

**Working Group on Lessons Learned**  
**Security Sector Reform and Rule of Law for Peacebuilding**

**26 October 2011, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM,**

**NLB Conference Room 6**

**Concept Note**

**Background**

Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Rule of Law (RoL) have been identified as peacebuilding priorities by a number of countries on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) agenda. Security sector reform and rule of law have been increasingly viewed as mutually reinforcing and, therefore, the linkages between the two priorities need to be further explored and key lessons identified on how the PBC can strengthen its efforts to support national security sector reform and rule of law efforts.

A previous Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL) meeting on *Comparative Lessons from the United Nations Rule of Law Assistance*<sup>1</sup> held on 20 October 2008 noted that peacebuilding can have a lasting impact, if it is based on inclusive consultative processes aimed at putting in place legal and societal mechanisms to prevent recurrence of violence. A long-term commitment that is anchored in a shared vision and a coherent approach of all relevant actors is an essential element of success for rule of law assistance. It also noted that investment in national capacity-building and strengthening of local expertise in the area of rule of law is a critical component of United Nations (UN) assistance in this area.

The most recently released *World Development Report 2011 on Conflict, Security and Development*<sup>2</sup> suggests that strengthening legitimate institutions and governance to provide citizen security, justice, and jobs is crucial to break cycles of violence. The report notes that security sector reform and justice sector reform need to be pursued in tandem to assist the transformation of institutions to ones that provide basic citizen safety, security and access to justice. The report emphasizes the need for a more coordinated approach to police and military reform and notes the importance of coordination across justice agencies in order to fight impunity and ensure effective linkages between the police and other justice institutions, including the judiciary, public prosecutors, and prisons.

---

<sup>1</sup><http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/Working%20Group%20on%20Lessons%20Learned/Chairs'%20Summary-RoL-3Nov08.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [wdr2011.worldbank.org/fulltext](http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/fulltext)

The World Development Report 2011 further notes that, if security forces are to be used in the national interest and prevent abuses, civilian oversight of the security forces is important at the early stages. It involves links between political and security strategy and public finances. The report suggests that three key elements in successful civilian oversight are: encourage political and military leaders to discuss the mission of the security forces in supporting national objectives; use public finance systems to reinforce civilian control; commit the military to improvements in accountability and human rights.

In the second global meeting of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding held in Monrovia, Liberia, on 15-16 June, 2011, the members of the g7+ Group and their international partners adopted the “Monrovia Declaration”<sup>3</sup> which consists of five objectives on peacebuilding and statebuilding, including the need to establish and strengthen people’s security, to address injustice and to improve access to justice. In this regard, the Declaration noted the critical challenge of improving the behavior, effectiveness and accountability of a broad range of security actors in response to people’s rights and needs, with particular attention to the needs of women and children. It was further noted that formal justice mechanisms must be accessible, affordable and seen as fair by citizens.

In his 2009 report on *Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict*, the Secretary General recognized the centrality of capacity development in priority areas for peacebuilding, including in the area of security sector reform. The resulting *Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict: Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group*<sup>4</sup> provided several recommendations in this regard. In addition, the 2010 report on the *Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture* underscored the need for the PBC and all actors engaged in peacebuilding to increase the focus on capacity-building across the board so as to build national expertise and ensure sustainability of peacebuilding efforts.

Last month, the Report of the Secretary General, *Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict*, was released, which identified actions that the UN can take over the next 12 months to enhance civilian capacity. The PBC should take due consideration of the report and its forth-coming discussions with member states on the report’s proposed measures when considering how it can strengthen support to SSR and RoL in post-conflict countries.

The PBC offers an appropriate platform for a crucial dialogue between the concerned Government, international and regional partners and the UN. Therefore, in recognition of the importance of linkages between SSR and RoL, civilian oversight and capacity building when addressing SSR and RoL for peacebuilding, this Working Group on Lessons Learned meeting

---

<sup>3</sup> [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/24/48345560.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/24/48345560.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.civcapreview.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3422&language=en-US>

aims to discuss examples and lessons learned from countries' experience to facilitate the development of a common approach, division of labour and management of expectations among various actors on SSR and RoL planning, programming and implementation.

### **PBC's experience**

Throughout its engagement with the countries on its agenda, the PBC has addressed the questions of security sector reform and rule of law as critical peacebuilding priorities. In certain situations, a key challenge will be to ensure that linkages between important aspects of security sector reform and rule of law planning are recognized and properly addressed, while also ensuring coordination among and between national and external actors.

