

## **Working Group on Lessons Learned**

### **The PBC's role in resource mobilization: Support of the organization of donor/partner conferences**

#### **Concept Note**

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#### **Introduction and purpose of the meeting**

The Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL) of the Peacebuilding Commission<sup>1</sup> will convene a meeting on 3 April 2013 to discuss lessons learned from the support provided by the Peacebuilding Commission to the organization of donor and partner conferences<sup>2</sup> in countries on its agenda.

Recently, in light of the development of second generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in countries on the Commission's agenda and the inclusion therein of agreed peacebuilding priority areas, the PBC has been asked to support the organization of donor/partner conferences. Currently, at least three of the countries on the agenda are in the process of finalizing new national development strategies. Therefore, and in connection with undertaking its advocacy and resource mobilization role, the PBC will potentially be involved in supporting the organization of different types of donor/partner conferences in the foreseeable future.

The purpose of this meeting of the WGLL will be to: 1) Identify key lessons learned from previous PBC engagement in support of donor/partner conferences for CAR and Burundi; 2) Define "success" criteria in the results of donor/partner conferences; and 3) Define the role and contribution of the PBC in supporting the organization and conduct of such conferences.

#### **Lessons Learned**

To date, the Commission has been engaged at different levels and with mixed results in the support of the Central African Republic Partners Roundtable (2011) and the Burundi Partners Conference (2012). Drawing on these experiences, there are crucial elements, which could help support the planning of donor/partner conferences:

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<sup>1</sup> The use of the term Donor or Partner Conference is generic and is being used liberally. Partner and Donor Conferences simply refers to meetings attended by countries or organizations that have a direct potential interest in supporting or contributing to countries in need of economic or financial assistance. The Consultative Group meetings, on the other hand, refers specifically to the meeting organized by the World Bank and signify meetings between government representatives and development partners of a country coming together to discuss economic policy issues and strategies for reducing poverty.

- Content: well prepared documentation, which articulates a vision for the country, clarity on priorities, as well as an appropriate level of technical details needs to be prepared in advance.
- Timing: donor/partner conferences have a higher possibility of success if: 1) organized at a time when the agenda of the international community would allow the appropriate level of attention and appropriate level of participation; and 2) when the political situation in the country concerned is favourable.
- Management of expectations: the international community and the country concerned need to be realistic about the envisaged outcome of the conference.
- Roles and responsibility: key actors (government, UN entities, international partners and PBC) should agree on clear division of roles and responsibilities towards the organization of the event, bearing in mind its geographical advantages/disadvantages.
- Communications: clear and continuous communications as well as alignment of messages among key actors need to be ensured.
- Follow-up: key actors must ensure the donor/partner conference is part of a process, with appropriate follow-up.

Experience has also shown that the ultimate responsibility for the planning and organization of the donor conference lies with the national authorities of the country concerned, especially considering that the event is organized to draw support for a national development strategy. The role of the international community should be confined to providing technical support, which would enable the national authorities to draw the maximum possible benefit from the event. All significant preparations must be led by and undertaken at the country-level.

#### Defining “Success” of a donor/partner conference

Defining “success” represents a crucial step in order to manage expectations of all the actors involved. In particular, lessons learned from the CAR and Burundi events show that it is important to use a definition of “success” that transcends the monetary dimension to envisage an event that could help draw a politically favourable image of the country concerned. This is likely an outcome that could be best attained with the participation of a variety of national and international actors, including institutional donors, private sector and civil society. At the same time, a preparatory process, which takes into consideration the elements of timing, communications and content, is likely to result in a satisfactory level of pledges and commitments.

#### The role of the PBC

As a political platform, which brings together a broad variety of actors supporting peacebuilding efforts, the PBC can play an important role in supporting national governments in the preparation of donor and partner conferences. Allowing space for preparatory process led by the government to take place on the ground, the PBC can support the process through outreach activities in New York. The Commission can help identify and mobilize partners, including non-traditional donors, and can promote the exchange of ideas among key actors involved in the organization of the event. At the

same time, the PBC could support the government in defining the scope and objective of the conference, as well as ensure that the importance of peacebuilding-related objectives in the national development strategies is sufficiently highlighted.

In addition to bringing visibility, participation and commitment, the Commission's role can be important in advising on suggested actions by the Government to help boost confidence in the country's peacebuilding and development process, help manage expectations of the outcome/results of the donor conference, and support a follow-up strategy to the outcome of the conference with a view of sustaining the attention of international partners.

### **Key questions:**

- How can the PBC ensure that there is sufficient attention to the peacebuilding-related aspects of the national development strategy in preparation for, during and in the follow-up to the donor/partner conference?
- What should be the timing of PBC engagement in the support of donor/partner conferences to exert its added value as a political forum based in New York?
- What is the most appropriate division of roles and responsibilities between the national and international actors in the process of the organization of donor/partner conferences?
- What is the PBC's role in managing expectations of the outcome/results of the donor conference? What should be realistically expected from the PBC in the follow-up process to the donor/partner conference?
- What can the PBC OC member states bring to the table to support the CSC Chairs in assisting donor/partner conferences?
- How should the PBC address the link between peacebuilding and long-term development, particularly when the donor/partner conferences are organized in the context of promoting PRSPs?

### **Panelists**

- H.E. Mr. Paul Seger, Chair of the Burundi Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations.
- Ms. Clare Lockhart, Co-founder and Director, Institute for State Effectiveness.
- World Bank (TBC).