

Peacebuilding Commission – Ambassadorial level Meeting on the Great Lakes Strategic Framework

27 November 2017

Chairperson’s Summary of the Discussion

On 27 November 2017, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened a meeting on the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Chair of the PBC. The purpose of the meeting was to raise awareness on the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework and to promote further interest of the international community in support of its implementation.

The Commission was briefed by Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General (SESG) for the Great Lakes, H.E. Ms. Liberata Mulamula, Former Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, H.E. Mr. Raymond Serge Balé, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo, Chair of ICGLR, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Mr. Franck Bousquet, Senior Director for Fragility, Conflict, Violence and Forced Displacement at the World Bank, and Mr. David Clapp, representing the Regional Chair of the UN Development Group.

The SESG informed the Commission that his Office and the United Nations Country Teams in the region had jointly developed the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework in 2015, which was subsequently endorsed by the Security Council in March 2016. The Regional Strategic Framework aims to align political and programmatic interventions by the United Nations in support of the implementation of the SESG Roadmap. He highlighted the six pillars of the Regional Strategic Framework: sustainable natural resource management; economic integration, cross-border trade and food and nutrition security; mobility; youth and adolescents; gender and sexual and gender-based violence; and justice and conflict prevention.

The SESG shared some examples that highlight the importance of activities under these pillars in supporting the political engagement of his office. He explained his office’s support for the political engagement and advocacy to promote the role of women in peace and political processes in the region, and support to the establishment of the Goma Youth Center for Peace and regional meetings which discussed measures to address youth unemployment in the region, in recognition of the important role of youth in peace and development. He also mentioned that the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference was held in Kinshasa in February 2016 to promote the role of the private sector in efforts to achieve lasting peace in the region.

The SESG welcomed the approval of the Peacebuilding Fund of a cross-border project under the Regional Strategic Framework, which addresses population displacement between Tanzania and Burundi.

In his remarks, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco welcomed the Regional Strategic Framework as an innovative way to link peace, security and development, which is in line with the Secretary-General’s vision of the UN peace and security architecture. He further noted that

PBSO welcomed the cross-border project proposal as an opportunity to implement the resolution on sustaining peace and to take forward the Secretary General's reform ideas on the peace and security architecture. The proposal is also in line with PBSO's on-going efforts to invest part of the PBF in supporting peacebuilding initiatives that address cross-border challenges. He informed members that the PBF contribution to the project "Preventing conflict and building peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and instability associated with forced displacement between Burundi and Tanzania" was US\$ 2 million, and the project will focus on enhanced border management and protection monitoring in border areas, preparation of economic reintegration of displaced populations as well as the strengthening of displacement-related conflict resolution mechanisms. He noted that the project is aligned with the Strategic Framework, specifically Pillar 3 that concerns mobility, and Pillar 6, justice and conflict prevention. He expressed hope that the PBF contribution to the Great Lakes Cross-Border MPTF would provide an opportunity to showcase the delivery capacity of the Framework, thus making a catalytic contribution to further resource mobilization efforts.

In her remarks, Ambassador Mulamula welcomed the role of the PBC in keeping peacebuilding at the top of the international community's agenda. She noted that the agreements reached within the ICGLR framework had considered the reality of cross-border cooperation on peace and security in the Great Lakes Region. She welcomed the initiatives under the Strategic Framework which underpin the commitment of ICGLR to address the challenges of peace and development. She welcomed the engagement of the Women Platform that provides a space for promoting the role of women in peace and political process in the region. In this regard, she welcomed the launch of the African Women Leaders Network that aims at bolstering the leadership of women in governance, peace and security, including initiatives addressing the role of women in peacebuilding. She expressed her hope that various ICGLR fora of Parliaments, Women, Youth and Civil Society would continue to be effectively engaged in the implementation of the identified priorities in order to address the root causes of conflict in the Great Lakes Region.

In his remarks, Mr. Bousquet recalled that the World Bank Great Lakes Initiative was launched following the joint mission of former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Kim to the Great Lakes region in May 2013, immediately after 11 African nations signed the "Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region" (PSCF) in February 2013. The joint mission created strong momentum and support for the implementation of the PSCF among the UN system, development partners, regional economic communities and countries in the Great Lakes region. For the World Bank, the joint mission led to the preparation of the Great Lakes Initiative, which aims to promote peace, stability and economic development. He provided an update on the implementation of World Bank Great Lakes Initiative, which has two inter-related-pillars, 1) recovery of livelihoods to reduce the vulnerability of people living in the Great Lakes whose communities suffered greatly during the conflict; 2) revitalizing and expanding cross-border economic activity and integration in the areas of agriculture, energy, transport and regional trade. Out of the \$1.3 billion earmarked to scale up World Bank development assistance via the regional IDA window, nearly \$1.1 billion has been delivered.

