

**Report of the Peacebuilding Commission
Assessment Mission
to Sierra Leone**

18-22 November 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a. For the first time and as requested by the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is reviewing its engagement in one of the countries on its agenda with a view to scaling down its activities. As part of this broader process, an assessment mission visited Sierra Leone from 18 to 22 November 2013 to take stock of progress made on peacebuilding and chart the PBC's potential role in Sierra Leone beyond March 2014. This report outlines the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission's findings¹.

b. Sierra Leone has made significant progress in consolidating peace since the end of the civil war in 2002 and is now increasingly focusing on sustained economic development. The country is on a positive trajectory towards transforming into a resilient and stable country.

c. The current political atmosphere is dominated by the ongoing constitutional review process. Progress is being made in terms of security, justice and rule of law, while reform of the security sector and security services continues. The Government of Sierra Leone is also exerting efforts to strengthen national human rights and rule of law institutions, promote gender and social equality, and strengthen human rights protection more generally. Socio-economic indicators have improved significantly as well, while rapid economic growth promises to further enhance public services. Consolidation of the peacebuilding process is fostering political stability, with the assistance of the UN, international and donor community and regional partners.

d. However, challenges remain to be addressed, such as governance, corruption, natural resource management, basic social services and youth unemployment. A few areas have been identified as requiring additional assistance from the UN or other international partners, including reform to the security and justice sectors, area-based development focusing on conflict prevention, and the protection and promotion of human rights.

e. The UNIPSIL drawdown and UN transition process is well underway and on track. Some UN agencies in Sierra Leone, such as UNDP, UNICEF and WFP, have been larger than UNIPSIL for the past two years in terms of staff numbers and budget. Most of the lead UN agencies in the field are further strengthening themselves to cover residual tasks that UNIPSIL has been previously mandated to fulfill by securing additional programmatic and technical support. In addition, resident international partners remain closely engaged and are either extending existing commitments or expanding their support in relevant areas. For the UN family in Sierra Leone, the transition does not end with the closure of the mission. Rather, it is just as much the beginning of a new phase for the United Nations role in the country. Looking forward, the development agenda poses different but equally complex questions as those in the peacebuilding and consolidation phase.

¹ The PAM report was finalized on 18 December 2013 in close consultation with PAM members, UNIPSIL, UNCT and PBSO.

f. These factors suggest that the PBC should begin scaling down its role. The PBC should adjust its own engagement to reflect both the steady progress made to date and the expected level of international assistance ahead. At the same time, there is merit in the PBC remaining engaged, albeit in a modified manner, as emphasized by national, international and UN interlocutors.

g. As was the case with the Agenda for Change, the PBC should continue to explicitly align its work with national priorities as expressed in the Agenda for Prosperity. The UNCT in Sierra Leone has been supporting these priorities since early 2013 through the Transitional Joint Vision, which bridges UN programming in support of the Government of Sierra Leone until the regular United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) begins in 2015. PBC's focused role in Sierra Leone will require it to be more reactive to developments in the field and more flexible in its approach. As such, the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that the PBC's work should be guided by a set of key strategic principles, namely that future engagement be: Field-Focused; Responsive; Adaptable; and Needs-Based. The PBC should (i) continue to explicitly align its work with national priorities; (ii) adopt a lighter and more responsive accompaniment role that adjusts to evolving needs; (iii) follow developments on the ground and respond to requests for support from the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations, and international partners, rather than proactively seeking to address a wide range of peacebuilding issues; (iv) lend support to existing approaches and serve as a platform for encouraging mutual accountability between the Government of Sierra Leone and its international partners as needed; and (v) consider marshaling resources in response to targeted peacebuilding needs if and when they emerge. The Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends an informal stock taking be conducted approximately one year following UNIPSIL's drawdown.

h. This scaled down role will have implications for the PBC's working methods. The Chair should continue to serve as a focal point for cooperation with key partners, but should also adopt a more flexible approach. Building on experience in other configurations of employing an informal steering group, a similar mechanism could draw on those members most directly invested in Sierra Leone to inform more responsive and targeted action. The work of a smaller steering group would thus supplement, but not replace, the collective role of the larger membership. Accordingly, fewer formal meetings would take place and would be convened on an as-needed-basis, guided by the wishes of the Government, UN and other stakeholders. If required and as appropriate, the Chair could convey the configuration's advice on any emerging challenges through informal means to the Security Council and other organs once UNIPSIL completely withdraws.

i. Following further consultations, the Chair will further refine the parameters of the PBC's future role and scope by visiting Sierra Leone in early 2014 to secure formal agreement with national authorities. The Chair will then seek agreement from the configuration membership before consulting with the Security Council. These steps are envisaged to be complete in the first quarter of 2014.

