

**Peacebuilding Commission**  
**Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee**  
**26 January 2011**

**Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion**

**Background**

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On 26 January 2011, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an informal meeting. The PBC Chairperson presided over the meeting. The agenda for the meeting included a briefing by Dr. Bruce Jones, Member of the Senior Advisory Group to the Secretary-General on the Review of the international civilian capacity and Dr. David Harland, Director of the Review Team.

**Briefing on the review of the international civilian capacity**

1. Dr. Jones framed the discussion by stating that peacekeeping can only provide temporary security and that measures to sustain lasting peace must be developed from the onset of peace operations. To date the civilian component has been lacking in quality, sufficiency and speed. One explanation was the short time span of peacekeeping operations against the need for long-term perspectives for allowing peace to take root in a country. Therefore, 85% of the conflicts we witnessed in the past decade were in countries that had already experienced conflicts in the decade prior to that. Adding to this, conflicts themselves were changing and new patterns emerging such as the interconnectedness with organized and transnational crime as well as significant sub-regional dynamics. Appropriate civilian capacities should therefore address not only the challenges of the past but also those of the future. This would require a more nimble United Nations with the ability to tap into the most appropriate capacities in Member States, regional organizations or civil society. Currently the UN had neither the people nor the systems to manage these partnerships.

2. The report would recommend a United Nations that is **OPEN** in that it focuses on **Ownership, Partnerships, Expertise and Nimbleness**. Dr. Jones emphasized that the PBC would be a particularly appropriate forum for taking forward a number of recommendations because of its mandate to work across organizational boundaries and address the entire continuum of peacebuilding activities.

3. Dr. Harland emphasized that many of the report's recommendations reflect points made by Member States during the debate in the Security Council on Peacebuilding and Institution-building on 21 January 2011. He pointed to the importance of national ownership, national capacity development, the need to limit 'brain drain', the need for a more demand-driven approach with stronger partnerships between the UN, Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations, training centers and civil society.

4. Dr. Harland also noted that the previous discussions in the PBC OC on the Review of International Civilian Capacity had provided useful input to the Review in terms of focusing

on existing structures rather than inventing new ones and in placing national ownership at the front and centre of the report.

5. The recommendations on ownership would include strengthened support to core state capacities, recommendations on increasing local procurement and institutionalizing the primacy of local capacities. The recommendations on partnership would include a Civilian Partnership Cell as a docking mechanism for Member States and other capacities, a legal and financial framework for supporting deployments as well as training regime enabling training centres to deliver more targeted training. The Report has a strong focus on the need to better leverage capacities in the Global South and among women. The recommendations on expertise will include identifying critical capacity gaps within the United Nations System as well as establishing a cluster system within core peacebuilding areas inspired by the humanitarian cluster system. Furthermore, different parts of the United Nations system should function as global service providers enabling UN leadership in the field to tailor the most appropriate assistance to a country emerging from conflict drawing on their services. Finally, the recommendations on nimbleness would include creating more flexibility in the funding streams for peace consolidation as well as harmonizing the overhead imposed on different funds across the United Nations system.

6. Member states welcomed the briefing and expressed support to the approach of the Review. In the subsequent discussion, they highlighted the following priorities:

- National capacity and national ownership: several Member States reiterated the importance of strengthening national capacities in order to lay solid foundation for sustainable peacebuilding.
- Bilateral capacities: Examples of appropriate civilian capacities among the Membership, that could be made available to the United Nations, were discussed. The United Nations should focus on identifying cost-effective local or regional capacities rather than automatically deploying international staff. South-South and triangular cooperation would be essential models in this regard. Also, existing national training centres should be leveraged in generating civilian capacity.
- Gender mainstreaming: Several Member States underlined the important role of women in post-conflict peacebuilding.
- Holistic approach: a number of members underlined the importance of including a broad group of actors including development actors and the World Bank in the implementation of the Review. Members recognized that some recommendations including the possible introduction of the cluster system across peacebuilding activities would require dedicated leadership at HQ as well as in the field.
- Follow-up: several Members States stressed that the real work begins when the report is out and look to the Secretary-General for strong leadership. Members also want the PBC to continue to play an active role in the implementation of the report and would similarly support the Review through bilateral channels.

7. In the follow-up remarks, Dr. Jones again emphasised the role that the PBC could play in taking some of the recommendations forward. In addition, coherent positions in other fora such as the boards of the World Bank and UNDP would also be required.

8. The Chair concluded the discussion by reminding the members and the Review team that engaging with partners would be a process, not an event.

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