

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal Meeting of the Organizational Committee
16 December 2015

Chair's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 16 December, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission convened an informal meeting. The meeting was chaired by the H.E. Mr. Oloof Skoog, Chair of the PBC, and addressed the following agenda items: (1) Briefing by the Chair of the PBF Advisory Group; (2) Outcome of the work of the Working Group of Lessons Learned in 2015: Presentation by the Chair of the WGLL; (3) PBC Gender Strategy: Presentation of the light review of PBC's engagement on gender to date; (4) Reflections on the work of the Commission and informal adoption of the PBC reports on its ninth session.

Briefing by the Chair of the PBF Advisory Group

1. Mr. Nigel Roberts, Chairperson of the Secretary-General's Advisory Group of the PBF briefed the PBC on the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 27-28 October 2015.
2. The Chairperson of the Advisory Group outlined its priorities for the two-year tenure agreed at its first meeting in April 2015, including the implications to the Fund of the reviews on peacebuilding and on peace operations, and the links with International Financial Institutions and other major partners. He highlighted that the hosting of the second meeting of the Advisory Group by the World Bank demonstrated the commitments of both sides to strengthen their cooperation. He further noted that it was agreed at the meeting to identify specific countries in which the Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group of the World Bank and PBF will work together more closely; to collaborate on analysis and planning; and to continue to pursue the joint thematic review on employment and peacebuilding.
3. The Chairperson of the Advisory Group underscored the need to invest more efforts in the Fund, which in his view is the most creative and effective instrument to prevent and manage violence. He noted that the target of USD 100 million is a disproportional amount compared to the enormous sum spent for peacekeeping operations, and that in the face of the funding crisis, it is necessary to bring in non-traditional donors and private development foundations. He added that there is a need to address the fallback through the use of assessed contributions as the AGE report recommends. He asked the members of the PBC to do all they can to contribute to the PBF.
4. Mr. Fernandez-Taranco, ASG for Peacebuilding Support, noted that the holding of the Advisory Group meeting at the World Bank represents an important signal in strengthening the relations with the IFIs. He highlighted the discussion which took place at the meeting on how to leverage the work of PBF using financing as a driver of coherence. He added that the Advisory Group also recommended PBF's greater engagement in countries of emerging crises, in particular in Libya to kick start larger multilateral support. He noted that PBSO has already been acting on the Advisory Group's recommendations since the meeting.

5. Member States welcomed the presentations and expressed appreciation for the work of the PBF. Recognising the difficulties in financing the Fund, they stressed importance of joint work with the IFIs and of collaboration with sub-regional organizations such as ECOWAS. They underscored the importance of solid conflict analysis including economic drivers of conflict, and offered their assistance in this regard. One Member State noted that, at the retreat on the peacebuilding review organized by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in October, there was a willingness to look at combinations of financing modalities. Another delegation announced its contribution to the PBF while another hoped to make a contribution in the new year. One Member State was keen on exploring new joint funding opportunities with the PBF.

Outcome of the work of the Working Group of Lessons Learned in 2015: Presentation by the Chair of the WGLL

6. The Chair invited the representative of Japan, Chair of the PBC Working Group On Lessons Learned, to present the report of the WGLL on “Institution-building: the challenges for the UN system”.

7. The Chair of the WGLL highlighted the importance of the topic since functioning institutions were the core of stable societies. Welcoming the flexible working methods adopted by the Commission in 2015, he noted that the WGLL had adapted such flexibility by convening a thematic session on Afghanistan. Referring to the discussions on the report, which took place on 2 December, he recalled that delegations had recognized the importance of discussing institution building. They had stressed the importance of national ownership and inclusivity in this regard and had highlighted the need for stronger measures for prevention. The Chair of the WGLL reported the concern expressed by one delegation during that meeting regarding the relapse of violence in one of the countries on the agenda despite the efforts in the area of institution-building.

PBC Gender Strategy: Presentation of the light review of PBC’s engagement on gender to date

8. The Chair invited Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, and Mr. Fernandez-Taranco to brief the delegation on the findings of the first phase of the development of the PBC Gender Strategy. He stated that the PBC should strive to adopt a light and strategic strategy which provides guidance tailored to the PBC’s specific role and mandate.

9. Ms. Puri welcomed the collaborative effort between the PBSO and UN Women in drafting the PBC Gender Strategy and stated that the recent reviews and resolutions were an urgent call for action for women’s participation for sustainable peace and stability. She stressed the need to improve all collective efforts in this regard and underscored the unique role of the PBC in this regard. Ms. Puri stated that the light review of the PBC’s engagement on gender to date had revealed a discrepancy between formal commitments and the implementation. She noted that there was a lack of a systematic engagement and that actions were tied to the Chair’s personal engagement and the capacity of national actors and country teams. She further stated that the light review found that gender issues were often sidelined in times of crisis.

10. Mr. Fernandez-Taranco, welcomed the drafting of the strategy as an example of effective cooperation within the UN system and expressed appreciation for the strong leadership role of UN Women in advocating for the implementation of gender related objectives of the recent UN reviews. He stated the strengthening and systematization of the integration of gender perspectives in a substantive and cross-cutting manner as one of the recommendations of the light review. Furthermore, he noted that the light review recommended an active leadership role of the Chair, regular consultations with civil society, the national gender machinery, and gender experts at country level, as well as dedicated technical expertise and funding for gender responsive peacebuilding. He highlighted the importance of the promotion of allocations for such purposes in line with the target of 15% for the accelerated implementation of the Seven-Point Action Plan and all relevant resolutions. He stated that the second phase of the development of the PBC Gender Strategy would start in January and would conclude in the adoption of the draft in June 2016.

11. Member States welcomed the drafting of the PBC Gender Strategy and expressed support through the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in different contexts.

Reflections on the work of the commission and informal adoption of the PBC reports on its ninth session

12. The Chair presented to the Member States the draft report of the PBC on its ninth session. He welcomed the new structure, which building on the forward agenda of the PBC report on its eighth session, ensured an increased accountability. He noted that the Report reflects the range of policy and country-specific works of the PBC which had aimed at convening more strategic and substantive meetings, as well as work in a more flexible manner. In this connection, he referred to the discussions the Commission convened on Papua New Guinea, Burkina Faso and Somalia as important opportunities for the PBC to pilot new approaches. He also referred to the work done by the Commission to improve its working methods, in particular in terms of establishing a more transparent and long-term calendar of meetings. He also referred to the PBC's role during the Ebola outbreak, the conclusion of the first phase of the PBC Gender Strategy and the inclusion of civil society actors in the deliberations, such as during the meeting on youth, which took place in November.

13. Looking forward, the Chair highlighted the importance of strengthening of the role of the PBC as a platform that draws upon the whole UN system. Finally, he referred to the Forward Agenda, noting that it reflects the Commission's determination to follow-up on several thematic and country-specific approaches that were initiated in 2015.

The Committee informally adopted the Report.

14. Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco congratulated the Chair and the members of the Committee on the informal adoption of the Report and echoed the Chair in welcoming its new dynamic structure. He stated that the forward agenda was ambitious and that the PBC needed to show its political weight with the view of becoming more effective. He underscored the importance of preventive measures and stressed the comparative advantage of the PBC and the PBF in this regard. He stated that more had to be done in order to truly make use of the diplomatic platform.