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Purpose of the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission

1. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) decided to “review the scope of its engagement with Sierra Leone following the successful completion of the electoral process in November 2012 (PBC/6/SLE/2). In March 2013, the Security Council also noted “its request in Resolution 2065 (2012) for the Commission to review its engagement with Sierra Leone following the successful completion of the elections and in line with the drawdown of UNIPSIL” and further requested “that the Commission review its engagement with a view to scaling down its role.”² Guided by the Security Council and its own commitments, this request marks the first time the Peacebuilding Commission has sought to gradually scale down its role in recognition of the peacebuilding progress achieved by a country on its agenda.

2. As part of this broader review of the Peacebuilding Commission’s role, an assessment mission visited Sierra Leone from 18 to 22 November to take stock of progress made on peacebuilding and chart the future of the PBC’s engagement in Sierra Leone³. Building on previous work undertaken by the UN system and other stakeholders, the assessment mission met with a wide range of national, international and UN stakeholders. This report provides background context on the Peacebuilding Commission’s engagement in Sierra Leone, conveys the mission’s findings with respect to peace consolidation, provides recommendations on the future role of the PBC, and outlines next steps.

1.2 The UN Transition

3. The UN transition process is on track and well underway, with a clear plan in place for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) to gradually transfer residual responsibilities to relevant UN agencies, in close collaboration with the Government and bilateral and international partners. Lead UN agencies, which have been larger in staff and budget than UNIPSIL for the past two years, are absorbing residual tasks that UNIPSIL has been previously mandated to implement. UN agencies are further strengthening themselves by securing programmatic and technical support. UNDP in particular is strengthening its capacity by bringing aboard a Peace and Development Adviser (PDA), a Constitutional expert, a Security Sector Advisor and a Human Rights Adviser.

² S/RES/2097

³The delegation consisted of representatives of the Chair of the Sierra Leone Configuration, the UN Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development, the United Kingdom Department for International Development, and Embassy of Egypt in Freetown. The World Bank and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations were consulted, but unable to participate in person.

4. In this respect and based on the UN Technical Assessment Mission conducted in January 2013, the United Nations has identified five areas that require particular support during the transition process and after UNIPSIL's withdrawal: (i) developing national mechanisms/capacities for prevention of violent conflict; (ii) supporting the constitutional review process; (iii) providing support to the security sector; (iv) addressing youth unemployment; and (v) managing natural resources and land ownership.

5. UNIPSIL continues to focus its remaining activities during the remainder of its mandated period on facilitating political dialogue, including support to the government, particularly related to the planned constitutional review, security sector support, and strengthening of human rights institutions and their long-term sustainability. Detailed projects have been prepared by UNIPSIL and the UNCT on all these remaining activities. While some donors are providing funding for specific areas, the UN approached the Peacebuilding Fund to provide support in the areas of constitutional review process, conflict prevention, security sector and human rights. These proposals have either been approved or are under consideration by the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO).

6. The UN Country Team (UNCT) recently developed a communication strategy to strengthen its joint communications by raising awareness about the changing UN footprint in the country, enhance visibility and credibility of the work of the UN on the ground, support resource mobilization, provide public education and enhance advocacy. Agreed budget lines will need to be funded through cost share contributions from UN agencies operating in Sierra Leone. Implementation of the strategy will begin in January 2014.

II. PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

7. Sierra Leone has made significant progress in consolidating peace and stability since the end of the civil war in 2002 and is now increasingly focusing on sustained economic development. The international community has responded to these strides forward by reconfiguring its support, including by initiating the transition from a United Nations political mission to a normal UN Country Team setting. Nonetheless, some root causes of conflict will require attention in the longer-term in order to mitigate the risks of any potential relapse.

