

Enduring Development

Speech by

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Introductory remarks

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are here to discuss the state of the world today. This building, the Peace Palace, has witnessed great changes in the world. When Queen Wilhelmina opened this seat of international law in 1913, the Chairman of the Carnegie Foundation, Van Karnebeek, said: "This Palace will be a Temple of Peace, in which, even when the waves of war arise on the horizon, better sentiments can find a resort, in order to resume their flight after the gale, like the doves of Noah's Ark." And indeed, the waves of war were already on the horizon. The world had known almost a century of relative peace after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. However, in 1914, one year after the opening of the Peace Palace, the storm broke and the world order collapsed. During two world wars and a cold war, world peace was shattered by a number of ideologies: nationalism, national-socialism and communism. That age ended only 15 years ago only 576 kilometres from here with the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

The death struggle of communism was accompanied by the rise of globalisation. In other words, by increased global economic integration, which was driven by revolutions in technology and policy changes. During the nineties, globalisation pulled the world together and turned it into a "global village". Although this has lifted millions out of poverty in the last ten years, September 11th showed us the dangers of living in a global village. Terrorists used the very forces that drive globalisation no less skilfully than international corporations. The concept of national security has lost its meaning and must be redefined. A threat to one is a threat to all. When one of the houses in the global village is burning, the fire may well spread to the others. There is only international security now. And there can be international security only if there is international cooperation in general, and development cooperation in particular.

Development and security are strongly related – in both the short and the long term. As I will argue, in the short term, security is a precondition for development and in the long term the opposite is true – development is a precondition for security. This year's State of the World report provides an excellent illustration of this relationship.

The short term: security as a precondition for development

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the end of the Cold War, weak or failing states have become the single most important problem for the world order. Many local and religious conflicts went into hibernation during the great conflict between the two superpowers. After the Cold War, those conflicts heated up and triggered a string of international crises. Weak or failing states like Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Liberia confronted the world with human rights abuses, humanitarian disasters, regional conflict and waves of migration. The failed state of Afghanistan would even serve as the launch pad for an attack that shook the remaining superpower to its foundation. The peoples of all states have an interest in repairing weak or failing states and putting them on the path to sustainable development.

But before countries can embark on that path, they need security. When bombs fall, when bullets fly, when tanks are in the streets; any flower, any sign of prosperity, will be crushed under the boot of a soldier. You cannot start to rebuild your house while it is still on fire. The

end of large-scale armed conflict does not automatically bring security. The headlines from Iraq drive this point home every day. As the philosopher Baruch Spinoza said: "Peace is not just the absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice." The no man's land between war and peace is a dangerous place. Without timely security sector reform, extensive peacebuilding and appropriate reintegration of fighters, countries may fall back into violent chaos. And this would destroy any hope of development. In fact, during the first post-conflict decade, we see a 50% risk of violence returning.

The development community cannot afford to stay on the sidelines, as countries are driven into a "conflict trap" – a vicious circle of deprivation and violence. We must enter the no man's land between war and peace and pull countries in the right direction by providing crucial development expertise.

At present, the hands of the development community are tied by the current rules for ODA – official development assistance. Several security-related activities with direct relevance for development cannot be financed with ODA money -which is why I will work with a coalition of other countries to continue to push for a broader ODA definition.

An international consensus on these issues is emerging. The UN's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change placed heavy emphasis on this link between security and development. It has proposed a Peacebuilding Commission, which should act on early warning signals from countries sliding towards conflict. It should also coordinate activities in post-conflict situations. The Commission could be the forum where peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development come together. Although this is an interesting proposal, further details must be worked out. What we do not need is another bureaucratic layer - another talking shop.

What we do need is swift, decisive action and a focus on results. Such results are sorely needed because some countries are rapidly unravelling and putting development into reverse - for example, Afghanistan, where, until very recently, stability was still at risk. The international community has been working hard to stabilise this country, the former seat of international fundamentalism. The presidential elections in October were a success. They made representative, honest government possible. The Taliban continue to lose ground, and the people of Afghanistan now need and deserve adequate support to improve their daily lives. However, with all eyes on Iraq, Afghanistan once again seems to be disappearing off the international radar screen. In a few weeks, I will be visiting Afghanistan and will make a case for increased donor coordination and further expansion of the International Security Assistance Force, ISAF. This will help to make progress sustainable. The Netherlands will continue to do its share. Last Friday, we announced that the Netherlands will provide the means for air support to the ISAF mission and that we will commit a contingent of special forces to Operation Enduring Freedom. We are also considering increasing our ISAF participation next year by setting up a second Dutch Provincial Reconstruction Team. In view of past experiences, the international community cannot afford to abandon Afghanistan. That would be playing with fire.

