

Seminar: "States in fragile environments:
Common engagement for conflict resolution
and development". University of Pretoria 24.
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Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr
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Draft

Your Majesties,

Your Excellencies Minister and Deputy
Minister,

Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the
University of Pretoria,

Ambassadors,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be
addressing you here today. The issues we
will discuss are important not only for this
region and for Africa, but for the whole
international community. I am therefore glad
to see that we have a wide audience here
today, consisting of South African
ministries and institutions, think tanks and
NGOs, the diplomatic corps and media from
both South Africa and Norway.

I am also honoured by the presence of Minister Chabane and Deputy Minister Van der Merwe representing the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. We are very pleased with the cooperation we have with your colleagues in the Department as well as with South African Embassies in many countries around the world.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the University of Pretoria, through the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor, with its 101st anniversary. Your University is a key academic institution in South Africa today, with an impressive output of graduate students and research publications.

As His Majesty already mentioned, the presence of students from the University of Pretoria and the Wits is particularly welcome, and I look forward to a more interactive session later in the seminar.

This is the second time I visit South Africa. The first time was in February 1995, when I accompanied our prime minister at the time Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland on her official visit to your country. I have fond

- and above all strong - memories from that visit. I had the honour and privilege to meet with your president at the time, Mr Nelson Mandela. One of the places we went with him was to his prison cell on Robben Island - or "the Mandela University" as it was called by so many.

The experience was something I will never forget. Today it makes me reflect on the following: This autumn in Europe, we have celebrated the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War - which gave millions of people the freedom from oppression and tyranny. A few months later, on February 11 1990, another wall came down, so to speak. On that day Nelson Mandela was released from the Victor Verster Prison, signalling the end of apartheid - and giving millions of people their freedom from oppression and tyranny also here. The two events symbolise that in the space of a few months the world had changed.

Today, South Africa is a symbol. Yes, it will remain a strong message of peaceful transformation during many decades to come. But first and foremost, South Africa is today a key international player - and a partner - which weighs in on many regional and global agendas. Democratic South Africa

gives South Africa a new face and a new voice. Both are welcome!

Norway for its part is involved in peace and reconciliation processes in various conflicts. I believe we have shown in the past that our two countries work well together in international peace efforts - and that is something I would like to develop even further. Not least when it comes to the topic of today's seminar: "States in fragile environments: Common engagement for conflict resolution and development".

States in fragile environments is a rather general concept, but it covers some traits we find in many states affected by conflict. They tend to have weak state institutions; they lack legitimacy in the eyes of the public, and have insufficient control over their territory. Unequal distribution of wealth and general polarisation between groups in society are also common traits. A strong presence of armed non-state actors presents a special challenge.

How do we, as the international community, engage in such situations, with a view to

contributing to lasting change? I will focus my introduction here on three steps I believe we must take in order to approach this issue:

1. First, we must draw on existing experience of both successes and failures. This requires broad insight into the history and political and socio-economic make up of a specific country, with a strong focus on efforts that may contribute to building a functional state. The need to incorporate all these elements results in a broad and challenging agenda.

Coordination is crucial here. The UN Peace building Commission plays an important role in gathering lessons learned and developing integrated peace building strategies. Norway is a key supporter of the Commission, which was established in 2005. While the UN is best placed to coordinate aid efforts during and immediately after a conflict, the World Bank has gradually developed extensive competence in managing multi-donor funds for the coordination of long-term reconstruction and state-building efforts. Norway channels considerable support to countries such as Sudan and Burundi, through such funds.

In Sudan, Norway has had an extensive engagement since the 1970s. Norwegian support to Sudan amounts to close to NOK 700 million, roughly 900 million Rand. A substantial amount is channelled through the World Bank's multi-donor trust fund, and funds are also channelled through various NGOs as well as the UN. I would like to mention a specific programme, called the Oil-for-Development initiative. Contested oil resources are a major factor behind the conflict in Sudan. By contributing to the development of a common knowledge base in the North and the South and improving the management of oil revenues, we can help to reduce tension and prepare the ground for long-term sustainable growth, based on the country's own resources.