2.1 Overview

8. The country is now on a positive trajectory towards transforming into a resilient, stable state. Sierra Leone successfully conducted its third post-war election in November 2012 and is making notable progress strengthening democratic governance. Although ethno-regional and inter/intra-party tensions persist, the overall political atmosphere is dominated by the ongoing constitutional review process, which strives to be as inclusive as possible and represents an opportunity to address some of the root causes of the past conflict. Progress is being made in terms of security, justice and rule of law, while reform of the security sector and security services is ongoing. The Government of Sierra Leone also continues to exert efforts in strengthening national human rights and rule of law institutions, promoting gender and social equality, and strengthening human rights protection more generally. Socio-economic indicators have improved significantly, while rapid economic growth promises to further enhance public services. Consolidation of the peacebuilding process is fostering political stability, with the assistance of the UN, international and donor community and regional partners.

2.2 Agenda for Prosperity and UN Development Assistance Frameworks

9. The Government is implementing reforms focusing mainly on socio-economic development. It aims to address the root causes of fragility and outstanding risks for sustainable development. These are well captured in the Government's third development plan, "The Agenda for Prosperity, 2013-2018 (AfP)" to achieve middle-income country status by 2035.

10. The AfP is structured around eight pillars⁴. The overall strategy to implement the AfP is to exploit natural resources (minerals, iron ore and petroleum), generate private sector-led growth, and diversify Sierra Leone's economy. The AfP also addresses outstanding peace consolidation issues that will continue to demand attention, including further strengthening of democratic institutions, sound governance of natural resources, and addressing youth empowerment and employment. It also aims to provide free health

⁴The eight pillars of the AfP include: Diversifying Economic Growth; Managing Natural Resources; Accelerating Human Development; promoting International Competitiveness; promoting Labour and Employment; strengthening Social Protection Systems; Improving Governance and Reforming the Public Sector; and promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

care and improve the transport, power and public health infrastructures and reduce corruption.

11. While the overall goals of the AfP are ambitious, there is general consensus among interlocutors that it builds on the previous “Agenda for Change” while adequately and appropriately addressing complex development challenges. At this critical trajectory, the main challenge for the Government is implementing the AfP, including operationalizing the relevant monitoring mechanisms and improving governance, oversight and coordination amongst ministries, departments and agencies. Generating sufficient private sector investment as well as increased tax revenues to secure the funding gap is also critical, which is estimated to be US\$2 billion out of a total of US\$5.7 billion needed for the AfP. Donors, such as the EU and DFID, have pledged US\$3.2 billion and the Government has committed US\$0.5 billion. A concrete long-term vision to raise awareness and the necessary funds for the implementation of the AfP is deemed critical by the Government.

12. The AfP is also consistent with the principles of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. The AfP was developed following a fragility assessment of the country, which ascertained that the country has made considerable progress in moving out of fragility though critical challenges remain going forward. Sierra Leone continues to develop country systems and procedures, strengthening skills to enable the structures to function. A Mutual Accountability Framework is also being developed to accompany the AfP and to facilitate monitoring and evaluation. The Framework is in line with the New Deal’s emphasis on preparing a National Compact. It is envisaged that the Framework will form the basis for tracking mutual commitments between the Government of Sierra Leone and donors.

13. In line with the priorities identified in the Government’s AfP, the UN developed its Transitional Joint Vision 2013-2014 (TJV), which is a set of UN programmes that outlines a joint UN strategy. Thanks to the generosity of donors, nearly two-thirds of the funds requested for the TJV are already available (US\$141 million out of a total of US\$230 million). Agencies are currently reporting back on progress against the goals and financing levels described in the TJV for 2013. Once finalized, the updated TJV will be provided to the Government in February 2014, which form the basis for UNCT activities until the end of 2014.

14. In addition, the UNCT has prepared the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2015 to 2018. The UNDAF is the successor strategy to the current TJV and will guide the United Nations in its support to the Government’s AfP. A draft of the UNDAF has been shared with the Government of Sierra Leone in December 2013 and further consultations are planned in the coming months.

2.3 Political Situation

15. The political situation in Sierra Leone has remained calm since the conduct of presidential, parliamentary, and local elections in November 2012. The elections were

widely viewed as a significant milestone and were generally recognized as free and fair by international observers. Related disputes by opposition political parties have been channeled and resolved through appropriate legal mechanisms.

