

**PBC Organizational Committee Informal Meeting
on “Financing for Peacebuilding”
10 October 2016**

Chair’s Summary

Background

On 10 October 2016, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an informal meeting. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau, Chair of the PBC, and addressed the following agenda items: i) Financing for Peacebuilding and ii) other matters. Invited guests were Ms. Mira Karybaeva, Deputy Head of the President’s Administration of Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Alexander Avanesov, Resident Coordinator in Kyrgyzstan, and Ms. Yukie Mokuo, UNICEF Representative in Kyrgyzstan. Via VTC, briefers included Mr. Petko Draganov, SRSG, UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, and Civil society representatives in Kyrgyzstan.

Financing for Peacebuilding

1. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Government of Kyrgyzstan for their interest and readiness in presenting to the PBC the progress the country has made on reconciliation and peacebuilding since 2010, with the support of the Peacebuilding Fund. He hoped that the Government of Kyrgyzstan would find the interaction as a useful opportunity to strengthen the support of the international community for Kyrgyzstan. The meeting marked an important step in the implementation of the Sustaining Peace resolutions [A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)] demonstrating the capacity for the PBC to work in a more flexible way, to strengthen the synergies between the Commission and the PBF and to allow for the PBC to consider a more diverse array of issues.

2. Ms. Mira Karybaeva, Deputy Head of the President’s Administration of Kyrgyzstan, introduced Kyrgyzstan’s peacebuilding experiences and achievements since the popular uprising and tragic inter-ethnic clashes in 2010, the challenges the Government faced and the ways in which partnership with the UN system assisted Kyrgyzstan to implement its national development strategy, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

3. Starting with a contextualization of Kyrgyzstan within Central Asia, Ms. Karybaeva spoke about the political system, socio-economic conditions and how inter-regional inter-ethnic dimensions evolved

since 2010. She pointed out that after the conflict in the summer of 2010, the Government began to work on a long-term peacebuilding and development strategy which contributed to strengthening inter-ethnic relations. She elaborated on how the UN engagement on peacebuilding complemented their own strategy and helped the country form its own vision of development priorities. She made reference to the exemplary role of the multi-stakeholder Joint Steering Committee (JSC), which was established by a special order of the President consisting of two co-chairs (Kyrgyz and UN representatives) and representatives of key government agencies, civil society and UN agencies, that also streamlined the system of control. In this connection, she informed that the PBF played an important role.

4. In close consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including the President's office, a peacebuilding priority plan was developed with the following main areas: 1) strengthening of justice and the rule of law; 2) strengthening the capacity of local government to maintain peace and unity; and, 3) promoting diversity and civic identity. She further elaborated on emerging challenges to peacebuilding that the government was addressing, namely the unequal access to economic and natural resources; youth unemployment; a lack of a common civic identity; demarcation of the borders with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan; radicalization leading to violent extremism; cross-border issues and regional dynamics. She emphasized the importance of the PBF in supporting the cross-border project, particularly since it targets cross-border issues and regional dynamics, including incomplete demarcation of borders with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, which continue to be causes for concern.

5. Throughout the discussion, participants referred to the collective impact of the investments that PBF and the Government have made in the Kyrgyz Republic's peacebuilding infrastructure. One set of outcomes that focused on improving central State policies and laws not only helped revise 11 key pieces of legislation to be in line with international human rights norms and standards, but trained law enforcement officers on gender sensitivity, human rights and effective communication. Together, these efforts have resulted in a 22 per cent increase in citizen confidence in authorities over the three year programme implementation period, while representation of women in law enforcement increased by 11.9 per cent. Other notable results include a reduction in serious incidents of violence in the restive border area with Tajikistan, from nine incidents in 2014 to only three in 2016. While these impressive results are encouraging, Ms. Karybaeva noted that remaining challenges must be tackled lest these impressive gains be overtaken by unaddressed drivers of conflict and social division.

6. While Kyrgyzstan considered such areas as important achievements, in which a strong partnership with the UN system in her country was a critical element, supported through concrete and targeted funding from the PBF, Ms. Karybaeva added that there were remaining and new challenges the

country was facing: even after 25 years of independence, not all sections of the border between the two countries that were part of the Soviet Union were legally defined, which was one of the factors of instability. While resolving the water and energy problems between the countries of the region remained a challenge, the proximity to Afghanistan has led to the creation of a corridor of drug trafficking alongside challenges in humanitarian issues and criminal property. Furthermore, the fight against extremism and terrorism in the region was critical issue that needed to be addressed.

7. Mr. Petko Draganov, SRSG, UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (connected via VTC from Ashgabat), stated that Kyrgyzstan's experience in peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy could serve as a model for other countries. It was an example of cooperation between all the key bilateral, regional and multilateral partners. SRSG Draganov described the UN's response to support Kyrgyzstan during and after the events of 2010, including the return to constitutional order, addressing the causes of conflict, the use of good offices to facilitate dialogue. He noted that, as the UN system focused on creating an enabling environment for peace and reconciliation and helping to develop long-term, durable solutions in Kyrgyzstan, the PBF had provided critical support and more recently further extended its support to cross-border efforts in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as mentioned by Ms. Karybaeva. UNRCCA would continue to support activities under the PBF in Kyrgyzstan and advocate for these efforts to continue expanding to longer term engagement including justice, law enforcement and early warning.

8. Mr. Alexander Avanesov, Resident Coordinator in Kyrgyzstan, spoke of the main lessons learned from PBF initiatives. First, he noted that peacebuilding was not business as usual. The UN must work together to deliver-as-one and achieve a critical level of coordination to effectively implement peacebuilding activities. Second, a strategic analysis was critical to prioritize where the funds would be allocated. Third, it was the responsibility of the RC to ensure that the distribution of resources and tasks were executed appropriately within the UNCT. Fourth, while the expression of the political will of the Government was critical, a strong, candid and inclusive steering mechanism was equally important for successful implementation of the peacebuilding interventions. Fifth, PBF investments were catalytic, attracted other resources, helped develop new partnerships and helped mobilize internal and external capacities, especially on the local level to address issues related to conflict prevention. Lastly, sustainability would depend on the commitment and capacity of the UN and national partners.