Together with South Africa, we are just about to start a tripartite programme that includes the Governments of South Africa, Sudan and Norway. The objective is to train a professional police service in Sudan, with special emphasis on South Sudan. Such a civilian police service is vital for maintaining law and order in the region. The implementing agent is the South African Police Service, which will draw on its extensive experience with other similar training programmes, including in the DRC.

In Burundi, the purpose of our engagement is to support the peace process and contribute to keeping that process on track. Up to June 2008 Norway led the UN Peace building Commission's work on Burundi, and fully experienced the challenges of meeting expectations in terms of peace-building and ensuring sufficient resources for development. We also provide substantial budget support to Burundi, channelled through the World Bank.

South Africa continues to play an important role in the peace process in Burundi. We commend the work you have done through your special envoy, and when the mandate expires on 31 December you will be able to look back on a job well done. We have had the pleasure of supporting South Africa in this work, and we look forward to continuing our cooperation in our joint effort to keep the peace process on track.

In Burundi, we also are also supporting dialogue and reconciliation at various levels of society. We are doing this through tripartite cooperation with the government of South Africa, and the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (AACORD)

- who is present here today - is responsible for implementation. This is a prime example of close cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors to achieve common goals.

Let me say a few words also on another joint challenge. Norway has been a long time friend of Zimbabwe providing support since the liberation struggle in the 70ies - politically, financially and through people-to-people cooperation. We have followed the early progress and then the tragic and comprehensive downfall - of democracy, the economy and of fundamental human rights.

When the Government of National Unity was created earlier this year signalled readiness to provide support to the constructive effort of the new Prime Minister. Now we witness considerable problems in having the agreement between the parties fully implemented and the situation is extremely fragile.

We welcome the fact that South Africa once more plays an important role as facilitator in this process through His Excellency, President Zuma. I can assure you that Norway

supports the SADC mediation efforts through South Africa and are further willing to explore possibilities for joint actions.

2. Second, experience has shown us that UN and other multilateral efforts need to be carried out in close cooperation with regional bodies. In Africa, this means the African Union as well as the regional economic communities. Cooperation and coordination between the UN and AU has been considerably strengthened in recent years. There is still considerable room for improvement, and I believe the joint operation in Darfur has taught us valuable lessons that should serve us well in the future.

South Africa is an important dialogue partner for Norway on AU issues, and this has provided valuable input to our partnership with this regional body. I hope our cooperation with the AU can be developed further, both in Addis Ababa and here in South Africa. Norway has been a close partner of the AU since 2000, supporting organisational transformation, capacity-building and contributing to the civilian component in Peace Support Operations.

The Training for Peace programme is key here. It started up in 1995 as a cooperation between two South African organisations - ACCORD, who I mentioned earlier, and Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS), as well as the Norwegian Foreign Policy Institute (NUPI). Originally the programme focused on Southern Africa. Today it is a continent-wide programme covering countries in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa. Training for Peace is an international capacity building programme aimed at developing improved and self-sustaining African civilian and police capacity for peace support operations, and at strengthening the African Peace and Security Architecture. The programme's focus is on training, policy advice and research, with a major part of activities being carried out by African partners.

Training for Peace has strengthened African peace operations by training thousands of military, police and civilian personnel who have been or can be deployed in peacekeeping missions. The programme has become a regional and international resource for scholars and policy-makers alike and contributes to the advancement of policy development on peacekeeping.

Civilian specialists and police personnel are critical assets in multi-dimensional peace support operations. The goal of Training for Peace is to promote peace, security, good governance and development through improved and self-sustaining African civilian and police capacity for the management and implementation of peace support operations. To achieve this, the programme conducts training courses, carries out research and supports policy development. ACCORD and ISS are central partners in the programme, providing training for civilian experts and police respectively. The Kofi Anan Centre in Ghana is another important partner on the Continent.

