

**Open Debate of the Security Council, January 31, 2007**  
**Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General, PBSO**

Excellencies, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I am pleased to provide a short statement in my capacity as head of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

The links between the Commission and the Security Council, the General Assembly, and ECOSOC are critical, and I know that members of the Commission are exploring how to make the relationships among and between these bodies as effective as possible.

How to deal with the critical post-conflict period has escaped our collective best efforts despite several attempts to address the issue through transitional mechanisms. The creation of the new mechanisms, the Peacebuilding Commission, the PBSO and the Peacebuilding Fund, offers a new opportunity to address this critical and fragile period in the life of a country ravaged by conflict.

For this to happen, the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in bringing all the actors together. This means that it will take on board the work of the Council, the work of ECOSOC and the General Assembly, the work of the UN Agencies and the work of all the partners, whether the financial institutions and the donors, the regional players, internal actors such as civil society and any others as appropriate. This does not mean duplication or overlap, rather it is the strategic way in which the Commission will work.

To be most effective, this work must play out at the country level. The test of relevance for all of us will be to apply this approach in a way that will bring results for Burundi and Sierra Leone. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs will be working closely over the next several weeks with PBC members and the governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone to frame the next stage for the Commission's work, building on the first round of work accomplished so far.

For its part, the PBSO will do everything it can to support the PBC in this important work. The PBSO must work with the players in the UN system, both in the field and in headquarters to ensure that the strategies of the PBC are applied to all relevant areas of the UN's work.

An important part of the Commission's mandate will be to marshal resources. While we all agree that the PBC is not another donor forum, its work should generate significant additional resources for countries committed to staying on track for peace.

The Secretary-General just announced a few days ago the first allocation under the Peacebuilding Fund -- \$35 million for Burundi, and will soon make an announcement regarding Sierra Leone. The Fund, however, can act only as a catalyst. Alone, it cannot address the peacebuilding resource needs of countries emerging from conflict. The role of the PBC in marshalling resources is much broader.

It is only by bringing all the actors together, that the PBC can fulfill its mandate to advise on and propose integrated strategies for peacebuilding; to identify critical elements of peacebuilding in the countries under its consideration, bringing them together under an integrated strategic approach. It is in this way that the PBC can work inclusively to define its own objectives, enter into an agreement with the countries under its consideration, and provide guidance to the various actors in how they can meet the broad goals of peacebuilding.

As I said, my office is committed to supporting the PBC and the overall efforts of the international community in this important endeavour, including through extracting lessons learned and becoming the repository for peacebuilding advice within the UN. We are now closer to completing the staffing requirements for this stage of the office's work and will continue to discuss with members of the PBC their vision for the work of the support office, particularly in the context of this year's budget discussions.

Under the leadership of El Salvador, in its capacity as vice-Chair of the PBC, work on lessons learned will begin soon, with the establishment of a working group which will include broad participation of all Commission members.

In the long run, Peacebuilding must not be another layer of work for governments or the UN or donors on the ground. Instead, it should define the way in which we frame our interventions to ensure that we can most effectively respond to the immediate needs of a post conflict society and keep the peace process on a sustainable track.