



United Nations - Nations Unies

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Presentation by the

Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

H.E. Dr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen

Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations

To the

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2013

Agenda item 7 (f) - African countries emerging from conflict

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Mr. President and distinguished colleagues,

On behalf of the Peacebuilding Commission, I am pleased to brief the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on this annual occasion, which testifies to the linkage between peacebuilding and socio-economic development. It is because of that linkage that the ongoing partnership between ECOSOC and PBC is of crucial importance.

Since the conclusion of the 2010 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, and through the adoption of its roadmaps for actions, the PBC has made important steps to implement key recommendations of the Review. In particular, it has focused on improving its relations with the UN principal organs, enhancing coordination, and improving its working methods. It is a fact that most of the post-conflict countries could not reach MDGs and widespread poverty is daunting. In this regard, discussions between PBC and ECOSOC are ongoing on how to further strengthen the relations between our two bodies in order to lead to concrete initiatives which can benefit countries emerging from conflict.

A second important aspect the PBC is focusing on is more related to its impact in the field. Over the past three years, the Commission has been trying to improve collaboration and coordination within the membership and major branches of the UN like UNSC, ECOSOC plus the UN agencies both in the HQ and the Field, improve its role in resource mobilization and better interaction with the Advisory Group of PBF, building partnerships, smoothening the process of work and in supporting national ownership and capacity-building. The partnerships with World Bank and the African Development Bank plus SRSGs on the ground continue to witness steady progress and consolidation for the benefit of a more coherent approach to peacebuilding support.

At the same time, the Commission is expanding and diversifying its partnerships. At the end of June, the Commission organized, together with the UN Global Compact, a meeting with private sector for peacebuilding in which we discussed ways to partner with the private sector and to promote responsible private investments in countries on the PBC agenda. This is an area which deserves continuing reflection and on which ECOSOC, through its annual partnerships forum, has proven to be a viable platform for building and strengthening the partnership with the private sector. We look forward to working with ECOSOC towards next year's partnerships forum.

Mr. President and distinguished colleagues,

The success of the Commission will always be measured by its impact in the field in resolving the issues politically and creating conducive environment to stop relapsing into conflicts and providing peace dividend to guarantee sustainable peace and security. In connection with the agenda item under which this briefing is taking place, allow me to brief the Council on the status of the Commission's country-specific engagement of the PBC in the six countries on its agenda: Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

Burundi:

Over the last 12 months, the Burundi Configuration focused its engagement on developing partnership around the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, PRSP. The PBC co-sponsored a partners' conference, on 29 and 30 October 2012 in Geneva, which generated US\$2.5 billion of

pledges in support of the PRSP. At the same conference, the Government of Burundi made a number of commitments aimed at pursuing the main policy reforms required by the implementation of the PRSP. Subsequently the Chair of the Burundi Configuration visited Burundi in January and June 2013 to discuss the follow up on the Geneva Conference (i) encouraging partners to materialize pledges made in Geneva, and (ii) encouraging the government of Burundi to pursue the commitments made in Geneva.

Central African Republic:

The peacebuilding process in the Central African Republic is going through a difficult period. Despite its engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission and support from the Peacebuilding Fund, the country has witnessed another setback with the overthrow, in March this year, of the elected regime in Bangui, thus demonstrating the fact that peacebuilding is not a linear progression. However, thanks to its critical and timely intervention, ECCAS, the Economic Community of Central African States, managed to avoid further escalation, and to force the de-facto authorities into a transition process leading to elections within a set timeframe. The Peacebuilding Commission will continue its support to this process and, in due course, once the security and political situation allows, will fully reengage with the country.

Guinea:

The PBC engagement with Guinea provided a platform for improved dialogue on key peacebuilding priorities, through the first review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments between the Government of Guinea and the PBC. The Peacebuilding Fund Joint Steering Committee in Guinea has coordinated the input of the Government of Guinea and the United Nations country team to the first review of the statement of mutual commitments, thus ensuring the coherence between the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the support of the Peacebuilding Fund in the country.

The PBC offered an additional space to engage the Government and political actors on the legislative elections. The discussion of election-related issues has triggered important initiatives such as a project led by the National Democratic Institute aimed at strengthening the confidence of political parties in the electoral process. The Chair of the Guinea Configuration visited Guinea last February to support the preparation of the upcoming legislative elections and discuss ways for the PBC to engage in resource mobilization efforts. The PBC continues to accompany the preparation of the election and to mobilize members for financial and technical support to the legislative election.

Guinea-Bissau:

The work of the PBC has been hampered by the illegitimate change of Government in April last year. But here too, the sub-regional organizations are taking a leading role in working with the de-facto authorities to manage the transition process which will allow the country to return to constitutional order. ECOWAS, the AU, EU, UN and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) are working together to provide the needed support to implement that transition, which, once completed, will see the international community reengage in full with the country.

Liberia:

Since August last year, the PBC actively advocated for an inclusive and coordinated strategy on national reconciliation. At an informal meeting of the Liberian Country Specific Configuration in September 2012, the Government of Liberia expressed gratitude for the PBC's advocacy on a coordinated approach to national reconciliation. The National Reconciliation Roadmap was officially launched by the President of Liberia on 20 June 2013.

On 6 March 2013, the Configuration adopted the second review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments (SMC) which reports on the progress made by both the Government of Liberia and the PBC as per their commitments in the SMC. On 20 March 2013, the Outcome of the second review of the implementation of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia, outlining a renewed set of commitments between the Government of Liberia and the PBC was adopted.

Sierra Leone:

In the second half of 2012, the PBC Country Configuration on Sierra Leone focused its attention on the November 2012 elections and on the issue of transition of UN Missions in PBC Agenda countries. The Commission adopted the Second Review of the Outcome of the Special Session of the PBC on Sierra Leone. The PBC reiterated the decision to focus its engagement on good governance and the rule of law, illicit drug trafficking and youth employment, as well as its decision to advocate for greater sub-regional cooperation and the promotion of gender equality and human rights.

For the first time, a joint delegation of the PBC embarked in a visit to two agenda countries, Liberia and Sierra Leone in February 2013. The PBC delegation was able to appreciate the regional interconnectedness and commonality of both the challenges and opportunities in Liberia and Sierra Leone with a view to enhancing cooperation with regional organizations and promoting a regional approach to peacebuilding.

The PBC will enter a new phase in its engagement with Sierra Leone as UNIPSIL fully draws down by March 2014 and the UN transitions into a Country Team setting. It is critical that the PBC Configuration continues to play an important role in support of the UN's transition process yet at the same time, consider altering its own engagement and begin to define an exit strategy.

Mr. President,

I wish to conclude by noting that the PBC is increasingly focused on the socio-economic aspect of peacebuilding. To this end, the PBC has identified economic revitalization, gender mainstreaming, education and job creation as a central theme for 2013. To this end, we will continue to identify practical approaches, replication of implementation of successful experiences and lessons learned through partnerships with the private sector and through South-South and triangular cooperation in the countries on the agenda. This is certainly an area which will greatly benefit from closer collaboration between the PBC and ECOSOC.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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