3. Third, post-conflict reconstruction must be based on respect for the rule of law and human rights. Civilians are the most vulnerable party in fragile states and in armed conflict. Failure to investigate human rights abuses and bring perpetrators to justice signals that violence is tolerated and a culture of impunity may develop. It is absolutely crucial to contribute to strengthening the judicial system in countries emerging from conflict, as well as the international legal order. Norway played a central role in the process of establishing the International Criminal

Court (ICC), a key institution for dealing with these issues. We welcome the clear statements made by South Africa regarding support for the ICC and the Rome statute.

Rarely do we see conflicts where international law is more challenged than what is the case in Darfur. Norway has been actively involved in international efforts to stop the horror in that part of the continent. That is why we study the AU Darfur Panel's recent report with great interest. The panel deserves praise for its very thorough examination of the root causes of the conflict.

We hope the panel's efforts will lead to a renewed commitment from the parties concerned to finding a political solution to the Darfur conflict. We agree entirely that a political solution must be comprehensive and include all key stakeholders, and we appreciate the AU's decision to assign the chairperson of the Panel, H.E. Thabo Mbeki, former president of South Africa, the task of overseeing the implementation of the recommendations set out in the report.

Disarmament is vital in order to strengthen human security in a fragile state or in post-conflict situations. The proliferation of small arms contributes to sustaining armed conflicts and starting new ones. At the end of a conflict, large numbers of unexploded anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and artillery shells are left on the ground. We have seen the consequences of this in countries from Mozambique and Ethiopia to Bosnia and Afghanistan. They pose a constant threat to the civilian population, and prevent paths and roads from being used, fields from being ploughed and refugees from returning home.

South Africa and Norway have worked closely together and played an active role in the international process leading up to the Mine Ban Convention. This is now being taken forward in the effort to ensure implementation of the international Convention on Cluster Munitions, signed in Oslo in December 2008. I am very pleased that South Africa and Norway will cooperate on arranging a regional meeting in Pretoria in March next year on the universalisation of the Convention.

I am confident that this cooperation will prove fruitful, and that together we can

take the next step on humanitarian disarmament and really make a difference in the efforts to improve control of the production of, trade in and proliferation of small arms.

Every day, armed violence kills more than 2000 people. The large majority are civilians. This is no less than a global crisis, affecting the lives and security of hundreds of thousands of people, and threatening international peace and security.

The Norwegian Government is strongly committed to humanitarian disarmament. Our engagement in the fields of landmines, cluster munitions, small arms and other related areas is motivated from the unacceptable harm to civilians caused by the use of these weapons.

Norway supports the immediate start of negotiations on a new international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). An efficient and robust framework regulating trade in conventional arms is an important element in the effort to combat armed violence. The treaty should make arms exporters and importers

responsible for ensuring that they do not deal in arms that may later be used in ways that violate international law. We think it is vital that as many countries as possible participate in the negotiation process while at the same time preventing that any single country is able to block a negotiated result.

Norway and UNDP will host a high-level conference on Armed Violence and the Millennium Development Goals in Oslo 21-22 April next year. The purpose of the conference is to agree on a framework for practical action - between governments, international organisations and civil society - to strengthen capacities for armed violence prevention and to achieve measurable reductions in armed violence by 2015. Considering South Africa's leading role on the continent and your valuable experiences in preventing and reducing armed violence, I would like to invite the South African Government to play a prominent part at the conference.

I mentioned earlier that we see a trend of civilians increasingly being targeted in armed conflicts. I would like to end my intervention by bringing our attention to the most exposed. Women and children are

particularly severely affected in modern conflicts, all the more so because abuse is systematically used as a weapon of war. Sexual violence as a strategy of war increases the level of conflict and prevents women from taking part in the reconciliation process. The UN has addressed this in Security Council resolutions 1820 and 1325. Following up these resolutions and making sure that violations of them are totally unacceptable and will have serious implications is absolutely vital in conflict resolution. It is a responsibility we take most seriously. This is also an area where I believe Norway and South Africa together can really make a difference in our future cooperation.

South Africa and Norway have indeed had a common engagement on peace and security in Africa for many years. Our bilateral cooperation is a key priority for Norway, both on the African continent as well as in the UN system, on issues of peace and security. We have a partnership that we believe is mutually beneficial, and that should be further developed in order to draw upon our joint capacities and competence.

Thank you for your attention

