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"Inclusivity in Rebuilding States:

Focusing on Inclusivity in SSR"

Tuesday, 22 April 2014

9:30am

Introductory statement by

Assistant Secretary-General Dmitry Titov

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Excellencies; Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to speak to you today about inclusivity in security sector reform. I thank the Permanent Missions of Japan, Tanzania and the Slovak Republic for taking up this important topic and hope that our discussion today will help to raise awareness for the need to enhance inclusion of all actors engaged in security sector reform.

'Inclusivity' is an integral part of successful state-building processes. They can only be sustainable if all segments of society feel included in the political dialogue. This holds particularly true when developing a national agenda for an effective and accountable security sector that responds to the

needs of those they are entrusted to protect.

In 2008, in his first report on security sector reform, the Secretary-General noted that security sector reform – I quote – "can only succeed if it is a nationally led and inclusive process in which national and local authorities, parliaments and civil society, including traditional leaders, women's groups and others are actively engaged."

Different people in our societies have different security needs and perspectives. In order to address these, plans and strategies for the security sector have to go beyond a narrow government perspective to encompass the voices of society at large.

This relates to one of the core principles of security sector reform – the inclusion of civil society in security and policy making. One related aspect is to support the integration of gender perspectives into security sector reform processes, for example, through developing and ensuring compliance with a code of conduct for the armed forces that explicitly prohibits and sanctions gender-based violence.

Inclusivity should not stop there. We must also ensure that security institutions represent society in total. Increased recruitment, retention and advancement of minority groups can help promote the legitimacy of the security sector and thereby prevent relapse into violence.

The United Nations has a role to play in supporting national actors through the facilitation of transparent and inclusive discussions on security sector reform. Essentially, security sector reform cannot be based on a monologue within the elite. It needs to be founded on a dialogue among citizens. Similarly, this process is a marathon, not a sprint – one that requires the continuous efforts of all actors and partners.

Burundi is one example of how inclusivity in post-conflict peacebuilding and security sector reform requires *sustained* commitment and *continuous* efforts of all actors and partners.

Inclusivity was a key component of the Arusha agreement that ended the conflict in 2001. The accords had enshrined the need to ensure "balance" and "inclusiveness" across ethnicity,

regional origin and political affiliation in the composition of the security forces.

Yet, today there is increasing concern that the country is moving away from that inclusive spirit. We see restrictions on the freedom of expression, especially the prohibition and disruption of opposition meetings by the police and the youth wing of the ruling party.

The international community must continue its commitment to preserve and widen the political space and sustain efforts in security sector reform in countries like Burundi. The failure to tackle security sector reform can jeopardise the gains made in peacekeeping and peacebuilding contexts.

South Sudan is yet another example highlighting the dreadful consequences that could result from a lack of inclusivity. Since its independence in 2011, the security sector in South Sudan remained fragmented along ethnic lines.   This eventually became one of the main factors that triggered the escalation of the crisis last December.   Such challenges can only be addressed through a context-specific, long-term

security sector dialogue incorporating a wide range of civil society representatives, including women and youth groups, and local authorities, irrespective of ethnic loyalties.

The United Nations can play an important role in assisting national actors with the establishment of such an approach. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the UNOCI SSR Unit helped to promote the inclusion of civil society in national dialogue on security sector reform, for example through the organization of regular informal meetings among key stakeholders in the security sector reform process. This inclusive approach contributed to raising awareness of the challenges ahead, thereby helping to manage expectations of all relevant actors.

Excellencies; Ladies and Gentlemen,

When discussing the topic of inclusivity, one should not forget the regional dimension. More often than not, the United Nations is just one of several actors providing support to security sector reform. Expanding and deepening partnerships particularly with regional and sub-regional organizations is important in developing sustainable approaches to security

sector reform, tailored to the unique histories and cultures of each context.

In January 2013, the African Union Heads of States and Government adopted a comprehensive AU Policy Framework on security sector reform, following an inclusive consultation and drafting process led by the AU Commission, supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Policy Framework represents an important tool to streamline security sector reform norms and guide reform processes on the African continent. Simultaneously, it promotes key African perspectives and AU principles, such as the primacy of national ownership and importance of a context-specific approach. The Policy Framework, for example, has informed mission planning and operational SSR support for the AU-led African International Support Mission in the Central African Republic.

We need to build on these initial steps, yet we need to do more to strengthening our regional approaches to security sector reform, while taking into account the lessons of countries that underwent reform.

In speaking of security sector reform, we cannot simply pay lip service to the ideal of inclusivity. Without building it into reform processes from the outset, we risk that the security sector will ultimately serve the interest of the few, rather than protecting the safety and security of all.

Before I close, allow me to again express my appreciation to the Permanent Missions of Japan, Tanzania and the Slovak Republic for organizing this event and to wish you all success in your discussions and deliberations.

Thank you very much.