Significant progress has been made in areas such as installing remedial infrastructure at two major crossings along the Rwanda border, and installing solar-powered lighting at Goma-Petite Barrière and at Ruzizi I crossings, allowing for greater security and extended trading

and border-opening hours. In addition, a cross-border committee was established between DRC and Rwanda to discuss and harmonize bilateral trade issues.

The Bank's support to the implementation of the PSCF under the Great Lakes Initiative is delivered in close collaboration with the office of the UN Special Envoy to the Great Lakes. He noted that this collaboration could be strengthened to fully exploit potential synergies in areas of common interest. These include cross-border trade, food and nutrition security, border management and cross-border mobility, gender and sexual and gender-based violence.

Mr. Bousquet reiterated some of the key messages of the joint UN-WB study *Pathways for Peace – Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* jointly presented by the Secretary-General and World Bank President at the UN General Assembly on September 21, 2017, which are consistent with and relevant to the approach used in the Great lakes:

In his remarks, delivered on behalf of Abdoulaye Mar Dieye, Chair of the Regional UN Development Group, Mr. Clapp noted that the Great Lakes framework went beyond an integrated approach at the country level, providing a complementary regional framework to address regional conflict drivers. He recalled the six pillars of the Strategic Framework, developed under the co-leadership of the Special Envoy and the Chair of the UN Development Group, together with the five UNCTs – Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

He provided an update on the progress made since the launch of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework, in terms of strategic management and implementation, including transparency and accountability. He explained that a Management Board is chaired by the SESG and Chair of the Regional UNDG, and that a dedicated cross-border multi partner trust fund had been set up. He welcomed the initial contributions from the Peacebuilding Fund and the upcoming funding from the European Union.

In his remarks, Ambassador Balé, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo, speaking on behalf of the President of ICGLR, welcomed the efforts under way to mobilize support to peace and development cross-border initiatives in the region under the Strategic Framework and in line with the ICGLR priorities. He stressed the importance of working together closely with the UN, WBG and the donor community to address political and socio-economic challenges of the region. He reiterated the commitment of the ICGLR to be an active partner in the implementation of the projects under the Strategic Framework.

Member States raised the following issues:

- They welcomed the detailed information provided by briefers, especially on the cross-border projects that are being implemented, including the one funded by PBF.
- Support was expressed for the holistic approach of the Strategic Framework and its complementarity with other regional programs.
- The important role of women in the Strategic Framework and in peacebuilding efforts in the Great Lakes Region was recognized.
- It was recognized that the Great Lakes Region remains one of the most complex and fragile regions in the world, and that it was important to address the root causes of conflicts. There was recognition of the complementarity between the Peace and Security Framework and the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework.

- The need to link peacebuilding efforts at national level with efforts at regional level was highlighted. The relevance of the 6 pillars was recognized and urgent action to address the challenges under the 6 pillars was called for.
- Recognizing the coherent approach of the Strategic Framework, it was noted that the people in the Great Lakes Region could not afford the fragmentation usually seen within the UN and with other international and regional stakeholders.
- It was requested that the 5 core countries be better involved in the implementation of the Strategic Framework. Initiatives underscored as key in relation to the implementation of the Strategic Framework include fighting illicit financing flows, fighting illegal exploitation of natural resources, and investing in regional projects in a follow-up to the Private Sector Investment Conference in Kinshasa in February 2016.
- The EU announced that they will deploy EUR 30 million, including EUR 1.5 million for a Great Lakes regional project for peace and security in line with the priorities of the Strategic Framework.
- It was suggested to explore the use of South-South Cooperation in implementing some of the initiatives, and to explore opportunities to replicate this regional approach in other countries and regions engaged with the PBC.

In concluding the meeting, the Chair thanked all speakers for their detailed briefings, which provided participants with an overview of the Great Lakes Strategic Framework and other on-going initiatives in support for sustainable peace in the region. He suggested that the PBC could continue to play a role in raising awareness on peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region, and in sustaining interest of the international community for the Great Lakes Strategic Framework. He informed members that the Chair would share the results of the meeting with the Security Council. He also suggested to discuss with the Special Envoy and representatives of the 5 core countries the opportunity to convene a follow up meeting in 2018.
