

6 February 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at the Meeting of the General Assembly to Resume Consideration of
Agenda Items 47, 113 and 149, in order to discuss the Progress
achieved in the Work of the Peacebuilding Commission**

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Today, we meet to resume consideration of agenda items 47, 113 and 149, in order to discuss progress achieved in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Member States called for the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission during the World Summit in 2005, to focus attention on reconstruction and institution building, in order to promote sustainable development in the aftermath of conflicts.

The Peacebuilding Commission was formally established by the General Assembly, acting concurrently with the Security Council, on 20th of December 2005. Resolution A/60/180 also requested the Secretary General to establish the Peacebuilding Fund.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, His Excellency, Ismael Gaspar Martins of Angola for his leadership. And also, the Vice-Chairpersons, Her Excellency Carmen Maria Gallardo Hernandez of El Salvador, and His Excellency Johan Løvald of Norway, as well as His Excellency Frank Majoor of the Netherlands, in his capacity as Chair of the country specific meeting on Sierra Leone, for all their hard work.

We need to recognise that the Peacebuilding Commission has embarked on crucial tasks in Burundi and Sierra Leone. The challenge now lies primarily in the need for the international community to deliver on the pledges made to assist the peoples of these countries in their efforts to rebuild the institutional and human capacity needed for comprehensive and lasting peace.

We all have a collective responsibility to ensure that the United Nation's strengthened peacebuilding architecture develops as envisioned by Member States. Our stock-take of progress to date is an important step in this process.

As you are aware, the Security Council held an open debate on the Peacebuilding Commission on the 31st of January. I welcome this opportunity to debate the issue in the General Assembly, as this will contribute towards a better understanding of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as ECOSOC, in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

There is a strong link between poverty, weak state capacity and instability, leading to relapses in conflict. It is therefore critical, that our organization plays a leading role in supporting countries to build and strengthen institutional capacities, which promote coexistence and the peaceful and sustainable resolution of conflicts.

National authorities play a critical role in creating the right atmosphere for sustainable peace. And, the United Nations role in peacebuilding should affirm national ownership, as well as, the supporting role of the international community.

With all relevant actors, the Peacebuilding Commission has an important substantive and coordinating role to play in promoting post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, including respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The Peacebuilding Fund can play a critical role in providing countries with start-up funding for early recovery. But, the Fund should not be seen as a substitute for the long term financial support needed to finance the transition from recovery to sustainable development. In this regard, the Commission can play an important role in coordinating and marshalling predictable financing.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

To date, donors have contributed and pledged over US\$140 million to the Peacebuilding Fund, and many non-traditional donors have indicated their intention to contribute. I would urge all Member States to work together to reach the \$250 million funding target.

I will personally write to a number of potential donors to encourage them to contribute to the Peacebuilding Fund so that the funding target is met.

The Peacebuilding Commission and Fund are still in the early stages of becoming fully operational. We should therefore, take note of the lessons learnt so far, and, by extending our fullest cooperation and support, do our utmost to ensure that the Commission performs its mandate successfully.

Thank you very much.