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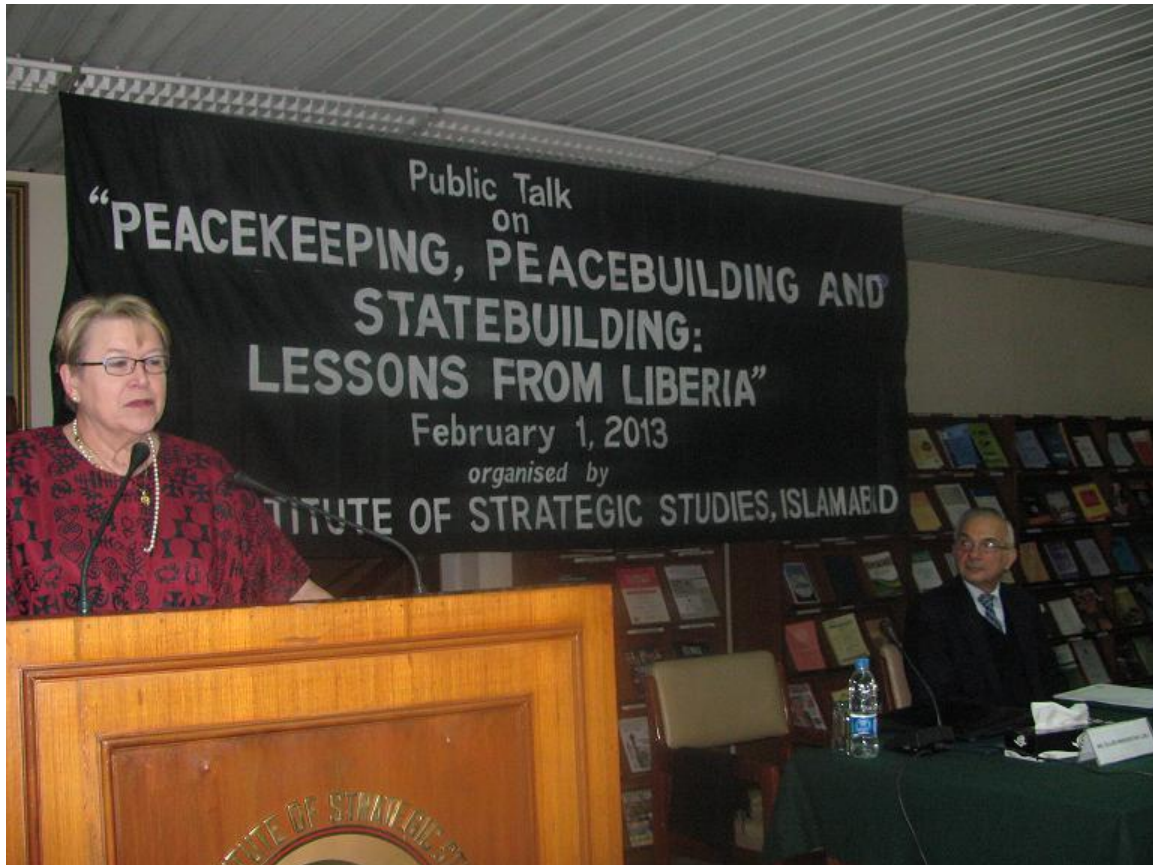
**Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and
State building in Afghanistan:
Lessons from Liberia**

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**THE INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES,
ISLAMABAD**

Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and State building in Afghanistan: Lessons from Liberia



The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), under its Distinguished Lecture Series, organized a public talk on February 1, 2013 titled *“Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and State building: Lessons from Liberia”* by Ms. Ellen Margrethe Loej, Chair of the International Board and Members Assembly of PLAN International and Former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Liberia.

The Director General, Ambassador (Retd), Ashraf Jehangir Qazi welcomed Ms. Ellen Margrethe Loej at the institute. In his welcome remarks he said that the topic under discussion is of immense important to us.

In her lecture, Ms. Loej, said it is vital that the peace is kept, a sustainable peace is built and encourage state building in fragile states. She said that peacekeeping, peacebuilding and state building are interlinked. She asserted that national governments with the help of international community will have to pursue all three simultaneously; peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development. She further said that challenges and solutions differ from state to state. Ms. Ellen believed that International community should engage with the fragile states in finding the solution of their particular predicaments. She said that focus should not be only to make or establish peace, but need to be on how to build or sustain peace. Ms. Loej stressed on the support for building national capacity. She also called on the Government of fragile states to establish priorities and to decide what practically can be achieved. Moreover, national ownership of these priorities is essential to ensuring sustainability at international level and for the national resources invested. She also stressed on close cooperation among international partners to ensure timely support for national priorities. She said that international community should respect these priorities set by the Government of fragile states and assist them in implementing them.

Ms. Loej also talked about challenges in Liberia where today police is facing shortage of necessary equipment to carry out their job. She said that training the police is not enough, trained police officers also need the means to function – transport, communication equipment etc. She also talked about the challenge of recurrent costs. She said that although recurrent costs are a national responsibility, but for fragile states with limited financial resources, support of international community becomes very important. In addition, she spoke about the need for administrative capacity building within the country. She said it is vital that international community should help the Government in addressing this capacity challenge.

Talking about Afghanistan, she stressed for national capacity building and sustainability in the country. She said that there is a need to focus on political issues, national security and peacebuilding in Afghanistan. Ms. Loej said that there is a

similarity between Liberia and Afghanistan with regard to support for security development sector. She also brought up the challenge of spending money directly between international partners and on the field, and marginalizing the government. In addition, she said that there is a close link between social, economic and security development in Afghanistan.

Question and Answer Session:

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session. In response to a comment that peacebuilding and peacekeeping is possible in North Afghanistan but not in South Afghanistan, and that there is a dearth of trust and hatred in Afghanistan, Ms. Loej said that, the situation in Afghanistan is much more complicated. It's a much more political agenda in Afghanistan. She said that political solution and security solution cannot stand alone unless and until peacebuilding element is not present in that. Moreover, she stated that we should continue with our efforts of engaging those people who do not want to have dialogue or talk. She stressed on rule of law and national capacity building in fragile states. Ambassador Qazi, the DG of ISSI, in his comments said that peacebuilding is necessary even in countries where situation is complex.

In answer to a question whether UN would play a greater role in post 2014 Afghanistan and is it possible for international community to leave Afghanistan in order to give the country a chance to build their own national capacity? Ms. Loej said that maybe or maybe not the UN would involve itself in Afghanistan after 2014. In her opinion she said that international partners who are currently engaging in Afghanistan may hesitate to be part of the UN in post 2014 Afghanistan due to number of reasons. Also, UN involvement in post 2014 Afghanistan will largely depends on the security concerns for its staff within the country. Furthermore, she said that it is not a wise thinking or a solution and even the Afghan government would not favor this idea that international community leaves Afghanistan in order to allow them to build themselves on their own. However, she said that international community or partners should assist

them in finding solutions of their problems and in national capacity building. Further, she said that it is important that necessary funds should be provided to the UN and its role to be welcome by domestic interlocutors. One of the guest commented that presently UN has no interest to engage itself in post 2014 Afghanistan, unless international community so desires.

Responding to a question whether it is viable to deemphasize peacekeeping and concentrate more on peacebuilding, Ms. Loej said that peacebuilding was supposed to be complimentary to peacekeeping. She said that peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two sides of the same coin.

Concluding the session, the Director General ISSI, Ambassador (Retd) Ashraf Jehangir Qazi thanked Ms. Ellen Margrethe Loej for her comprehensive presentation and audience for their active participation.

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