16. However, a wide range of interlocutors stressed that Sierra Leone continues to be politically divided along regional and ethnic lines. The 2012 election resulted in only two parties being represented in Parliament, the ruling All People's Congress (APC) and the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). Out of a total of 124 Members, the APC has 70 elected Members while SLPP has only 42 elected Members in Parliament. There are 12 Paramount Chiefs representing the 149 Chiefdoms in Sierra Leone. The present Parliament has 84 new Members. This high turnover rate reflects national party dynamics. These numbers ensure that the majority party dominates and results in limited oversight of the executive, thereby creating limited political space for dialogue and negotiation on critical policy matters. This is compounded by the weak institutional support available to the Parliamentary Committees and MPs. This situation raises the risk of further polarization between the APC's base in the northwest of the country and the SLPP's traditional areas of support in the southeast. It is also contributing to a tendency to view most policies through a regional or political lens. Interlocutors raised concerns that the winner-take-all nature of the country's political situation has the potential to create instability in the future.

17. As expressed by H.E. President Ernest Bai Koroma, addressing this political dynamic is one of several motivations for undertaking a reform of Sierra Leone's constitution, which dates from 1991. Constitution reform was also strongly recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and remains one of the outstanding requirements of Article X of the July 1999 Lomé Peace Accord. The constitutional review process was launched in July 2013 and is currently in its initial stages, although the pace of progress has been slightly hindered by funding delays. A Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) consisting of approximately 80 members has been established, including representatives of political parties, national institutions, civil society, youth and women groups. The Committee has agreed rules of procedure and is organizing itself into subject-specific sub-committees.

18. In substantive terms, the review provides a critical opportunity to examine the findings of the Peter Tucker Law Reform commission Report of 2008 and its recommendations as well as to broadly consult Sierra Leoneans and to address a number of shortcomings in the current Constitution, including with respect to reforming the political system, protecting human rights, empowering women, managing natural resources, and revising land tenure. The CRC plans to proceed in an inclusive manner that solicits views from all segments of society and all parts of the country. This input will be incorporated into the drafting process and the plan is to submit the final text for national approval in a public referendum. The CRC has been set a deadline of March 2015.

19. Since the end of the war, Sierra Leone has made significant progress in building and strengthening independent national institutions, including the National Electoral

Commission (NEC), Parliament, National Commission for Democracy (NCD), Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL), National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), and Independent Media Commission (IMC). These institutions play a critical role in safeguarding democratic governance and promoting human rights. However, a wide range of interlocutors stressed that limited capacity in the judiciary is increasingly hampering these institutions' ability to fulfill their respective mandates. The widespread perception that the courts represent a weak link in the system risks undermining public confidence in key institutions, a point that was made repeatedly regarding the ongoing fight against corruption. Given high public expectations about future growth and development, this issue has the potential to disappoint a population expecting a larger peace dividend in the form of effective governance and better basic services.

20. Corruption has been rated as endemic in Sierra Leone and remains a major obstacle to prosperity. Albeit, Sierra Leone's ranking improved slightly over the past few years on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, which measures perceived levels of public sector corruption. Sierra Leone ranked 134 out of 183 countries and territories in 2011, 123 out of 178 in 2012 and 119 out of 175 in 2013.

2.4 Security Situation

21. Significant progress has been made in terms of security, and most interlocutors were cautiously optimistic. The ongoing security sector reform is now focusing on improving human security, capacity building, and professionalization. Sierra Leone assesses that 95% of security threats are internal, however, a National Security Policy and Strategy is currently being developed, which will provide a framework aligning the security sector with the AFP. The National Security Policy will also provide a chapeau for the national strategies that are being adopted to address other areas of concern, including the police, justice sector, national disaster management, youth discipline, extractive industries, maritime and transnational organised crime and terrorism and stability in the Mano River sub-region.

22. The overall security sector in Sierra Leone and the process of reform and restructuring of the Sierra Leone Police has come a long way since the civil war. Yet, there still remain a number of significant challenges including corruption, governance, command and control, accountability, oversight and coordination that warrant continued engagement on strategic and policy-levels.

23. Justice and the rule of law still need to be closely monitored, with the support and assistance of the UN and other stakeholders, including access to justice, improving the rule of law and timely administration of justice, especially in under or un-served areas in the country. Institutional capacity in the courts, justice personnel, and the dual justice system (formal/informal, latter based on customary law) are areas of specific concern. Two related issues are that the formal justice system is not easily accessible outside of urban centres, and the perception of continued political interference in the justice system.

24. As reform of the security services is ongoing, a notable increase was seen in donor assistance and activities, particularly in the areas of enhancing police professionalism; improving security sector responsiveness to the needs of the public through revitalised community policing; and further combating corruption.

