

PRESS RELEASE

## **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ESTABLISHES PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION**

UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, 20 DECEMBER 2005 — In implementing a major outcome of the September 2005 Summit, the UN General Assembly today established a Peacebuilding Commission to assist countries emerging from conflict to achieve sustainable peace.

The Peacebuilding Commission will marshal resources at the disposal of the international community to advise and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery, focusing attention on reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development, in countries emerging from conflict.

“This resolution would, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, create a mechanism which ensures that for countries emerging from conflict, post-conflict does not mean post-engagement of the international community,” General Assembly President Jan Eliasson told the General Assembly just before the decision.

Composed of Security Council members, top financial and troop contributors, members of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly, the Commission will be an advisory body whose recommendations should carry the weight of its prestigious membership. It will have no enforcement powers.

The Commission will promote coordination among all actors within and outside the UN system involved in assisting a country’s recovery, including that country’s national authorities. Its objective will also be to extend the period of attention by the international community to post-conflict recovery and to ensure predictable financing for their efforts.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan called the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission “a turning point in our efforts to help states and societies manage the difficult transition from war to peace.”

He said that the new Commission would address “a critical institutional gap” in the UN’s machinery for helping war-torn countries and should improve “coordination both within and beyond the UN system.”

The Secretary-General proposed the Peacebuilding Commission in his “In Larger Freedom” report of March 2005. In noting that roughly half the countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years, he wrote that “no part of the United Nations system effectively addresses the challenge of helping countries with the transition from war to lasting peace.” The Peacebuilding Commission and its support office within the UN Secretariat will help achieve this end.

The Commission will convene in New York as soon as possible after the adoption of the resolution, and will be supported by a small Peacebuilding Support office in the UN Secretariat, financed by existing resources.

The Secretary-General will establish a standing Peacebuilding Fund from voluntary contributions to ensure the immediate release of resources needed to launch peacebuilding activities and secure financing for recovery.

The General Assembly resolution states that the Peacebuilding Commission will meet “in various configurations.” It will have a standing Organizational Committee composed of 31 members: seven members of the Security Council; seven members of the Economic and Social Council; five top providers of assessed contributions to the UN budgets and voluntary contributions to UN funds, programmes and agencies, including a Peacebuilding fund, — and five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to UN missions. Seven additional members will be elected to ensure representation from all regional groups and by countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery.

The work of the Commission will be carried out by country-specific committees that will include the country under consideration, countries in the region, major financial, troop and civilian police contributors involved in that country's recovery effort, relevant senior UN officials and relevant regional and international financial institutions.

The Security Council and ECOSOC or the General Assembly will solicit advice from the Peacebuilding Commission on identifying specific countries emerging from conflict which could benefit from the Commission's consideration. The Commission will then convene to organize assistance and make recommendation on efforts needed by the international community to ensure long-term recovery.

The Commission will end its consideration of a country when foundations for a sustainable peace and development are established or upon the request by national authorities of that country.

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