The case of Afghanistan also illustrates the importance of a broader ODA definition. The establishment and training of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police took a long time. In the meantime, the lack of an internal security structure added to the general insecurity and lawlessness in large parts of the country. ISAF did not fill the security gap. Additional assistance and training for the Afghan National Army were needed, but donors did not meet those needs. The activities could not be financed with ODA money and this may have contributed to the lack of support for the security sector. Had we focused more on results and less on development dogmas, Afghanistan might have been both safer and more developed today.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The link between security and development has been a priority for me from the start. Last year, the Netherlands set up the Stability Fund. It allows us to make a fast, flexible contribution to peace, security and development.

But there's no time for complacency: the reality on the ground is in a constant state of flux. We constantly need to develop new partnerships and new tools. I am proud of the successful cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence in this area. I am also pleased to announce that this partnership will be expanded and deepened. A new joint security task force will initiate activities to speed up security sector reform in post-conflict countries. It will also serve as a national and international knowledge hub. Activities will include police training, improving civilian control over the army and training military personnel in human rights law.

Women deserve our special attention. No society can be at peace while women's human rights are violated. Gender-based violence affects as many as one out of three women worldwide. In conflict situations, many women are the target of sexual violence, often employed to humiliate, dominate or disrupt social ties. It is especially disturbing when UN peacekeepers violate the rights of women. During peace missions, clear safeguards should be in place to protect women. I will not hesitate to cut funding to UN organisations that allow such abuses or that do not actively foster gender equality. As I have emphasised on many occasions, the UN's commitment to improving the position of women must be both strong and visible. Protection and empowerment are the keys to unlocking women's potential and to giving them what they deserve – dignity.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the short term, a results-based development policy is based on security: security first, development later. I welcome the emerging international consensus on this point. The Netherlands will continue to be at the forefront of the discussion.

The long term: development as a precondition for security

In the long term, development is a precondition for security. We cannot continue to run from one crisis to the next, putting out fires. We must work on long-term solutions that will prevent the fire from breaking out in the first place. This is not only the right thing to do. It is also much cheaper. Because civil wars in developing countries cost 100 billion dollars a year – almost twice the annual amount of development assistance the international community provides.

The thematic priorities of my development policy are all aimed at strengthening the pillars of sustainable development - which is the basis for peace and stability. My policies on reproductive health and rights, HIV/AIDS, education, environment and water, make people stronger. Environmental fragility and water scarcity must be dealt with, since they weaken people by causing both human conflict and natural disaster. Healthy and well-educated citizens who live in a properly maintained environment can take control of their destiny. They will start companies to promote prosperity and will organise themselves through civil society to engage in public life.

Strong citizens will also hold their government to account. They will not accept wasteful wars. They will not accept widespread corruption or worthless bureaucracy. Like Dutch citizens, they expect visible, sustainable results from their governments. As Francis Fukuyama writes in his latest book, domestic demand for good institutions and policy reform is key to sustainable development. Development starts at home.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen,

I began by speaking about the past. I want to end with the future. And the future belongs to young people. The world is faced with the largest youth generation in history – 1.3 billion. Half are poor, a quarter live on less than a dollar a day. With our support, they can seize the opportunities of globalisation, find a good job in the formal sector and carve out a better life for themselves. Without our support, without hope, they might turn to both old and new ideologies of hate and despair. As we saw in the 20th century, these ideas destroy development and security – in both the short and the long term. At the dawn of the 21st century, world leaders discussed vital security issues and defined output targets for development – the Millennium Development Goals. This autumn, world leaders will again meet at the UN to discuss the development and security agenda for the future. Rather than arguing about the number of seats in the Security Council, they should focus on offering young people an agenda of hope and opportunity. This means winning the peace in the short term by providing security and winning the peace in the long term by achieving the Millennium Development Goals on time. Development cooperation is not only the right thing to do, it is also key to our own long-term security. The Minister for Development Cooperation is therefore also a minister for international security.

Thank you.

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