9. Members of the PBC welcomed the briefings as an excellent opportunity to understand concrete peacebuilding interventions and support through the PBF, commended the opportunity as a welcome

addition to PBC deliberations and agreed that it offered an important example of a more flexible and accessible forum. A number of Member State interventions focused on the following issues:

- Many delegations commended the PBF for its catalytic, timely and critical contribution to sustaining peace in Kyrgyzstan.
- The PBC needed to convene more discussions of this kind in order to diversify its focus, keep Member States better informed of PBF activities and strengthen the Commission's synergies with the PBF.
- Predictable and sustained financing was critical so that the PBF could continue to invest in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.
- Further discussions on QCPR were needed to improve UN coherence at the country-level.
- Several delegations stated that a regional approach and collective efforts were important to address cross-border challenges, including the rise of violent extremism, illegal drug trafficking, migration and water-sharing.
- A few members mentioned that violent extremism should also be further discussed in the PBC, including how the PBC and PBF can assist in preventing radicalization.

10. Mr. Bisrat Aklilu, Member of the Advisory Group (AG) of the PBF, shared the findings of the AG's visit to Kyrgyzstan (April 2016). He noted that the visit aimed to understand the nature, effectiveness and impacts of the PBF operations in Kyrgyzstan by discussing with project beneficiaries. He stated that PBF projects in Kyrgyzstan had well-defined peacebuilding needs and goals, displayed impressive value for money, had a strong gender focus, contributed to stem youth radicalization, was time-bound and required to be catalytic and scaled-up initial PBF investments. The visit confirmed that political commitment existed in Kyrgyzstan. He mentioned that consolidation of the inter-community peaceful coexistence in Kyrgyzstan could benefit from a broader and more sustained interaction and political support through possible continued association with the UN Peacebuilding Architecture. Mr. Aklilu stated that the peacebuilding initiatives in Kyrgyzstan were probably the most critical areas where the UN had to deliver-as-one to support the peacebuilding programmes of national governments.

11. Ms. Yukie Mokuo, UNICEF Representative in Kyrgyzstan, spoke about the impact and sustainability of projects on multilingualism and school curriculum and government of Kyrgyzstan's initiatives. She stated that learning different languages through the PBF funded projects was directly associated with civic identity and prevention of violent extremism. Promoting multi-lingualism in Kyrgyzstan could provide job opportunities and empower youth to be active citizens and foster an

environment enabling broader integration, especially of minorities while promoting protection of their rights and address civic cohesion.

12. Civil society representatives (Mr. Tilebaldy Uulu Eliyazar, Program director at the Institute for Youth Development, and Ms. Anara Eginalieva, Director of Bishkek Head Office of the Foundation for Tolerance International, connected via VTC from Bishkek) spoke about the achievements of implementing PBF projects, focusing on the role of youth and how they have engaged in the peacebuilding initiatives. Mr. Eliyazar said that the PBF allowed CSOs to work closely with the state and local government, which created synergies and cooperation at different levels, and increased the level of trust between citizens and the local administration. Ms. Eginalieva added that work continued with young people to address conflict prevention and resolution, including in border areas. She spoke of the value that through the PBF projects, a safe forum was provided for all to participate in discussions and decisions, while providing knowledge and gaining experience in non-violent communication.

13. Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, ASG for Peacebuilding Support, welcomed the meeting and encouraged Member States to continue to discuss how to further strengthen PBC-PBF synergies. He reiterated that peacebuilding was about partnerships and making it work on multiple levels, including with IFIs and regional organisations and the importance of synergies, sharing experiences and learning by showcasing cases such as Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan was a good example of implementing the resolutions on sustaining peace and even before they were adopted. PBSO was grateful for the committed leadership of the Government of Kyrgyzstan in tackling difficult issues related to peacebuilding from an early stage. He also recognized that the RC's leadership was equally important to ensure that the PBF could effectively support the country and build coherence within the UN system. He concluded by welcoming the opportunity to keep Member States informed of PBF activities and suggested that briefings could be organized, for example, when countries are declared eligible to receive funds from the PBF.

14. The Chair concluded the agenda item by stating his intention to welcome any other PBF recipient country to come and brief the Commission on its experience in sustaining peace.

Other matters

15. PBC Visit to the African Union (17 to 19 October 2016): the objective of the visit would be to further strengthen UN-AU cooperation in sustaining peace efforts in Africa. The visit would provide an opportunity to assess how PBC can continue serving as a platform for improved coordination and

enhanced coherence between the UN, AU, Regional Economic Communities and other international actors in sustaining peace in Africa. The delegation consisted of the Chair, Vice-Chairs of the PBC, as well as PBSO.

16. Letter from the Chair of the Guinea Configuration (dated 3 August 2016): The Chair of the Guinea Configuration had informed of her decision to relinquish the position of the Chairmanship of the Guinea Configuration effective on 19 August 2016. The PBC Chair recalled President Conde's statement to the General Assembly on 23 September 2016, which indicated that the resolutions on sustaining peace should provide an opportunity for a review of the nature and the scope of Guinea's engagement with the PBC. The Chair informed the Members that building on that statement he would consult the national authorities of Guinea on undertaking this review that would highlight peacebuilding progress made and make recommendations on the PBC's future engagement with Guinea, taking into account the recent resolutions on sustaining peace that recommends that the PBC adopts new flexible forms of engagement.