

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
17 October 2012

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 17 October 2012, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an informal meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Chair of the PBC, and, subsequently, by the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Vice-Chair of the PBC. The meeting addressed the following agenda items: (1) Briefing by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group on the meeting of the Group; (2) Resource mobilization: Follow-up to the Committee's discussion of 9 July 2012; a) Partnership with the International Financial Institutions, b) Mapping and national donor coordination; (3) Other matters.

The Chairperson opened the meeting by expressing gratitude for all those member states who participated in the High-Level Event on "Peacebuilding: way towards sustainable peace and security" (which took place on 25 September 2012) and who contributed to its success. He underlined that the Event has certainly brought peacebuilding into focus and has helped generate the much needed attention at a high level. He also stressed that the contributions made by the Honourable Heads of State and Government, by Ministers and by the Secretary-General confirmed the need to keep policy and decision makers regularly engaged in discussing the future direction of United Nations peacebuilding agenda. Finally, the Chairperson expressed his gratitude to those delegations who constructively engaged during the development of the substantive declaration which was adopted at the High-Level Event.

Briefing by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group on the meeting of the Group:

1. The Chairperson welcomed Ambassador Jan Knutsson, Chair of the PBF Advisory Group (AG) participating via video conference from Geneva, and invited him to brief the Committee on the outcome of the meeting of the PBF Advisory Group which took place on 8 and 9 October.

2. Ambassador Knutsson, noted that the meeting of the Advisory Group of 8 and 9 October addressed the three priorities that the Group has set for 2012-13, namely: 1) How to make the PBF more catalytic in its financing, in particular through closer relations with International Financial Institutions; 2) How to further improve the Fund's monitoring, evaluation and communications; and 3) How to improve the Fund's strategic positioning. With regard to the relations with the IFIs, the Chair noted that the AG underlined the importance of supporting government-driven plans. Referring to the case of Liberia, the Chair noted that there is a reciprocal interest for the PBF and the Bank to work more closely. An area such as the public expenditure review which the Bank conducted in Liberia

represents an example for such collaboration. On monitoring and evaluation, the Chair reported that the AG welcomed independent evaluations of the PBF results in Burundi and CAR, noting that these evaluations have come to appreciate the catalytic role which the PBF could play in support of peacebuilding activities. In this regard, the Chair also referred to a number of recommendations which have emerged from this discussion including: (i) the need to increase the role of and support to the Joint Steering Committees; (ii) the need to enhance PBSO's support for programme design; (iii) the need to enhance communications concerning PBF results. Finally and addressing the strategic positioning of the Fund, the Chair noted that the AG encouraged the PBF to focus its activity on a limited number of countries, keeping in mind the strong connection between PBF and PBC but also considering giving attention to countries belonging to the g7+ initiative. The Chair concluded by informing that, in early 2013, the AG will undertake two field visits, to Guinea and Nepal, in order to better understand the challenges facing the PBF at the country level. He also informed that in 2013, the Terms of Reference of the Fund will be reviewed through an independent process, yet in close consultations with Member States.

3. The Assistant-Secretary-General underlined that the PBF has found its niche and identity. She highlighted that, looking at the portfolio of the past two years, the Fund has clearly demonstrated that it is fast, catalytic and risk taking instrument.

4. Members of the Committee welcomed the briefing of the Chair of the AG. They expressed strong support for the work of the PBF and focus their remarks on the following issues:

- The PBF should support coordination efforts among peacebuilding actors in the field, in particular IFIs. Country-level collaboration with the World Bank should be further strengthened.
- The catalytic role of the PBF is widely recognized.
- The review of the Fund's ToRs in 2013 will be an important opportunity to address issues pertaining to the peacebuilding impact of the PBF.
- There is a need to broaden the donor base for the PBF and to explore how possibly to facilitate in-kind contributions.

Resource mobilization: Follow-up to the Committee's discussion of 9 July 2012:

5. The Chairperson recalled the policy discussion which the Committee had on 9 July on the "Role of the PBC in resource mobilization" and invited members to consider two aspects that would further strengthen the PBC's function in the area of "resource mobilization", namely: a) Partnership with the International Financial Institutions; and b) Mapping of resources and promotion of national donor coordination systems in countries on the PBC agenda.

a) Partnership with the International Financial Institutions

6. The Chairperson briefed member states on the visit that he undertook, together with members of the PBC Chairs' Group, to the World Bank Headquarters in Washington on 10 September 2012. The Chairperson noted that, during the meetings with senior officials of the Bank, as well as a number of Executive Directors, the discussions focused on developing mutual understanding of the complimentary of the roles of the PBC and the World Bank in the countries on the Commission's agenda. He also noted that there are concrete ideas to take forward the collaboration, both at the policy and country-levels. The Chair informed that a detailed summary of those discussions would be circulated to member states in due course.

7. The Representative of the World Bank noted that the visit represented an important opportunity for both the Bank and the PBC to better understand their respective views on the potential areas of collaboration. The Bank highlighted that issues such as coordination of activities and alignment of the respective strategies could be of particular and mutual benefit.

