil society, academia and women's groups. Only in that

way will political reforms be able to take root and open space for the development of national dialogues, reconciliation efforts and other initiatives.

Equal focus also needs to be placed on transparency, accountability and effective management and oversight, with a view to strengthening the legitimacy and integrity of security institutions. In combination, all of those aspects will contribute to our common objective of maintaining international peace and security.