25. Both Government and the international community cited ongoing concerns related to the porous borders between Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. There have been reports that arms and drug trafficking has been increasing, which are potentially destabilizing factors to peace and security in the sub-region, especially in light of limited national and regional capacity to counter these threats. Similarly, any increase in the instability in neighbouring countries could have a negative impact on Sierra Leone through increased migration, refugee flows and socio-economic and geo-political spillover. Other potential threats include piracy and terrorism. To address some of these challenges, the MRU, with the support of UNOWA, recently concluded the Cross-Border Security Strategy, which reiterates the important role of UN missions, regional organizations and neighboring countries in addressing cross-border threats. The MRU, as well as other regional organizations, have an important role to play in improving stability, regional development and inter-dependence, but despite its ambitious strategy, it lacks funding and capacity.

2.5 Socio-Economic Issues

26. Socio-economic indicators are improving. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth also increased to more than 15% in 2012, mainly due to the commencement of iron ore production, while non-iron ore GDP growth was 5%. The latter was led by an expansion in agricultural production, services and construction, as spending, particularly on roads and the two large iron ore projects, continued at increased levels. In 2013, GDP growth was estimated to be 13% and the forecast for 2014 is estimated to be 14%. A significant achievement is seen in the upward move for Sierra Leone of 30% in the Human Development Index (HDI) during a twelve-year period, improving its position in the HDI by 10 places in 2012 (now ranking 177 out of 187 countries, as opposed to 187 out of 187 in 2000). Exports are expected to rise strongly in 2013 and 2014 as mining activity picks up particularly in the south. The positive trajectory also relates to the general decline in the poverty rates from 66% in 2003 to 53% in 2015.

27. With a high expectation placed on the exploitation of natural resources to contribute to socio-economic development, the Government is moving towards increased transparency and equitability in the extractive industry and land management. Processes are ongoing to reform the Land Policy and address issues related to land ownership. The country is also increasing its capacity to monitor compliance with environmental policies. Revenue administration processes are being improved and a Chamber of Mines is being established to improve self-regulation as well as corporate social responsibility in the mining industry. Concerns remain, however, that the ongoing processes at the national

⁵2011 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS).

level are having insufficient impact at the community level, due to the lack of adequate systems to ensure that revenue generated through resource exploitation is invested in sustainable local development activities.

28. Despite the progress made, the country lags behind most sub-Saharan Africa and its MRU neighbours, ranking below most African countries for many social well-being indicators, including having access to basic social services such as water and sanitation for the rural population. Current investments in the extractive industries are not generating sufficient job opportunities, especially to address the high rate of youth unemployment. While this phenomenon is contributing to the rise of youth-related crimes and youth gangs in the country, the overall existing human capital was deemed weak by the interlocutors, who underscored the need for increased skills and capacity building, especially in national institutions. Progress in gender equity is still low as Parliament continues to grapple with passing the Gender Bill.

29. The Sierra Leonean youth remain confronted with a series of economic and social challenges with high incidences of extreme poverty, which is amongst the highest in the world. More than 80 percent of the country's youth population lives below the poverty line of \$2 per day and well over 60 percent are unemployed; with large numbers of 'working poor youth' found especially in urban areas.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PBC IN SIERRA LEONE

3.1 A Scaled-Down Role

30. As seen in the above analysis and findings, several factors suggest that a scaling down of the Peacebuilding Commission's role would be warranted. First, Sierra Leone has taken significant steps towards consolidating peace and is increasingly focusing on longer-term development challenges. Second, the Security Council's decision to withdraw UNIPSIL is an important signal of stability. Third, the transition to a Resident Coordinator-led UN Country Team is on track and the majority of relevant UN entities are strengthening their capacity in key peacebuilding areas. Fourth, resident international partners remain closely engaged and are either extending existing commitments or expanding their support in relevant areas. As such, the PBC should adjust its own engagement to reflect both the steady progress made to date and the expected level of international assistance ahead.

31. At the same time, a general consensus emerged from national, international and UN interlocutors that there is merit in the Peacebuilding Commission remaining engaged, albeit in a modified manner. Sierra Leone's status as a success story for post-conflict recovery should neither obscure the challenges ahead nor lead to a discontinuation of the international community's focus and attention on the country. In this respect, differing levels of emphasis were placed on the core elements of the Commission's mandate.