For example, there is a need to link SSR and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in the implementation of peace accords in order to ensure a smooth transition to a stable political environment. There is also a need for an early dialogue among relevant government institutions (police, defense, justice, etc.) with a view to developing a nationally owned "vision" or "strategy", with clear priorities and detailed timeline for short, medium and long-term institutional reform objectives, which often support the implementation of peace processes. The multiplicity of partners (national, bilateral and multilateral, NGOs, civil society) that are active in these fields necessitates the creation of a reliable coordination mechanism and agreement on division of responsibilities that is primarily driven by the "national vision".

The experience of some countries on the PBC agenda also suggests that it is critical to support the country's capacity to ensure rightly-sized and well-equipped military in order to ensure the credibility of a peace process and prepare the grounds for withdrawal of peacekeeping forces where they exist. The Liberian experience has highlighted the need to pay particular attention to the effectiveness of civilian oversight determining if sufficient mechanisms are in place to prevent re-politicization of security forces. The National Security Council in Liberia provides a platform for political and military leaders to have discussions and make decisions on issues of national security dimension. Their National Security Strategy also "places the citizens at the center of a new arrangement that focuses on human rights as the cardinal ingredient for National Security." <sup>5</sup> to improve military commitment in human rights. The development of civilian oversight capacities of security institutions (for example, through support to the role of Parliament) is found to be crucial, as well as the development of national and local mechanisms to promote RoL.

The UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) provides financial support to SSR and RoL, under its implementation of peace agreements priority area – which has so far received the largest allocations. A number of useful lessons learned emerged from PBF interventions in this priority

---

<sup>5</sup> PBSO Briefing Note on Security Sector Reform – Liberia (June 2011)

area, in particular in countries on the PBC agenda. One important lesson is that PBF interventions in the areas of SSR and/or RoL may not lead directly to immediate peace, and sustainable efforts are needed to make the intervention successful. For example, in Guinea-Bissau, to foster the SSR, the PBF financed the refurbishment of four prisons and the rehabilitation of many military barracks in various localities. A feasibility study to design dedicated training courses for the police and the military was also conducted, based on the human rights based-approach and including a special focus on women.

### **Key issues for consideration**

Going forward, the PBC aims to advocate for better communication and cooperation among different actors in SSR and RoL to improve linkages between rule of law and security sector reform. Most recently, the PBC's four west-African country configurations held a meeting to examine ways to support the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI) on combating narco-trafficking. That meeting demonstrated the PBC's potential to promote a sub-regional approach to addressing cross-border peacebuilding challenges on the basis of supporting cross-border cooperation and promoting practical linkages between SSR and RoL. The PBC also aims to serve as a platform for information sharing on strategies and mechanisms that have proved useful in fostering civilian oversight in the aftermath of conflict. It could also play a role in mobilizing resources needed to establish structures, facilities and ensure targeted capacity development for the countries on its agenda.

To better guide the PBC's future engagement in the aforementioned three areas, namely the linkages between SSR and RoL, civilian oversight and capacity building, this meeting of the WGLL will aim at addressing obstacles faced by the actors in the field in carrying-out their supporting in this regard. It will explore how best the PBC could engage in identifying the gaps in policy development, implementation and resources in the field and how it can help efforts in the field in order to overcome challenges in mobilizing funding and expertise and/or ensure linkage and coordination between different sectors and actors.

In fulfilling the aforementioned objective, the WGLL meeting will provide an opportunity to draw on the experience of experts from within and outside the UN system, by addressing the following questions:

- What experiences can countries undergoing peacebuilding draw upon in improving linkages between security sector reform and rule of law and in ensuring nationally-led policy dialogues and sectoral coordination among key actors?
- What have been successful strategies and mechanisms for promoting and developing civilian oversight of security institutions in the aftermath of violent conflict and political crisis?
- What are sustainable approaches to national capacity development in rule of law? What issues must be addressed in rebuilding a country's legal education system so to have a

sustainable impact? How can cooperation at the regional or sub-regional levels contribute to rule of law capacity development?

**Format and Structure**

This open meeting will be held as a panel discussion.

**Location:** New York, North Lawn Building conference Room 6

**Date:** 26 October 2011, 10 AM – 1 PM

**Chair:** H.E. Mr. Tsuneo Nishida, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

**Panelists:**

1. Col. Aloysius Kagoro, Deputy Director of Legal Services, Uganda People's Defence Force
2. Mr. Adedeji Ebo, Head of the Security Sector Reform Unit, Department for Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations
3. Mr. Kevin O. George, Country Director, American Bar Association, Rule of Law Initiative
4. Ms. Camino Kavanagh, Senior Program Coordinator and Fellow, Center on International Cooperation

**Follow-up**

The outcome of the meeting will be consolidated by the Chair of the WGLL in the form of Chair's Summary, as well as Initial Findings on recommended actions for the PBC. The documents will be shared with the Organizational Committee and Country Specific Configurations for further reflection.

\*\*\*\*\*