8. Members of the PBC Chairs' Group, who participated in the visit, focused their interventions on the importance of aligning the Bank's Country Assistance Strategies and the PBC's Instruments of Engagement.

9. Member states welcomed the briefing and underlined the imperative of having stronger relations with the IFIs. They also underlined the importance of ensuring sustainability of financing for peacebuilding-related initiatives. A member state also suggested the need to identify practical ways to engage with non-traditional donors.

10. Moving to the next part of this sub-item, the Chair informed members of the recent meeting he had in New York with Vice President of the African Development Bank (AfDB) for Country & Regional Programmes and Policy and he asked PBSO to brief the Committee on the main areas of progress since the PBC Chairs' Group visit to AfDB in November 2011.

11. PBSO presented to member states a note describing the progress in the collaboration between PBC and AfDB. The note, which follows a series of meetings and exchanges between the two institutions addressed the following areas: 1) Joint advocacy and resource mobilization: both institutions agreed to undertake joint advocacy in support of countries on the PBC agenda (for example, by supporting donors/partners conferences); 2) Job creation: PBC and AfDB are expected to identify pilot countries on the PBC agenda where the two institutions can undertake joint initiatives; 3) Funding and complementarities with the PBF: concrete proposals are currently discussed by PBSO and the AfDB's Fragile States Facility to take forward this area; 4) Complementarities between and alignment of the PBC instruments of engagement and the AfDB Country Strategy Papers; 5) Support to countries on the PBC agenda in the mining sector and possible areas of collaboration between the two institutions in the area of natural resources management; 6) Lessons learned and experience-sharing between post-conflict countries in Africa: building on the experience of the High-level Meeting of Kigali of November 2011.

12. Member states stressed the need to continue to strengthen the relations between the PBC and AfDB and called for concrete steps to follow-up on the areas of potential collaboration presented by PBSO.

b) Mapping and national donor coordination

13. The Chairperson recalled that mapping and national donor coordination was among the key areas which the Committee found to be of particular interest as a potential contribution of the PBC within the context of its mandate of resource mobilization. In this regard, and also recalling the meeting of the Working Group on Lessons Learned of 3 July which addressed this topic, the Chair invited the Chair of the WGLL to brief the Committee on the findings from that discussion.

14. The Chair of the WGLL informed that the Working Group is working on a new way of collecting aid reporting that could be used to identify funding gaps in a timely manner compared to what the current systems allow. He informed the Committee of the difficulties that the WGLL has encountered in implementing this new process drawing on an initial mapping exercise undertaken in coordination with the Guinea Configuration (e.g. the fact that donors report on projects using different formats, or the problem of incorporating non-monetary contributions). However, he noted that the WGLL has recommended to the PBC to consider advocating with donors for accurate and frequent reporting of the aid flow. He also highlighted that the mapping should not be seen as the end point of the PBC's work but should, instead, be used as a tool to prioritize areas for resource mobilization and for encouraging the countries concerned to design their national resource mobilization strategies. Finally, he noted that the PBC should advocate for a more systematic Aid Information Management System (AIMS).

15. Member states welcomed the briefing and commended Japan for the analysis of lessons learned from the mapping exercise for Guinea. A member noted that Japan's position as a major international donor as well as former Chair of the PBC places it in a unique position to lead the WGLL on the subject matter.

16. PBSO briefed the Committee on the AIMS projects being undertaken in Liberia with funding from the European Union. PBSO explained that AIMS is intended as a system to provide better aid information for the countries on the agenda of the PBC with a particular focus on funding flows towards peacebuilding priorities. In order to have a clearer picture of capital aid flows to countries on the PBC agenda, PBSO stressed that concerned governments should be in the lead on aid information management and donors' coordination. At the same time, development actors should commit to providing current and relevant information to facilitate the identification of funding gaps. PBSO noted that AIMS will provide an online tool, a dashboard, displaying investments made by development partners in key peacebuilding processes. Using this tool, the government concerned and the PBC will be able to identify resource gaps for critical peacebuilding activities and, hence, support national resource mobilization efforts.

17. ASG Cheng-Hopkins stressed that the goal of AIMS is critical and expressed her gratitude to the EU for its decision to provide funding for the project. She noted that, this exercise will bring coherence and could enhance the efforts of the PBC in the marshalling of resources. She concluded that the success of AIMS will rely on the commitment of government and donors to collect and share information.

18. The representative of Liberia confirmed that AIMS is an important instrument which reinforces his government's ownership of the peacebuilding process, which also corresponds to the country's commitment in the context of the "New Deal" and as a member of the g7+. The representative of the European Union highlighted that this project has a great importance for donors' coordination. The EU welcomed the work of PBSO and called for increased efforts to conclude the project in a timely manner, and inquired about the status of a similar project for the Central African Republic. PBSO explained that there were delays in the case of the second pilot country, the Central African Republic, which is being addressed with the relevant officials in the country. The representative of CAR informed the committee that his government is fully committed to this project.

19. The Chairperson thanked member states for their important contributions to the various items discussed in the meeting. He informed that the third topic identified in the 2012 Roadmap of action under the category of resource mobilisation, namely the engagement with philanthropic organizations, foundation and private sector, would be addressed by the Committee in due course.
