

PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE (PBSO)

Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2009 to June 2010)

During this reporting period, the Peacebuilding Support Office continued its support for Africa's development through its work in support of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) which is engaged in peace consolidation efforts in the four African countries on its agenda; through the operations of the Peacebuilding Fund, which currently provides funding for peacebuilding activities in 12 African countries, and through its analytical work in post-conflict peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding commission engagement in African countries

The four African countries on the agenda of PBC are Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone.

The Commission's key tasks include advising post-conflict countries on the development of integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery; helping to marshal resources and ensuring predictable financing for early recovery activities, and ensuring sustained attention by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

Taken together, actions in all these areas contribute to Africa's development by helping individual post-conflict countries re-launch themselves on the path of sustained growth and development—the main goal of NEPAD. Enhancing the development prospects of African countries through regional cooperation is also fundamental principle of NEPAD.

The third review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi which concluded in July 2009 recommended “strengthening the participation and leading role of Burundi in subregional organizations such as the African Union, the East African Community, the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.” The implementation of this recommendation has encompassed a composite of policy measures and actions.

Burundi has participated in regular sectoral meetings for its full integration into the EAC. In addition, EAC, COMESA and SADC are in the process of negotiating an agreement to establish a free trade area (Agreement Establishing the Tripartite Free Trade Area). Negotiations for a Common Market Agreement were finalised and signed on 20 November 2009 during the 21st Summit of East African Community Heads of State. Work is currently under way to prepare for the agreement's ratification. To enable a quick implementation of the VAT and accelerate the harmonization of Burundi's customs system with those of other countries of the East African Community, a capacity-building workshop for senior Burundian officials was organized in partnership with the Rwanda Revenue Authority.

In November 2009, the ICGLR organized a round table in Bujumbura on the implementation of the Pact for Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. Two regional programmes of action were adopted, on peace and security and on democracy and good governance respectively. They will be implemented over five years (2010-2014). The Coordination Group for Burundi's Regional Integration, chaired by the Minister for East African Community Affairs and co-chaired by the United Kingdom, and bringing together different

development partners who provide assistance to this programme, met for the second time on 11 December 2009. Among other tasks this group has been working on a Strategic Action and Communication Plans for the Ministry for East African Community Affairs. This group includes also representatives of civil society and the private sector.

The first review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in CAR, which itself makes several references to regional and sub-regional organisations in Africa, highlights the positive role played by some of these organisations in the Central African context, such as MICOPAX (an ECCAS stabilisation force based in CAR). Furthermore, ECCAS has agreed to provide the necessary military observers to support the DDR process in CAR notably, the verification of the lists of ex-combatants and their disarmament and demobilisation. This effort is funded by the European Union through its Africa Peace Facility.

In the context of the upcoming withdrawal of the UN's Peacekeeping mission in Chad and CAR (MINURCAT), the PBC and PBSO have encouraged the identification of regional and sub-regional solutions. This stance is based on the fact that regional problems should be dealt with in a regional context and necessitate regional solutions. In addition to trans-border security issues in CAR, the country also faces the situation of LRA presence on its territory. The CAR government has agreed with Ugandan authorities to allow the latter to provide support to the former to solve the threat LRA poses to the region.

The involvement of the PBC in Sierra Leone and the support that the PBSO has provided to the Commission, have ensured that Sierra Leone continues to enjoy sustained attention of the international community. The attention brought to Sierra Leone by the PBC has translated into broadening of the donor base to the country and has provided a platform for the Government of Sierra Leone to advocate for investing in sustainable peace and development in the country.

Cognizant of the important development and peace nexus, PBC priorities in Sierra Leone have throughout its engagement included priority areas that coincide with those in the NEPAD plan of action, specifically particularly energy and employment, particularly as well as youth employment. In the area of energy, the involvement of the PBC has ensured 9 million USD of funding for the provision of electricity to Freetown and two other provinces. In the area of youth employment, the PBC has encouraged the Government of Sierra Leone, the UN, the World Bank and the German GTZ to craft a joint response aligned with the government plan and aimed at the creation of over 100,000 sustainable jobs.

The peacebuilding priorities jointly identified by the government of Guinea-Bissau and PBC included elections and good governance, economic revitalization, SSR and fight against drug-trafficking, public administration reform and social questions critical for peacebuilding. The first review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau concluded in February 2010, recognising the need for Guinea-Bissau and for CSM to work closely with ECOWAS and African Union in tackling a number of urgent priorities, including cross-border security threats, fight against drug-trafficking and illicit arms and light weapons, security sector reform and judicial reform.

Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)

One of PBF's primary objectives is to set conditions for sustainable development in post-conflict countries at the earliest stage possible. In 2009, the terms of reference of the PBF were revised by the UN General Assembly to make the fund more effective and responsive, while its scope was expanded to include initiatives that stimulate economic recovery and deliver early peace dividends mainly for conflict affected populations and groups.

As of 24 June 2010, the PBF provided in total funding for 12 African post-conflict countries (Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan) to assist them in various aspects in the transition from conflict to sustainable peace and development. Four of these countries, Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone are on the agenda of the PBC and receive peacebuilding strategic advice and support in marshalling resources for recovery.

More concretely, of the total PBF global approved budgets of 173.7 million USD in June 2010, an amount of 154.7 million USD (or 89 percent of total budgets) went to support peacebuilding efforts in African countries.

One priority of the PBF is to support the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue, in particular in relation to strengthening of national institutions and processes set up under those agreements. Critical funding is allocated to rebuild technical and human capacities of national security agencies; strengthen judiciary systems in order to institute rule of law, support disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants; and facilitate political dialogue at times of imminent threat to the peace agreement and negotiate solutions and sustain the peace process. In total 38 projects have been or are still implemented in Africa in the above referred countries amounting to 61.8 million USD.

The Fund also provides financial support for projects which bolster good governance, promote national dialogue and reconciliation to end corruption, impunity and denial of basic human rights. In 2009 the PBF also deepened its commitment to contribute to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1889, 1820 and 1888. Consistent with one of NEPAD's primary objectives, the Fund has paid increasing attention to fund projects which advance gender equality. In total 11 PBF programmes in Africa are designed to enhance effective participation of women in peacebuilding processes, build capacities of women's organizations in community reconciliation and improve the protection of women against gender based violence.

One of the core activities of the PBF is to provide funding for early economic recovery, which, in Africa, currently amounts to 20.04 million USD (in total 19 projects.). Most projects prioritize youth empowerment and employment programmes to overcome persistent and pervasive unemployment that pose an ominous threat to the stability of post-conflict resources. More generally, the Fund aims to strengthen economic governance through the promotion of partnerships with private sector; development of micro enterprises and youth employment schemes, and technical support to design more inclusive and sustainable policies of the management of natural resources.

PBF projects are also designed to assist post-conflict governments and ministries in the rehabilitation and expansion of basic social services and infrastructure (energy, transportation, safe drinking water and proper sanitation) in regions most affected by conflict. The PBF currently funds six projects in this area in the total amount of 11.9 million USD.

PBSO's Analytical Work

Last year's report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (A/63/881-S/2009/304) outlined how the United Nations and the international community could support national efforts to secure sustainable peace more rapidly and effectively. This landmark policy statement identifies recurring peacebuilding priorities and calls upon the UN system and its external partners to take specific steps that will result in a more coherent and effective response to these challenges.

For example, the report calls for more clarity on the division of labour within the UN system and among its partners for key peacebuilding activities including mediation, mine action, security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, elections, economic revitalization, and public administration. The recommendations will impact upon the system's ability to deliver in immediate post-conflict contexts, especially in Africa. UN presences in Africa are systematically implementing the recommendations, and thus, are moving toward more coherent approaches to peacebuilding. Implementation of this agenda for action is evident in countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, DRC, Burundi, and Guinea Bissau.

The report also called for a review that would analyze how the United Nations and the international community can broaden and deepen the pool of civilian experts to support the immediate capacity development needs of countries emerging from conflict. The review is drawing lessons directly from countries emerging from conflict on the African continent and relevant UN field operations in order to develop recommendations on how to strengthen the availability, deployability and appropriateness of civilian capacities for peacebuilding. The review is consulting broadly across host nations, Member States, civil society and regional organizations such as the African Union. A series of consultations with African stakeholders are foreseen, the first of which took place in Addis Ababa on 29 June 2010.

The Peacebuilding Support Office has been tasked by the Secretary-General with overseeing the preparation of a report on "Women's Participation and Inclusion in Peacebuilding and Planning in the Aftermath of Conflict," called for under Security Council Resolution 1889. Taking into consideration the views of the Peacebuilding Commission, the report will include: (1) an analysis on the particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations; (2) an assessment of the challenges to women's participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding; (3) recommendations for enhanced response, including both measures to enhance national capacity and actions to ensure more robust and coherent action by the UN system and the wider international community. The report will be informed by a series of studies, consultations and interviews. In Africa, missions have been fielded and local consultations conducted in Burundi and Sierra Leone to ensure the recommendations are grounded in practice and reflect the needs and recommendations of stakeholders in addressing gaps and challenges, while highlighting best practice, to women's participation in peacebuilding in the region.