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Intervenção Secretária de Estado da Defesa Nacional, Ana Santos Pinto, na sessão de encerramento da Conferencia sobre Fragilidade de Estados: Recursos Naturais, Resiliência e Desenvolvimento

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It is a great pleasure to share with you this closing session, after what I am certain has been an intensive and very stimulating day for all. This first Conference on State Fragility, organized by the G Seven Plus and Clube de Lisboa, provided an outstanding panel of speakers and high-quality discussions.

I would like to publicly thank the organizers for the timeliness of this conference and for the kind invitation to join you today.

State fragility has been on the international agenda for most of the last three decades, linking political and security concerns with issues of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Fortunately, the expression **state failure has been abandoned as mainstream language.** We have gradually been moving away from the view of these states as risk in themselves to international security, and rather as being affected by risks that we have responsibility to address. This is an important gain for all.

In order to address to these challenges, **international forms of intervention**, based on international law, namely the UN Charter, have been adapted to respond to complex emergencies.

The **UN peacebuilding concept**, for instance, has put forward increasingly integrated approaches to state fragility, requiring the international community to act on different levels, at different speeds, and during longer periods. Furthermore, we have **added state-building to our lexicon** as a solution for the challenges many communities face, legitimizing different forms of international involvement.

Considering all these steps, why has state fragility lingered? Why are so many areas of our globe still immersed in complex processes of destabilization? And why are efforts by international organizations not delivering on the promised sustainable peace and stability?

In order to contribute to this debate, I would like to address two main issues.

The first is our shared understanding of state fragility.

The second are the limits of our approaches to state fragility and our view of sustainability.

Let me start by **our shared understanding of state fragility**.

Portugal has been actively participating in several **EU, UN and NATO missions with strong components of capacity-building and assistance for reforms**. Some of these missions are increasingly constituted both by civilians and military, operating side by side. I would mention EU missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, with a strong rule of law component, which are then complemented by NATO's presence in both countries with a stronger military component, focused on training local forces to deliver on the security of the state.

What these missions try to achieve is the creation of a context that allows the State to develop according to a specific understanding of its national and international tasks, including the responsibilities inherent to sovereignty.

This view has led us to **push forward legislative reforms** that, for example, give girls and women in Afghanistan the right to participate in public life. This view has also **trained police and armed forces** in Iraq to address security threats more effectively. This approach has **trained and equipped police and civil society** in Mali to address migration flows in a more effective and humane way.

These achievements have not solved all our problems and in some cases have created new ones. We are well aware of this, **but not doing anything is not an option**.

So, in my view, **understanding how useful our conceptual frameworks have been and where they need to be adjusted** is a first step towards making external interventions more in toon with local communities' aspirations and more effective in delivering regional and international peace and stability.

Addressing state fragility cannot only mean promoting reforms of state institutions. Adopting a new constitution, new laws on fighting corruption, creating a new police force, or training and equipping the military **will be insufficient**, **if we do not complement this institutional, formal dimension, with the substantive social-political robustness of the community**.

In sociological terms what I am advocating is for complementing the Weberian view of the state with a Durkheimian view that stands for **nation-building as a fundamental process side-by-side with state-building**.

Another conceptual clarification with important impact at the operational level is the **security-development nexus**. Although it makes perfect sense to advocate stronger attention to economic and social processes in achieving security, there are risks involved in fusing the two areas and it has been quite difficult to operationalize this nexus in a way that delivers long-term sustainability and stability.

One difficulty may occur from the fact that **neither side of the nexus has been fully willing to review their own approach nor to engage in a meaningful discussion as how these can be adapted to fit other purposes**.

To overcome this, our focus should be on the needs of an integrated and highly interdependent world, with volatility emerging from different corners, which requires that we push forward a new conceptualization of how peace and stability can be achieved.

Learning the right lessons from the experiences, including on the **role that self and mutual perceptions play** in this process is, in my view, a rather important step. We cannot afford to waste time and resources, as generations of young people grow up in poverty and violence and as our negative impact on the planet becomes more visible.

Which leads me to my second issue, that **I find central to understand the limits of our approaches to state fragility: our view of sustainability**.

This conference discussions addressed the issue of natural resources in the development of resilient societies. And I would like to commend the **large view of resources that the conference organizers put forward.** Moving from a strict view, focusing on extractive resources, to address also natural resources that are vital for human life, like water and arable land.

These are very different in nature and it is important that discussions acknowledge that. **We cannot treat water and land in the same way we treat oil or diamonds**. The commodification of nature is already a trend and is being increasingly integrated in the global market places.

Poorer societies will struggle to maintain their resources if put under pressure from the markets. **Nature is not something we can trade with, if we understand it as being a global common**, playing a fundamental role in sustaining human life.

But we continue dependent on what sovereign states do with their resources and no doctrine exists for a shared management of these global commons. Let me give you a illustration: Is the Amazon forest such a global common? Can we create institutions that decide and implement specific policies to safeguard the existence of this massive rain forest? There are no easy answers to these questions, although they are urgent.

We are also **looking at ways in which economic activity can continue to provide well-being for societies, in equilibrium with the environmental pressures of our planet**. Often, local communities have good answers to these challenges, and we need to develop strategies for sustainability that reflect these local views. There is no single solution to all human problems and no one-size-fits-all approach to these challenges.

So, when we address the challenges of economic and natural resources sustainability, we cannot have that discussion separated from the important discussions on the most relevant models for political and social organization, for processes of wealth redistribution that assure equal progress among all.

From the view point of security and defense, these approaches are critical. Preventing violent conflicts from arising and addressing the root causes of insecurity is always the preferred means of action. And having a military presence that creates the necessary conditions to address these longer-term processes is sometimes needed.

Our view is that a balance between military means and other political, economic and financial instruments continues to make sense, if guided by a view of human security, where individuals and communities have a voice and space to develop locally owned solutions.

I trust many of these issues were also part of your debates and that they may inform your won views for future action.

Thank you very much.