

## VIII OWG-SDGs

### BRAZIL AND NICARAGUA

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota  
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations**

**"Conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and the promotion of  
durable peace, rule of law and governance"**

Mr. Chairman,

Nicaragua and Brazil align themselves with the statement made by Bolivia on behalf of G77 + China.

No State present in this room would disagree with the understanding that an environment of stability and peace is essential for development.

Likewise, there can be no doubt about our commitments to multilateral initiatives that contribute to sustainable peace. – and in the particular case of Brazil, be it in the field of peacekeeping, in the Peacebuilding Commission, which I currently have the honour to chair, or in our activities as elected member of the Security Council during different mandates.

We all agree, as well, that our discussions must be based on "The Future We Want", the consensual outcome of Rio+20 which sets out what we mean by sustainable development, with poverty eradication at the center of our attentions, and establishes the areas and parameters for the SDGs.

That the Rio outcome document has no specific pillar or goal on peace and security was not the result of negligence, nor an indication that peace and stability are not important -- it was rather a conscious decision that issues of peace and security should not be at the core of this debate, so as not to deviate our focus from dealing with the essential social, economic and environmental challenges of sustainable development.

Whether this is an appropriate forum to deal with peace and security issues is therefore a legitimate question.

Inserting security issues in the discussion about the post-2015 development agenda will not bring us closer to peace and stability, and runs the risk of jeopardizing a process that can be extremely beneficial to development.

Mr. Chairman,

I now wish to comment on the TST Issues Brief prepared for this discussion. I regret to say that Brazil and Nicaragua find this document of limited assistance -- if not detrimental -- to our debate. It mixes issues of international and domestic bearings, it bases some conclusions in loose statistics and untested theories and it presents non-consensual concepts without caveats.

"Conflict" and "violence" are two very different subject-matters. While conflict and war are politically motivated, violence may result from individual actions, totally

alien to international affairs. While the response to conflict and war may call for international action, based on collective security and collective responsibility, the response to violence is a domestic-level affair, within the realm of public security and subjected to national laws.

Although international cooperation, upon request, is a valid tool to curb violence, we are dealing with different spheres of responsibility, to which different remedies should be applied. Conflict is case-specific and does not invite sweeping generalizations or "one size fits all" formulae. Mixing those concepts in the same discussion, and presenting them in the paper in an indiscriminate way do not contribute to productive debate.

Another conceptual confusion relates to the assertion that the nature of conflicts have changed "dramatically" in recent decades. This is not necessarily true. We have surely witnessed an increase in conflicts between groups inside States, but wars between States - or at least with the support of some States - remain commonplace. Just this week there is an article on Foreign Affairs on proxy wars.

This interpretation of the nature of conflicts may find its roots in a misperception according to which conflict and instability can only be generated in weaker or poorer regions. The truth is that historically, it is the militarily most advanced that have spread destruction on the widest scale. Poverty should not be a synonym for potential conflict and violence. We must reject this logic and remember that the mandate of this working group is to address poverty from a developmental perspective, not to subordinate it to security considerations and conditionalities.

We would have liked to see the document touch upon a number of issues related to peace and security that create instability and negatively impact the development process. Unfortunately, the text provides no analysis of (and in most cases not even reference to) the impact on development and poverty eradication of military expenditure, of funds diverted to the continued possession of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, of ill-conceived military strategies that promote unilateral interventions that disrupt stability and ruin governance structures, or of unilateral sanctions that impact progress and thwart perspectives of human development of the civilian population.

Mr. Chairman,

We acknowledge the interrelationship between development and the rule of law - as stated in the Declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law held in September 2012. It should be underscored that the Declaration recognizes that this is a reciprocal cause-effect dynamic: the rule of law is not only a cause of development, but a consequence thereof as well. And although the Declaration calls upon consideration of this issue in the post-2015 agenda, the Rio+20 document does not place Rule of Law at the centre of the debate on the SDGs.

We must avoid being prescriptive with regards to the responsibilities and duties of States on rule of law. By no means should we explain the difficulty of States in implementing goals related to sustainable development by passing judgment on observance of the rule of law.

There is no agreed or universal basis on how to assess "levels of implementation" of the rule of law. Analysis of this sort must be the result of more sophisticated, long-term, comprehensive understanding of the challenges specific countries face and of international law. Also, we cannot forget the need to address issues of governance and rule of law at the

international level through reforms of international organizations in order to increase the legitimacy, transparency, accountability and representation of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I highlight the importance of respecting the agreed thematic selection (I am referring to the three dimensions, social, economic, environmental) contained in "The Future We Want" as the centerpiece of this SDGs process. The unwarranted addition of issues and lack of conceptual clarity will not advance our common goals.

Brazil and Nicaragua are simply not convinced that peace and governance can be targeted and measured in ways that are consensual and that reflect the democratic plurality of nations, their histories, political circumstances and cultures, or even, for that matter, their human development achievements, which are quite varied, independently of the forms of Government.

Though enticing they may be, these matters are very hard to adequately frame in their own right. We should therefore concentrate in areas that have already been jointly recognized as the core elements of the sustainability debate, within the three pillars of the Rio+20 consensus.

Peace, Governance and the rule of law are obviously important, and may have a role to play, including at the level of global governance, with respect to issues directly related to the implementation of the SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. However, they should not, on their own, become the substantive focus of attention, lest we wish to completely change course midstream.

The targets presented in the TST Issue Briefing are all highly desirable. We can support most of them, but they are not elements of the sustainable development conceptual framework agreed to in Rio. In fact, we invite all to consider the Peacebuilding Commission as a locus for debating security and development in a comprehensive manner, as a long term challenge.

Democracy, plurality, human rights, social and economical progress and the primacy of rule of law are very dear values and goals to Brazil and Nicaragua. As in the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean, they were achieved with high sacrifices, commitments and dedication. We will uphold them in the UN as we do at home.

Thank you