

The Advisory Role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to the Security Council (SC)

Working-level meeting of
members of the PBC that are members of the Security Council, countries on the PBC agenda,
and members of the PBC Chairs' Group

24 October 2016

Coordinator's summary

Background

1. On 24 October 2016, Egypt, in its capacity as coordinator of the periodic stock-taking exercises on the PBC's advisory function to the Security Council, convened an informal meeting to take stock of how the PBC exercised its advisory function to the Council in connection with the situations in Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, and Liberia. Since the last stock taking meeting that took place in April 2016, the Council considered these situations and it was important to assess how the Council drew upon the engagement of and the advice from the PBC with the countries concerned. The members of the PBC that are members of the Security Council, the representatives of the four countries under considerations, and the respective chairs and penholders were invited to participate in the meeting.

Main points from the discussion

2. The coordinator opened the meeting underlining that a stock-taking discussion on the advisory role of the PBC to the Security Council was of particular importance in view of the intention of the Council to regularly request the advice of the PBC, as noted in paragraph 8 of resolution S/RES/2282 (2016). The coordinator also noted that this discussion was also timely in view of the adoption by the Council of resolution S/RES/2303 (2016) on Burundi, resolution S/RES/2301 (2016) on Central African Republic, and of the upcoming Council's consideration of UNMIL. Focusing on the second half of 2016, the coordinator invited Member States to share their perspectives in respect to the following country-specific issues:
 - Burundi: To what extent did the Security Council Resolution 2303 of 27 July take into account the letter/report of the PBC Chair on his visit to Burundi and to the region on 04 – 08 July? What should the PBC do more of or differently going forward in support of a Security Council strategy to address the situation in Burundi?
 - Central African Republic: What would be the practical role of the PBC pursuant to paragraph 16 of SCR 2301 and in light of the realities of the situation in the country? To what extent was this role articulated in the statement delivered in the open meeting on MINUSCA earlier this month?

- Guinea-Bissau: In which ways can the PBC practically support the ongoing regional efforts to diffuse the political tension in Guinea-Bissau?

- Liberia: How can the ongoing activities of the PBC in Liberia lead to an advisory input to the SC's consideration of UNMIL scheduled for December 2016.

3. With regard to Burundi, Member States noted that the Commission provided useful inputs to the Security Council. Through its visit to Burundi and meetings in New York, the Commission fulfilled its advisory role to the Council and functioned as an important interlocutor with the Government of Burundi. In connection to resolution 2303, it was noted that, though informal interactions between the Chair and members of the Council (including the penholder), a number of peacebuilding priorities identified by the Commission have been reflected in the resolution. Some delegations underscored the value of the PBC in bringing to the Council broader perspectives which touch upon the linkages between security and development challenges facing Burundi. They stressed that the Commission should continue building on its diverse membership and strengthen its partnership with various stakeholders in order to bring different views to the Council. Members looked forward to the outcome of the informal retreat called for by the PBC in Switzerland as a forum that is intended to bridge the increasing divide between the Government of Burundi and its development partners. The outcome, some Member States opined, could be of particular relevance to the Council's consideration of its strategy to address and resolve the current crisis in Burundi.
4. On the Central African Republic, delegations highlighted the complexity of the situation in the country and reflected on the role that the Commission can play in complementing the Security Council's engagement by providing advice on broader peacebuilding issues, going beyond the security dimension. Building on paragraph 16 of SCR 2301, which encourages "continued coordination with the PBC and other relevant international organizations and institutions in support of CAR's long term peacebuilding needs" including the possible development of a mutual accountability framework. In this connection, Member States underscored the importance of ensuring that the PBC is perceived by the UN in the field as a helpful tool which can be utilized to ensure that timely attention is given to peacebuilding needs in CAR.
5. On Guinea-Bissau, delegations welcomed the work undertaken by the PBC in support of regional efforts to address the political tension in the country. Member States also appreciated the coherence of messages coming from the Council and the Commission throughout the year. Looking forward, delegations called for continued coherence in advocating for political dialogue, and reiterated the importance for the PBC to strengthen its preventive role by addressing the root causes of conflict in the country and in encouraging continuous regional engagement with a view to overcome the political stalemate that continued to obstruct long term peacebuilding efforts.
6. On Liberia, Member States welcomed the decision by the PBC to co-host with the Government of Liberia a multi-stakeholder forum on "Sustaining Peace through transition in Liberia" which took place on 20 October. They highlighted the importance for the Commission to formulate its advice with particular emphasis on how it can mobilize the required support for Liberia after UNMIL's drawdown. Delegations recognized the importance of structuring the work of the Commission in such way that could enrich its advisory function to the Council at this crucial

time of UNMIL's transition in Liberia. It was noted that, in addition to a briefing to the Council in December, the Commission could share its advice in other forms, including through an Informal Interactive Dialogue with the members of the Council. This interactive dialogue can also address the strategic assessment currently conducted by DPKO and provide an opportunity for the Commission to share its perspective on how the UN could provide coherent support to Liberia at the time of transition.

Next steps

7. Participants welcomed the meeting as a platform for frank discussions on how to strengthen the advisory role of the PBC to the Council. Member States were informed that an upcoming meeting of the Security Council Ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in African, scheduled for 1 November, would provide another opportunity to discuss the modalities by which the PBC can render its advice to the Council pursuant SCR 2282 (2016).
