

Statement by H. E. Mr. Olof Skoog, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations. Annual debate of the General Assembly on the PBC and PBF annual reports 16 April 2015.

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Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Patriota, for his strong leadership and commitment during his Chairmanship of the PBC last year. It is a daunting task to replace him, but I am glad that he will stay on as vice chair.

This annual debate on peacebuilding at the General Assembly is particularly important this year. As part of the probably record high number of key UN conferences on critical global challenges during one year, we must also seize this opportunity to discuss how the UN can be better equipped to meet the increasingly complex global security challenges. This includes better support for countries emerging from conflict, towards sustainable peace and development. This includes also, as was just stated by the Ambassador of Brazil, a people-centred approach where we listen to those that are most affected by conflict.

PBC has urgent and important tasks ahead; such as the Ebola recovery, UNMIL drawdown and political processes that risk tensions and relapse, and the socio-economic development agendas that also remain far from accomplished in countries on the agenda. The tenth anniversary of the creation of PBC also gives us reason to look back and to reflect. The original motivation for the creation of the PBC, as first laid out in the Secretary General's report "In Larger Freedom", was rather straight-forward: to more effectively address the challenge of helping countries transition from war to lasting peace, and to fill an institutional gap in the UN system, including by improving strategic *planning*, helping countries strengthen their national *institutions*, ensuring predictable and flexible *funding*, improving *coordination* of international post-conflict activities, and providing a (new) diversified *intergovernmental forum* to ensure greater coherence of support and extend the period of political attention. This vision remains equally relevant today. And by working together we can take further steps during 2015 to realize this vision.

Mr. President,

During 2015, we initially have set four main priorities:

Firstly, the peacebuilding review. An impressive advisory group is currently undertaking case studies. We are looking forward to their findings that will provide important input to the intergovernmental process during the fall. As Chair we intend to act as conveners, ensuring broad participation and buy-in to the review process. This review should also tie into the

reviews of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security as well as the review on peace operations.

Secondly, peacebuilding in Ebola recovery. The three most affected countries by the Ebola Disease Outbreak - Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea - are all on the PBC agenda. As the epidemiological situation is now getting much better and we are hopefully soon down to zero cases, we need to make sure that peacebuilding priorities are addressed in the recovery efforts, including the need to accelerate support for institutional capacity building. Last week I undertook a trip to the region and I witnessed firsthand the importance of integrating peacebuilding into the recovery plans. After this meeting today I will travel to Washington DC. to participate in the World Bank spring meetings on Ebola recovery.

Thirdly, support for and coordination with regional organizations, not least the African Union. By drawing upon the work initiated by my predecessor last year, we should deepen the dialogue with regional organizations to see how our different comparative advantages can best be drawn upon. We should also look at ways to develop joint strategies as a way to forge closer and mutually reinforcing modes of cooperation.

Fourthly, financing for peacebuilding. The proposed theme for the Annual Session of 2015 is "Predictable financing for peacebuilding – breaking the silos". This session should address – again - one of the founding pillars of the creation of the PBC and in that light provide input to the peacebuilding review process.

In addition, as a cross-cutting issue we must continue to improve gender equality and women's empowerment in all our efforts. It is a crucial aspect of sustainable peace and development.

Mr. President,

In closing, we look forward to listening to the debate today, which provides an important opportunity for the wider UN membership to reflect on an increasingly significant aspect of the United Nations response to post-conflict challenges.

I thank you.