32. In the near term, the Security Council's decision to withdraw UNIPSIL will lead to a shift both in the United Nations political presence in the field and the type of international attention devoted to Sierra Leone. As such, it will be important that the new Resident Coordinator continue performing many of these key coordination and advocacy functions to sustain confidence among stakeholders and to help ensure a smooth transition. The triple-hatted ERSG/RR/RC function has had an important advocacy role with respect to liaisons with the Government of Sierra Leone, and has helped ensure coordination and coherence among the UN, donor community and national stakeholders. The ERSG function will no longer exist with the drawdown of UNIPSIL. It was felt that this model was particularly suited to integrated peacebuilding offices in contexts like as Sierra Leone.

33. Given these shifts, interlocutors focused on the Peacebuilding Commission's central added value as political advocacy and accompaniment. This role would play to the PBC's strength as an inclusive multilateral body with a unique membership. The Commission could thus continue to serve as a forum for sustaining international attention, including through pointing to emerging needs and challenges as required. Likewise, the Government of Sierra Leone stressed the utility of the PBC's role as a trusted advocate with the broader international community, especially with respect to Member States and other international actors not directly represented in Freetown.

34. Sierra Leone has also emerged as a good example of aid effectiveness. The Government of Sierra Leone has set clear national priorities and its international partners

have effectively aligned themselves with national strategies. These practices have continued with the launch of the Agenda for Prosperity and efforts underway to implement the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. The United Nations has also achieved a high degree of coherence and continues to work together in an integrated manner on the development of the forthcoming UN Development Assistance Framework (2015-2018). In such circumstances, the PBC's role is likely to be most constructive if it lends support to existing approaches and serves as a platform for encouraging mutual accountability between the Government of Sierra Leone and its international partners as needed.

35. While the Agenda for Prosperity faces a sizeable funding gap, this is most likely to be filled through increased national revenues, private sector led growth, foreign investment, and public-private partnerships. The scale and type of resources required are not particularly suited to the Peacebuilding Commission's mandate. Likewise, requirements associated with UNIPSIL's drawdown and transition to a UNCT setting are largely funded by Government, bilateral and international partners and relevant UN entities. However, UN interlocutors strongly recommended for increased support from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) for conflict prevention, including area-based development, and security sector reform. Interlocutors underscored the importance of the PBF as being best suited to provide for a more sustained engagement in support of countries such as Sierra Leone emerging from conflict and to support peacebuilding activities which directly contribute to post-conflict stabilization and strengthen the capacity of Governments, national/local institutions and transitional or other relevant authorities. Furthermore, assistance from the PBF would initiate programmes and activities in specific areas that were deemed to be in need of further support during the UN transition. As such, the Peacebuilding Commission's mandate to marshal resources may be best fulfilled in the future by responding to targeted and specific peacebuilding needs, if and when they emerge.

3.2 Guiding Principles

36. At this stage of post-conflict peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, the PBC's role should be pragmatically focused on the specific areas it can add real value. This approach should also recognize that aspects of the Commission's mandate that were more important during the immediate aftermath of violent conflict have been increasingly assumed by national authorities and international partners, as should be the case. Encouraging national ownership and respecting national sovereignty, rather than seeking a comprehensive engagement with Sierra Leone's peacebuilding challenges, should guide the PBC's efforts to scale down by becoming lighter and more targeted.

37. This focused role will require the PBC to lower the intensity of its engagement, become more responsive to developments in the field, and be more flexible in its approach. The Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that the PBC's work should be guided by a set of key guiding strategic principles (F.R.A.N.):

- **Field-Focused:** Focus on the developments, progress and strategic direction on the ground of all relevant stakeholders, including national and international partners, donor community and UN.
- **Responsive:** Respond to the needs of the country through political accompaniment, if required and as deemed appropriate.
- **Adaptable:** Modify and adjust the level and scope of PBC's engagement, if and when required in a flexible manner.
- **Needs-Based:** Keep abreast of the latest developments with an eye on peacebuilding perspectives and consider the needs, requirements and challenges in the country.

3.3 Thematic Scope

38. As was the case with the Agenda for Change, the PBC should continue to explicitly align its work with national priorities as expressed in the Agenda for Prosperity. The thematic scope of the Commission's engagement would thus include Governance and Public Sector Reform (Pillar 7), Gender and Women's Empowerment (Pillar 8), Managing Natural Resources (Pillar 2), and youth employment and empowerment, which is treated as a cross-cutting priority. The PBC's engagement should also take into account Sierra Leone's intentions to implement the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States.

