

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
20 July 2012

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 20 July 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 had the following agenda items: (1) Consultations on the upcoming SG report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict; (2) Mid-year assessment of progress in the implementation of the 2012 Roadmap of Actions (3) Other matters.

The Chairperson recalled the open debate convened by the Colombian Presidency of the Security Council on Thursday, 12 July, on the occasion of the annual report of the PBC on its fifth session, as well as the informal interactive dialogue organized by the Presidency of the Council on 13 July. He noted that both the debate and the interactive dialogue were extremely useful, as they highlighted a number of important issues about the potentials of the PBC, the challenges it faces and the relations between the Council and Commission. The Chair expressed appreciation to all members of the Commission who participated in the debate and shared their perspectives. He also expressed gratitude to the members of PBC who are also members of the Security Council, the chairs of the various configurations and the countries on the agenda for sharing their views very candidly and constructively during the informal interactive dialogue. Most importantly, he expressed appreciation to Colombia for taking the initiative, showing leadership and bringing the discussion of the PBC to a whole new level within the Security Council.

Consultations on the upcoming SG report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict:

1. The Chairperson recalled that, in its PRST of 13 October 2010, the Security Council requested the Secretary General to submit a report by October 2012 on further progress made in implementing his agenda for action which he introduced in his 2009 report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict. The PRST has requested the SG to take into consideration the views of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Chair then invited PBSO to present to the Organizational Committee an overview of the emerging issues and recommendations of the report.

2. PBSO outlined the contents of the upcoming report on peacebuilding, which would offer an update on progress toward implementing the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's reports on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (2009) and women's participation in peacebuilding (2010). Overall, progress toward fulfilling the recommendations has been made, enabling the UN to provide better, faster and more coherent support to countries transitioning from conflict. On the issue of women's

participation in peacebuilding, progress toward goals has been varied. There has been a strong interest within the UN system to implement the 2010 report's Seven-Point Action Plan, but more needs to be done, including in the areas of access to justice and funding for gender-sensitive peacebuilding projects. The complexity and multidimensional nature of conflicts as well as their changing nature have presented challenges to peacebuilding. But new opportunities have also emerged, including increased civil society engagement and regional approaches. PBSO highlighted the report's main themes: institution-building, inclusivity and sustained international support and mutual accountability. PBSO outlined some of the main messages contained within each theme.

3. Member States welcomed the presentation and their comments focused on the following issues:

- Member States stressed that peacebuilding should be grounded in the principles of national ownership and leadership. Several Member States suggested that the international community could do more to support this through capacity building and increased coordination and financing of their peacebuilding programmes. Members observed that the Peacebuilding Commission could play an important role in supporting national ownership. Some Member States also highlighted efforts by the g7+, a group of conflict-affected states, to advance these principles.
- Some members expressed the hope that the report will highlight the progress made and challenges faced by PBC in the implementation of the recommendations of the 2010 Review.
- Members noted the focus on inclusivity in peacebuilding and called for increased integration of women, youth and civil society groups in peacebuilding. Specific attention should be given to women, including, for example, increasing their political empowerment and participation in local dispute resolution processes. Some Members suggested that the PBC capitalize on its comparative advantage in connecting with and convening a variety of actors, including at the country level.
- Several delegations urged PBSO to highlight the continuing challenge of demonstrating quick impact of peacebuilding programmes, while focusing on longer-term institution building and reestablishment of core government functions.
- Some Members noted that job creation for women and youth remains a key short-term peacebuilding priority.
- Member States urged the report to be comprehensive and present a clear way forward for the peacebuilding agenda. Several Member States acknowledged the potential for benchmarks and indicators to be helpful in monitoring progress on peacebuilding goals and demonstrating quick impact. Other Member States warned against fitting rigid monitoring systems on inherently flexible peacebuilding processes that may also overwhelm fragile institutions in post-conflict states.
- Several Members noted the augmented attention and support that peacebuilding has gained in recent years. Some Members suggested that the UN—and the PBC in

particular—deepen partnerships, including with international institutions, non-traditional donors and groups of Member States. However, other Members responded by saying that the UN should be reserved in its outreach to and collaboration with other groups, including the g7+.

- One delegation inquired about the rationale behind the deletion of the word “immediate” from the title of the report and if that deletion could affect the scope of the report. PBSO explained that, regardless of the change in the title, the report will not lose its focus on the “immediate” and it would emphasize the crucial link between immediate and long-term peacebuilding challenges.

Mid-year assessment of progress in the implementation of the 2012 Roadmap of Actions

4. The Chair recalled that, following the working-level meeting of the OC of 22 May, an exercise was launched whereby the Chairs of all PBC configurations were requested to submit their own assessments of the work undertaken and challenges faced by the various configurations. The Chair noted that the exercise was very important and was intended:

- To help keep all members of the Committee fully engaged in the work of the PBC. The working-level meeting on 22 May and today’s envisaged discussion represent crucial steps towards the much needed “Whole of PBC” approach and broad ownership of the PBC processes and engagement with the countries on the agenda;
- To allow Member States an opportunity to undertake course correction, if needed, and enable the Commission to pursue a results-based approach to its work, in implementation of relevant recommendations from the 2010 Review.

5. The Chair, invited Member States to reflect on the two documents they have received prior to the meeting: 1) a detailed Mid-Year assessment report, developed on the basis of inputs from the Chairs of the various configurations and organized around the agreed three priority areas, and 2) the Chair’s preliminary findings and suggested deliverables until the end of 2012, developed in order to facilitate the discussions. The latter document drew on the detailed assessment report and seeks to suggest specific deliverables which the PBC could undertake ahead of the end-of-year assessment in December 2012.

6. In their interventions, Member States focused on the following issues:

- A number of Member States welcomed the mid-year assessment as a useful instrument to keep the OC better informed of the work of the CSCs, ensure a collective ownership of all members, maintain focus on priority areas and facilitate course adjustment in the implementation of relevant recommendations from the 2010 Review. A few members, however, cautioned against transforming the assessment into a bureaucratic exercise.
- A few members welcomed the focus of the assessment on resource mobilization. In particular, Member States noted that the Commission, working with national

authorities, should continue its mapping of resource flows to identify gaps in resources. Members also stressed the importance of enlarging the donor base by approaching non-traditional donors in a more systematic way, including through national leaderships.

- A number of delegations noted that the assessment represents a useful opportunity to follow-up on the interactive dialogue of 13 July between PBC and Security Council on finding ways to strengthen the relations between the two bodies.
- Several Members also emphasized the need for the PBC to pay particular attention to the upcoming Report of the SG on Civilian Capacities and to be prepared to contribute to the subsequent consideration of this Report at the General Assembly.
- With regard to the working methods of the Commission, one delegation noted that steering groups within various CSCs are useful but, in order to avoid the creation of additional layers in peacebuilding processes, they should not be institutionalized.

Other matters

7. The Chair informed that, following the nomination by the African Group of Zambia as a Vice Chair of the PBC and, on the basis of silence procedure, Zambia has been elected as Vice-Chair effective 10 July. The Chair extended warm congratulations to the African Vice-Chair.

8. The Chair noted that Member States should have received invitation letters to and the concept note for the High-level Event scheduled for 25 September (4:00 – 5:30 PM). He informed that invitations addressed by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to her counterparts would follow shortly. The Chair also noted that strong recommendation of all members to their respective capitals on the need for highest level representation will be critical.
