

**Statement by Mr.Masood Khalid, Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the United Nations at the Open Debate on: The Role of Civil Society in Post-
conflict Peace-Building (22 June, 2004)**

Madam President,

We welcome your presence and compliment the Philippines Presidency for organizing this open debate. We thank the distinguished Secretary-General for his presence this morning and his important statement. We also acknowledge the presence of ECOSOC President and her valuable contribution. The non-paper circulated by Ambassador Baja has helped guide the Council's thematic deliberations today, which we hope would benefit all, in particular the victims of conflicts.

2. We are also happy to see two respected NGOs – 'Care International' and 'International Center for Transitional Justice' – participating in the discussion. We are appreciative of their work, both in the field and in the deliberative process.

Madam President,

3. The role and contribution of civil society in the UN processes has dramatically increased, especially in the last two decades. This ever-evolving relationship has been the subject of a number of reviews, discussions and studies. We express our appreciation to President Cordoso and other members of the Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relationships for their comprehensive report. It is a well-intentioned effort that will contribute a great deal in streamlining the engagement of civil society with the UN processes. The report – in particular the proposals contained therein – would be carefully studied. Hopefully, the general membership would pronounce itself on the report in due course; we look forward to detailed discussions on it by the Member States. My delegation would remain constructively engaged with the process.

Madam President,

4. Since the demise of cold war era, there has been an upsurge in the number and intensity of conflicts all over the world. Triggered by one or mix of several factors – economic deprivation, social disintegration, cultural discrimination and political diffidence – these conflicts engender complex crises in terms of human suffering, institutional instability and pervasive underdevelopment. There is an ever increasing need for the international community to evolve a comprehensive, integrated and coherent response, to these conflicts. In this context, Pakistan has already proposed the establishment of ad-hoc composite committees of the Security Council, General Assembly and ECOSOC to effectively address the complex crises in their political, economic and social dimensions.

5. Over the last decade, international peacekeeping operations in post conflict situations have vastly expanded in character to include multidimensional 'nation-building' – establishing or reviving state structures. This necessitates an interactive interface among the relevant UN entities led by the Security Council, and a host of

actors and stakeholders – local, national, regional and international, all working in synergy.

6. The Security Council through its debates and resolutions can guide further development of a peace-building doctrine. The international civil society organizations can help by sharing their field experience, best practices and lessons learnt, in the Council's deliberative process like Arria formula meetings, open debates, seminars and informal interaction.

Madam President,

7. While structural causes of conflict need to be addressed by states, a reinvigorated civil society – the bedrock of any state system – can make valuable contribution through fostering peace-building relationship and in consolidating the peace process. Civil society can work in tandem with the UN agencies on ground, in particular peace-keeping missions operating under the Security Council mandate, to help safe return of displaced population, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants and providing assistance for economic and social progress and re-establishing the rule of law. A truly credible civil society organization, enjoying confidence of all actors, can even facilitate stimulation of political dialogue and harnessing the energy of the people in a constructive direction.

Madam President,

8. Efforts to strengthen civil society is a necessity that can be facilitated by the international community in a number of ways – by assisting local communities and individuals in designing of programmes, providing capacity building services, access to financing, and establishment of legal entities like cooperatives. These local civil society organizations can serve as effective and efficient bridge between local authorities and the international community, including donor communities. They can even help in identifying priority reconstruction and development projects and monitor judicial utilization of resources.

9. Since each post-conflict situation presents a unique set of circumstances, there cannot be a 'one-size-fits-all' model of governmental/intergovernmental and civil society interaction. Therefore, the Council may consider tailoring such activities on a case-by-case basis, weaved into each individual peacekeeping mandate. Peace missions should expand their efforts to build on existing local resources and utilize local actors and civil society organizations. Proactive involvement of international civil society organizations beyond humanitarian assistance, and where appropriate, capacity building of local civil society, could be counter-productive.

10. The Council could consider enhancing the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms by making use of the contribution that the civil society may be able to offer. The special representatives of the Secretary-General, the Security Council's missions, peacekeeping operations, all could be asked to consult the local civil society in a structural way. They need to ensure that the civil society organization is broad-based, inclusive, participatory and most important of all indigenous. In fact the whole process should be domestically owned and driven rather than imposed from outside.

Madam President,

11. Finally, the fact that many conflict situations arise from the politics of poverty and scarcity cannot be ignored. Post-conflict peace building will inevitably have to be built upon the provision of hope to destitute and desperate people for a better tomorrow. Thus economic and social development must constitute an integral part of the international community's endeavours to promote peace and reconciliation on a sustainable basis. The UN and its family of organizations, as well as civil society, have a vital role to play in generating equitable socio-economic developments in these countries and regions for effective and sustainable peace building.

I thank you Madam.