

United Nations - Nations Unies

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Formal Meeting of the Organizational
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Statement by the

Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

H.E. Vladimir Drobnyak

Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations

[Please check against delivery]

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

Ambassador Antonia de Aguiar Patriota, Chairperson-elect of the PBC,

Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support,

We have come to the end of the seventh session of the Peacebuilding Commission.

A year ago, this Committee has entrusted Croatia with the responsibility to lead the Commission's continuing efforts to support peacebuilding in the countries on its agenda. This was truly a rewarding experience. This is why I was keen to sustain Croatia's engagement with the PBC as Vice-Chair of the Commission in 2014. I hope this will ensure some degree of continuity in our collective effort.

Together with colleagues leading the country configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned, the members of this Committee and of the country configurations, our joint efforts aim at enhancing the PBC's relevance, value-added and impact.

We have just adopted a report on the Commission's work this past year. The content of the report testifies to the continuing learning process that the Commission is undergoing as it engages with countries in various stages of or even experiencing setbacks in their peacebuilding processes. In all such situations, the Commission is learning much about its areas of strength and potentials, as well as its limitations.

In 2013, the Commission has yet again embarked on an ambitious work programme guided by the Commission's continuing commitment to take forward relevant recommendations from the 2010 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. The Forward Agenda which the Commission adopted through its previous report served as the basis for such efforts.

Once again this year, we continued to prioritize and explore means to enhance the sense of collective responsibility and commitment of the membership. We took the extra step of involving Member States in performing specific tasks. The contributions of Norway, Indonesia and Rwanda to issues of policy and institutional development in 2013 serve as the

baseline for expanding further this voluntary approach to country-specific tasks. The Forward Agenda for 2014 sets out specific actions in this regard which we need to fulfill. We need to create an institutional culture in the PBC whereby the ownership of all its activities, both at the policy and country-specific levels, is effectively shared. If the PBC is to become more effective and relevant, Member States need to invest the requisite time and energy to demonstrate practical commitment to its cause and, most importantly, to country-specific peacebuilding objectives.

In this connection, I sensed the urgent need for reinvigorating the commitment to “peacebuilding” at the appropriate political level in our governments. To this end, I consider the decision by this Committee to convene annual sessions for the PBC, back to back with the Peacebuilding Fund’s annual Stakeholders’ meetings, as an important step in this direction. I thank Indonesia for steering the discussion leading to this decision.

In this connection, Croatia took the initiative to convene a High-Level Ministerial meeting of the PBC in September 2013 on “Women’s economic empowerment for peacebuilding”. The meeting was jointly organized with UN Women and was presided over by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, with participation from number of Ministers. The consensus Declaration emanating from this meeting did not only reaffirm our political commitment to support the economic empowerment of women for peacebuilding, it also showed the potentials of the PBC, as a political and broad-based Member State platform, in formulating, raising awareness and in defending global principles and objectives of peacebuilding.

In the same vein, Croatia is convinced that business can play an important role in support of job creation and economic growth in post-conflict settings. The special meeting organized in June, in collaboration with the UN Global Compact, underscored the importance of creating an enabling environment for the effective development of the local private sector and of fostering socially responsible business practices and inclusive economic growth in post-conflict countries. With the participation of African business leaders, civil society representatives and government officials from countries on the agenda, this special meeting

was yet another occasion to show the potentials of the PBC as a platform for broad-based outreach and advocacy to a variety of actors and potential partners for the countries on the agenda..

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

The unfortunate turn of events and the tragedies experienced by CAR over the past year was of great concern to the PBC. The country experienced the kind of relapse for which the PBC was found to prevent. Despite the absence of a dedicated chair, the PBC had to sustain its engagement with the UN leadership in the field and at the Headquarters, and to mobilize the attention and commitment of its members to re-engage in support of early peacebuilding once a credible transition process is in place. Now that Morocco is firmly in the lead, we are assured that our collective efforts to prepare for a more informed and strategic engagement in CAR is on track. Going forward, however, the PBC would benefit from serious lessons learning exercise looking into the causes of relapse in CAR. The UN and the international community can no longer afford to turn away from the situation once the bloodshed has stopped.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

In my view, the Commission has taken an important decision to start advance preparation for the 2015 Review. I trust that the Commission is well-placed to reflect on the scope of and the possible outcome of the Review, as well as the possible adjustments that could be already made in the PBC's orientation and working modalities ahead of the Review. The policy discussions aimed at revisiting the PBC's field orientation, the way it measures its results and the nature of its forms of engagement represented initial steps in this direction in 2013. With sincere appreciation to the efforts made by Norway and the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation for facilitating these discussions, there are already a set of very good ideas for further reflection this year. In fact we have piloted some of the possible early adjustments in field orientation and the modes of engagement in the most recent informal Ambassadorial-level discussions on CAR in November and December 2013. The PBC must continue to adapt to

changing circumstances, developments and needs in the countries concerned, in the regions to which they belong, and at the UN.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

I wish to conclude my remarks by acknowledging the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office, of Assistant Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins and her team, in support of the Commission's work and activities. The Office is increasingly drawing on and channelling the expertise and knowledge within and outside the UN system in support of the PBC's policy and country-specific activities. We will certainly continue to count on PBSO, especially as we prepare for the 2015 Review. I understand that PBSO is leading a UN system reflection which will eventually be encapsulated as a contribution to the 2015 Review. We are looking forward to this valuable contribution.

Mr. Chairperson-elect, Excellencies and distinguished colleagues, Madame ASG,

In closing, I wish to affirm Croatia's continued commitment to the goals of the Commission and its efforts in support of the needs and aspirations of the people and societies in the countries on its agenda. Let us all recommit ourselves to put these needs and aspirations on top of our priorities for 2014. Let us not shy away from introducing the necessary improvements and changes which will make the PBC effective and relevant

Thank you.