Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
6 November 2013

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 6 November 2013, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission convened an informal meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and addressed the following agenda items: (1) Briefing by and interaction with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation on the Draft Outcome Report of the Workshop: "The Peacebuilding Commission's impact and engagement"; (2) Other matters.

Briefing by and interaction with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation on the Draft Outcome Report of the Workshop: "The Peacebuilding Commission's impact and engagement"

1. The Chairperson welcomed the Executive Director of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Ms. Annika Söder, connected by video from Uppsala, Sweden, who organized and hosted an Ambassadorial-level workshop on 18 and 19 October in Greentree Estate. That workshop represented a first step in the partnership between the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, the PBC and the PBSO with a view to initiating preparations for the 2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture. The Chair noted that the workshop represented a good opportunity for participants to engage in an interactive and constructive exchange around key aspects related to the impact of the PBC and the prospective improvements needed in its forms of engagement. He informed member states that, due to space limitation, a number of members of the Organizational Committee could not be present at the workshop and that this discussion represents an opportunity to ensure that all members are aware of and engaged in informing next steps towards the 2015 Review.

2. Ms. Söder thanked the Chair for the opportunity to present the draft outcome report to the members of the Organizational Committee. She opened her presentation by noting that the purpose of the workshop was to bring together varied forward-looking perspectives of relevance to the 2015 review. She further noted that during the workshop, there was general agreement on the important role that the Peacebuilding Architecture has played in clarifying the concept of peacebuilding and in giving it a more prominent role on the international agenda. She reported that other important elements discussed included the respective roles of member states and the Secretariat in the work of the Commission, the relations between the Commission and the charter bodies (in particular, the Security Council), the need to explore more flexible forms of engagement, and the importance of expanding peer-to-peer exchanges. Ms. Söder concluded that the workshop could be considered a beginning of an emerging consensus on a forward-

looking perspective. She emphasized that the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation stands ready to assist member states in their efforts to review and strengthen the Peacebuilding Architecture.

3. Member States welcomed the presentation by Ms. Söder and the draft report prepared by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. Members expressed appreciation for the work of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and PBSO in taking the first, informal, steps in preparation for the 2015 review. Members focused their interventions on the following issues:

- Role of the PBC: the Commission's contribution in many country situations is noticeable but not sufficiently recognized. As a political body, the PBC represents a unique platform to identify strategic gaps in peacebuilding efforts and to bring together key actors to help address these gaps. There is understanding that this role can be fulfilled through a strategic approach to advocacy, resource mobilization and forging coherence. In reviewing the role of the PBC in resource mobilization, there is a need to address the gap between expectations and reality. The PBC should draw attention and support to enabling the countries to mobilize domestic resources as well as resources from within and outside the UN System.

- Forms of engagement: There is certainly much room for improvement. The Commission should aim for more flexible forms of engagement and current structures should be reassessed. The PBC's engagement must be tailored to the needs in the field. The Commission should work to strengthen its links with the Security Council, General Assembly, and ECOSOC. Attention should be given to monitoring and evaluation and lessons learned, with a particular emphasis on the added value of the work of the PBC on the ground.

- 2015 review scope: The review should take into account ongoing developments in peacebuilding support within and the challenges facing the UN system. It should also take into consideration relevant discussions in connection with the post-2015 development agenda. In addition, the review could also address the implications of global developments, such as the New Deal, for the UN and the countries on the agenda.

4. Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, ASG for Peacebuilding Support, noted the need to strengthen the links between the PBC, PBF and PBSO with the wider UN system. She indicated that a UN Policy Committee discussion to this end is scheduled for early 2014. ASG Cheng-Hopkins also noted that the mandate of the 2015 review, as stated in the PBC founding resolutions, limits the scope of the review to the Peacebuilding Architecture established in 2005.

5. Both Ms. Söder and Ms. Cheng-Hopkins alluded to next steps in the collaboration between the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and PBSO in preparation for the 2015 Review, taking forward the themes and priorities identified during the Greentree retreat and the inputs during the OC meeting. These include informal workshops and discussions on specific topics related to the strategic functions of the PBC, its field orientation and its forms of engagement. They noted that there is a need to ensure synergy between the different efforts leading to the 2015 Review. Ms. Cheng-Hopkins also stressed that PBSO

will be in contact with member states in order to put into practice some of the ideas addressed in the workshop, even before the 2015 Review.

Other matters

6. The Chair updated the Committee on the status of the chairmanship of the Central African Republic Configuration. He informed that he has received a letter from the Prime Minister of CAR nominating a member of the Configuration and that, in accordance with established practice, he undertook informal consultations with members of the Committee. However, consensus could not be attained around the nomination made by the Government of CAR and the Chair has written back to the Prime Minister with the results of the consultations expressing readiness and commitment to continue to work with the Government of CAR to identify the next chair.

7. The Chair informed member states that the timeline and draft outline of the report of the PBC to the General Assembly and the Security Council on its seventh session would be circulated to all members. He noted that a process of informal/expert-level consultations around an initial Chair's draft is planned for the second week of December and a meeting of the Organizational Committee to informally adopt the report is scheduled for 20 December.

8. The Chair also informed that, as indicated in his mid-year assessment report, a thematic meeting of ECOSOC and PBC was scheduled to take place before the end of the year. The PBC Chairs' Group and the ECOSOC Bureau agreed that in order to ensure that the meeting becomes useful and relevant to the work of both the PBC and ECOSOC, it would need to be carefully planned and that its outcome could be followed-up and reinforced with a series of activities. However, in view of difficulties in scheduling and the need to ensure proper planning and follow-up, the Chair and the President of ECOSOC agreed to defer the joint thematic meeting to a date to be determined and announced early in 2014. The Chair announced that member states would receive shortly an action plan for joint ECOSOC/PBC collaboration in 2014.

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