



Permanent Mission  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the United Nations  
New York



## **Statement**

**by the**

**Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations**

**H.E. Dr. Peter Wittig**

**on the occasion of his election as Chairman of the**

**Peacebuilding Commission**

**United Nations**

**27 January 2010**

**(Check against delivery)**

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany,  
Ambassador Dr. Peter Wittig**

**Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission**

***New York, 27 January 2010***

Ambassador Muñoz, former Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission,  
Vice-Chairpersons of the Peacebuilding Commission,  
Ms. Cheng-Hopkins, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding  
Support,  
Distinguished Permanent Representatives of the Member States of the  
Peacebuilding Commission, Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I sincerely wish to thank you for selecting me to chair the  
Peacebuilding Commission in 2010.

Allow me to thank especially Ambassador Muñoz for his leadership of  
the PBC over the last twelve months. Ambassador Muñoz has guided the  
work of the Commission in an exemplary manner and helped to strengthen  
the PBC's standing in the United Nations System and beyond. Let me also  
emphasize the important foundation for the work of the PBC laid by its  
former chairmen, Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola and Ambassador  
Takasu of Japan.

The Peacebuilding Commission is an essential component of the  
programme of reform and revitalization of the United Nations set in train by

the World Summit of 2005. From the very start Germany supported the establishment of the PBC. And the experience of the last three and a half years confirms that the Commission certainly has the potential to fulfil its role as entrusted to it by the General Assembly and the Security Council. The PBC is the central pillar of the UN's peacebuilding architecture and its success will likely define, in many ways, the success of the United Nations as a whole. By helping societies emerging from conflict and laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development, the PBC is indeed entrusted with a crucial contribution to international peace and security.

The PBC so far has achieved encouraging results in the countries on its agenda. Here, we owe specific gratitude to the incumbent and former Chairs of the Country-specific configurations of the PBC. Much of the future achievements of the Commission will depend on the work of its country configurations and on a structured, well conceived and organized synergy between the Organizational Committee, the Working Group Lessons Learned and the country configurations.

At the end of the day, the PBC's success in the countries on its agenda will be measured by its capability to achieve tangible and sustainable results for people on the ground. The upcoming 2010 Review process will provide an excellent opportunity to identify ways and means to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the PBC.

With the Review at our door step, and against the backdrop of a global financial and economic situation which remains difficult, 2010 will be

a critical year for the Peacebuilding Commission and a complex challenge for all of us Member States of the PBC.

**Our goal** should be to live-up to the expectations of societies and populations emerging from conflict and improving the contribution of the PBC to building hope for a better future. The 2010 Review gives us an opportunity **to reinvigorate the vision behind the Peacebuilding Commission**. It should result in a shared understanding of the purpose, role and functioning of the Commission.

For the 2010 Review and the future work of the PBC, I would like to identify the following areas as being key to further enhancing our collective peacebuilding efforts:

**First**, the **PBC** has to fulfil its role as the **platform for strategic policy coordination** for international engagement in post-conflict countries. To this end, we should think about ways to strengthen the role of the Organizational Committee of the PBC in setting overarching policies and contributing to the strategic coordination within the United Nations System.

**Second**, the PBC should play the **central role in bringing cohesion** between political, security, development and humanitarian actors. In this regard, our **partnership** and ongoing dialogue **with the International Financial Institutions, regional and sub-regional organizations and entities as well as civil society will be crucial**. We need to ensure that the relevant initiatives and activities are complementary to PBC efforts in countries on its agenda, and that our own efforts are also reinforcing

ongoing and existing peacebuilding efforts. As Chair of the PBC, I intend to establish contacts with the World Bank and the IMF in the very near future, followed by a visit to Washington, D.C. in the course of the next months.

**Third**, the PBC should provide a **framework for mutual accountability**, under which **host governments** and the **international community** should be held to account against agreed commitments. The engagement of donors with post-conflict countries should be guided by objectives identified by the host countries and the PBC within the overarching national peacebuilding strategy.

A **fourth** target would be to achieve a **more structured relationship between the Security Council and the PBC**, including increased interaction. We should help the Council identify the synergies between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. And we should do our best to ensure that countries on the Security Council's agenda could benefit from the PBC's engagement at an early stage. We can also consider how the Commission's advice on specific issues could help the Security Council clarify and monitor progress in the implementation of mandates given to peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

**Fifth**, the analysis of a **specific country situation** by the PBC should lead to the identification of a **clear and limited set of priorities** as well as to channel the necessary resources. We should reflect on the PBC's working methods: How can they become more flexible and less cumbersome in dealing with country-specific situations? We should consider how **monitoring of progress** can be carried out effectively and how to develop exit strategies.

**Finally, best practices, relevant knowledge and lessons learned** across country configurations as well as across the wider UN system and beyond need to be cross-fertilized. In this regard, the role of the **Peacebuilding Support Office should be enhanced** and further clarified. In particular, its role in supporting the PBC's advice in order to gain operational relevance within the United Nations must be strengthened. To this end, the PBSO should be able to bring the UN system together, convene peacebuilding expertise and provide solid input to PBC deliberations.

For those objectives – and probably many more which you as Member States of the PBC will no doubt have in mind – it will be essential for us to work together not only within the Organizational Committee, but also in the Working Group Lessons Learned and in the actual and future Country-specific configurations of the PBC. Within the broader context of the 2010 review process, we will also need to engage with the broader UN membership. However, I think you will agree with me that the improvement of certain areas of the PBC's work can move ahead in parallel to the 2010 review process. After all, we must not forget that the PBC's engagement with countries on its agenda or those likely to request advice is an ongoing process which we can not afford to pause or delay.

The annual retreat of the Peacebuilding Commission to which I also would like to invite the Co-Facilitators for the 2010 Review will be a good opportunity for us to reflect on the way forward. This retreat of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States of the PBC – which

follows the tradition established by Ambassador Takasu and Ambassador Muñoz – will be held on the 5th and 6th of March. We have received assurances that the Secretary-General will join us.

Before concluding, I should like to express my special gratitude to all colleagues involved in the work of the PBC, to the Chairs of the Country-specific configurations and of the Working Group Lessons Learned and to the team of the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Judy Cheng Hopkins. Without the hard work, skills and determination of the team of the PBSO, we as the PBC could not fulfil our function and responsibility.

Finally, let me come back to one key point: In **2010 we have to reinvigorate the vision behind the PBC**. We have to **follow up on the report “peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict”** and on **Security Council Resolution 1889 – Women in Peacebuilding**. We have to establish a closer **cooperation with the World Bank and the IMF** and have to closely cooperate with the **African Union** and the **International Dialogue on Peacebuilding**.

I hope – and I am confident – that we, the Member States of the Peacebuilding Commission, can tackle, in a concerted manner and in a common effort, the challenges we face in 2010. Effective peacebuilding is a central function of the United Nations, and the PBC role – and ultimately its relevance – will be measured by its capability to deliver.

I thank you again for the confidence you have placed in me and my country.

Thank you.