

Peacebuilding Commission Working Group on Lessons Learned
Afghanistan Compact: Successes, Challenges, and Lessons

April 17 2007

Summary Note of the Chair

1. The primary purpose of this meeting of the Working Group on Lessons learned was to enrich the discussions of the Peacebuilding Commission on the drafting of the Integrated Peacebuilding Frameworks/Compacts for Sierra Leone and Burundi. The meeting was organized in cooperation with the International Peace Academy and the Center for International Cooperation and was chaired by the Ambassador of El Salvador, H.E. Carmen Maria Gallardo Hernandez. The guest speakers for the meeting included H.E. Zahir Tanin, Dr. Barnett Rubin and Dr. Renata Dwan. (See attached programme).
2. The meeting started with presentations on the lessons learned from the drafting and implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. The scope of the meeting was then broadened to include a comparative analysis and review of other existing frameworks such as the Liberia Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme, the Iraq Compact and the draft Timor-Leste Compact.
3. It was noted that such compacts and frameworks are increasingly seen as potentially important instruments for supporting peacebuilding initiatives. They represent an attempt to provide a framework for engagement with a post-conflict country on the basis of mutual accountability and joint commitment. In the process of developing such compacts the following dimensions were highlighted as critical: national ownership, a consultative process to ensure buy-in and inputs from all relevant stakeholders, an effective mechanism for monitoring and evolution, effective prioritization and sequencing of challenges and gaps to be addressed, and a limited number of measurable qualitative and quantitative benchmarks.
4. It was stressed that the context in which a cooperation framework or a compact is developed is critical and influences all other elements such as the timing, the scope, and the mechanism for effective monitoring and follow-up. Therefore the PBC and other international actors involved would need to avoid “one-size-fits-all” templates and focus on developing context-specific cooperation instruments.
5. On the Afghanistan Compact in particular the panelists noted that one year after the endorsement of the Compact it is too soon to tell whether it will be successful as a framework for peace consolidation. Preliminary lessons from the implementation of the Compact and its drafting include: the need to harmonize and limit the number of benchmarks, ensure a manageable number of partners on the joint monitoring committee, support the national government’s coordination and leadership role, raise awareness about the Compact among the population and strengthen accountability mechanisms for the implementation of identified commitments.

6. In conclusion, it was noted that further discussions and comparative analysis of the existing frameworks for cooperation in post-conflict situations maybe helpful in supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.
7. The Chair thanked all panelists and participants and noted that a summary from the meeting would be circulated to all members of the Peacebuilding Commission.