

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
27 April 2012

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 27 April 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 addressed the following agenda items: (1) Synergies between the PBC and PBF; (2) Other matters. Before proceeding to consideration of the first agenda item, the Chairperson reminded members of the Committee that, on 17 April, the Committee elected Sweden as the new Chair of the Liberia Country Configuration following the resignation of Jordan starting on 7 March. The Chair noted that the nomination of Ambassador Staffan Tillander as Chair of the Configuration testifies to Sweden's commitment to the PBC and to the peacebuilding process in Liberia. The Permanent Representative of Sweden and Ambassador Tillander took the floor to welcome the opportunity to serve as the Chair for the PBC Liberia Configuration. Ambassador Tillander expressed his intentions to build upon the work of the previous Chair adding that he looked forward to working closely with the Liberian Permanent Representative and members of the Configuration.

Synergies between the PBC and PBF:

1. The Chairperson recalled that the Roadmap of Actions in 2012 has identified improving the synergies between the PBC and the PBF in relevant areas while implementing the priority tasks as an action which the Committee and the Country Configurations should prioritize in the context of the overall approach to the Commission's role in the area of resource mobilization.

2. In this context, the Chairperson invited PBSO to provide its periodical update on the activities of the PBF (see attached presentation). Subsequently, the Chairperson invited the new chair of the PBF Advisory Group (AG), Ambassador Jan Knutsson to make brief remarks about the content of the first meeting of the newly constituted Group. In this regard, Ambassador Knutsson noted that:

- The previous Group made important recommendations on the strategic positioning of the Fund, monitoring and evaluation, a 'renewal' policy for grants and the organization of the first-ever field visit of the Advisory Group (to Liberia in May, 2011).
- He aims to continue the practice of briefing the PBC about progress of the Fund when the AG meets.

- The PBF is still facing considerable challenges, despite some considerable progress. He suggested the following issues as examples for the AG over the coming two years:
 - Improved synergies between the Fund and the World Bank and the regional development banks.
 - Improved reporting and dissemination of the peacebuilding impact of the Fund's work. This includes both improved communications and strong monitoring and evaluation.
 - Continually increasing the Fund's synergies especially with the PBC, as well as with the broader efforts of the United Nations system – including PBSO but also efforts of the Secretariat and its Specialized Funds, Agencies and Programmes – to advance peacebuilding.
 - Strategic identification of countries eligible for PBF support. While PBC countries will remain a priority, post-conflict and post-political crisis peacebuilding opportunities are occurring in a number of countries including Yemen, South Sudan, Myanmar, Mali and Somalia. At the same time, more clarity would be helpful around exit strategies. Reviewing the Fund's decision-making to draw broader lessons and guidance for the future will remain core work for the AG.
 - Advising for smarter in-country strategies. The AG aims to look at how PBF systems – and the UN on the ground through whom it works – can enable the Joint Steering Committees, also representing the national “owners” of peacebuilding strategies, to make those strategies more effective.
 - While the AG's work is not principally to raise resources, it aims to use its platform to raise concerns about signs of underfunding in 2013.

3. Member States welcome the presentations and focused on the following issues:

- Members emphasized that the AG should help enhance collaboration between the PBC, PBF and the rest of the UN system on peacebuilding. Members noted that the AG should extend its strategic advice to those countries on the agenda of the Commission as well.
- Members generally acknowledged improved performance of the PBF, appreciated its strategic positioning (country selection) in a rapidly evolving situation of post-conflict countries, and recognized improving synergies with the PBC, such as in Liberia and Guinea. The Guinea (SSR) example was confirmed as demonstrating the ability of the Fund to respond quickly in support of the Commission's political engagement.
- Several delegations supported PBF emphasis on PBC countries and enhancing synergy between the PBC and PBF on funding coordination, UN coherence and using the PBC to help ensure a catalytic role of the PBF. More efforts, however, should be

made to research and report on the catalytic effect of PBF. The PBF was also encouraged to report more often to the PBC Country Specific Configurations on results. PBC members were encouraged to provide follow-up funding in countries, in order to assess the catalytic potential of the PBF.

- Members appreciated the importance placed on the links to the G7+, the 'New Deal' and the International Dialogue on peacebuilding and Statebuilding.
- While acknowledging the progress made to enhance Monitoring and Evaluation, Member States called for further improvements on results reporting, in order to inform the public and donors on the Fund's impact in post-conflict countries. One delegate noted that a global review of PBF may assist in resource mobilization efforts.
- Member States underlined the importance of the UN's Civilian Capacity initiative for capacity building in post-conflict countries, and encouraged the PBF to play a supporting role particularly with regards to South-South cooperation. A suggestion was made for the PBF to consider replicating the WFP working capital model for financing in short-term responses in post conflict countries.
- The situation in the Sahel region was noted as highlighting the need for the Fund to begin to give attention to regional dimensions of peacebuilding.
- While acknowledging the positive effect of the recent DIFID and AusAid reviews on funding contributions, Member States registered concern on the noticeable donor fatigue which has potential negative effects on the sustainability of the Fund in the future. Some delegations emphasized the need to improve partnerships with AfDB and the IFIs. Others encouraged more attention on alternative (beyond traditional) donors.
- Several members re-stated their financial commitments to the Fund in 2012 – Norway (US\$5 million); UK (multi-year funding for next four years at \$20 million a year); Korea (more pledges in the future); Luxemburg (disburse its commitment this year); Russian Federation (continue with its \$2 million annual contribution).
- Some members underscored the importance of the gender dimension of peacebuilding, appreciating last year's Gender Promotion Initiative, and called for priority consideration to women in employment generation as well. Others noted the importance of specific themes, such as gender, but cautioned that the heart of the PBF's mechanism was to build on national ownership and priorities.
- On exit strategy, a number of delegations encouraged the PBF to institute upfront engagement and reach-out to other development partners (mainly IFIs and RDBs) in order to ensure better complementarity and partner take over support. In this context, emphasis was also given to the need to balance rapid deployment of funds and long-term sustainability, also called "joint collective effectiveness".

- For its briefings to the PBC, PBSO was requested to provide more information on the reported underperforming 20% of recipient projects.