3.4 A More Responsive Approach

39. Within these parameters, the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that the PBC adopt a lighter and more responsive accompaniment role. Rather than proactively seeking to address a wide range of peacebuilding issues, the Commission would instead continue to follow developments on the ground and respond to requests for support from the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations, and international partners, if and as needed.

40. This lighter and narrower scope of engagement would be accomplished through informal cooperation with key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the UN Country Team as led by the Resident Coordinator, and Member States as represented within the Sierra Leone configuration. The Chair and the configuration membership would remain prepared to undertake targeted action in response to emerging issues and challenges. The PBC would also continue to serve as an advocate and a forum for the Government of Sierra Leone to express its national priorities.

41. This new and focused role would re-adjust according to evolving needs. Should Sierra Leone continue on its current positive path towards increased stability and development, the PBC may not be required to play a significant role. Should unexpected challenges emerge, the PBC could increase the intensity of its engagement to provide increased political support as needed. This could potentially involve deploying appropriate personnel to assist in monitoring peacebuilding developments, and advising

and liaising with national and international interlocutors in the field and New York. It may also require drawing on resources resident within the configuration membership and cooperation with key UN entities, International Financial Institutions, regional organizations, and other partners.

42. In order to reduce duplication and minimize transaction costs, the PBC should assess progress according to the arrangements established to monitor implementation of the Agenda for Prosperity. In this respect, the Mutual Accountability Framework currently under development to track national and international commitments to the Agenda for Prosperity may provide an important mechanism for the Government of Sierra Leone and its partners to identify any emerging challenges.

43. With respect to further reviewing the PBC's own engagement, the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends an informal stock taking be conducted in the first quarter of 2015 approximately one year following UNIPSIL's drawdown. This will provide an opportunity to assess the utility of the PBC's scaled down role and consider further reductions in its engagement, including the possibility of moving towards Sierra Leone's complete exit from the Commission's agenda. Such a stock taking would not necessarily have to be conducted with a subsequent Peacebuilding Assessment Mission to Sierra Leone.

3.5 Implications for the Sierra Leone Configuration

44. The Chair should continue to serve as a focal point for cooperation with the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations, and other partners, conveying relevant updates to the configuration membership as required.

45. The PBC's scaled down role will entail less formal meetings. It will also require a more flexible approach to a programme of work. In principle, the configuration should meet informally and on an as-needed-basis, as dictated by advice from the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations, and international partners engaged in the country.

46. Several interlocutors stressed the disparity between the large membership of the configuration and the smaller group of states directly engaged in Sierra Leone. The Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that more flexible and nimble working methods be established to enable closer cooperation with those actors who are contributing most to helping meet Sierra Leone's peacebuilding challenges. Such arrangements could build on experience in other configurations of employing an informal steering group. While the Configuration will continue to be an inclusive decision-making platform, having an informal and smaller steering group in place would better suit a lighter form of engagement that seeks to be both more responsive and more targeted.

47. Formal opportunities to brief the Security Council on peacebuilding in Sierra Leone will cease after 31 March 2014 when UNIPSIL withdraws completely. If required and as appropriate, the Chair could consider conveying the configuration's advice on any

emerging challenges through informal means, whether by inviting Security Council Members to participate in relevant deliberations or by sharing views in writing.

IV. THE WAY FORWARD

48. This report outlines the Peacebuilding Assessment Missions' findings with respect to the parameters of the PBC's role in Sierra Leone beyond March 2014. It will form the basis for further consultations with the membership of the Sierra Leone configuration, including the Government of Sierra Leone and relevant UN entities. This consultation process will begin with an informal expert-level meeting of the Sierra Leone configuration in New York and consultations with the UN system in New York.

49. On the basis of these discussions, the Chair will further refine the parameters of the PBC's future role and scope. This will entail further specifying practical arrangements for cooperation with the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations Country Team in Sierra Leone, United Nations entities in New York, and other international partners.

50. The Chair then plans to visit Sierra Leone in early 2014 to secure formal agreement with national authorities on the PBC's scaled down role and lay the ground work for a lighter form of cooperation with key actors after 31 March 2014.

51. Once these arrangements have been finalized, the Chair will seek informal agreement from the configuration membership before consulting with the Security Council. The Chair anticipates completing these steps by the first quarter of 2014.

ANNEXES

1. UN Security Council Resolution 2097(2013)
2. PBC/6/SLE/2
3. A/RES/60/1