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Excellencies and colleagues,

On 15 July, the Rwandan Presidency of the Security Council convened the third annual informal interactive dialogue (IID) between the members of the Security Council, the members of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) chairs' group and the representatives of the countries on the PBC agenda.

You will find attached the summary of the third IID jointly prepared by the President of the Security Council and the Chair of the PBC.

Sincerely,

Eugene Richard Gasana

President of the Security Council

Antonio de Aguiar Patriota

Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

Members of the Security Council
Members of the Peacebuilding Commission

The Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission
Informal Interactive Dialogue (15 July 2014)

Joint summary of the President of the Security Council and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Introduction and opening remarks

The third annual informal interactive dialogue (IID) between the members of the Security Council and members of the PBC chairs' group and the countries on the PBC agenda was held on 15 July 2014. It was the second such dialogue to be convened under Rwanda's Presidency of the Council. Ahead of the IID, the Presidency circulated a short concept note that provided background information on the follow-up process to last year's IID. The concept note articulated the purpose and focus for this IID.

In his opening remarks, the President of the Security Council noted that the IID offered an opportunity to update on the progress made and the evolving practice in the content and modality of interaction between the Security Council and the PBC. At the same time, he noted that for this year's IID, a joint reflection on the question of "recurring relapse into conflict" is needed in view of the recent crises in the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan.

The PBC Chair noted that the crises in CAR and South Sudan reaffirm the need for comprehensive, long-term and sustainable solutions. He emphasized that in view of the complexity of these and other conflicts, the Security Council's strategies and tools needed to be diversified. The Chair stressed that the PBC was established as a strategic tool to enable the UN to more effectively respond to these complex crises. The Chair recalled that the focus on the causes of and the strategies needed to prevent relapse into conflict is timely as the Security Council and the General Assembly prepare to launch the ten year review of the peacebuilding architecture next year.

The PBC's advisory function to the Security Council: Progress in focusing the content of the advice and the evolving practice in the modality of interaction

The President recalled that Rwanda coordinated, on behalf of the PBC, a quarterly informal expert-level stock-taking exercise that examined the scope of the PBC's advisory function and the modality of interaction between the two bodies when countries on the agenda of both organs came up for consideration by the Security Council. The stock-taking discussions brought together representatives of the Council's presidencies, penholders, members of both bodies, chairs of country configurations and the countries on the agenda.

The President noted that the exercise confirmed that the PBC's advice to the Council needed to remain flexible, pragmatic and, at times, opportunistic in its approach. The advice also needed to be targeted and guided by country-specific contexts. Going forward, the President called for a strategic approach that would help clarify how the PBC's diverse membership structure and flexible outreach to regional and international partners can complement and reinforce the Security Council's and UN political strategy in each specific context. He placed particular emphasis on the political and

convening role that the PBC could potentially play to improve regional and international coherence of positions and actions.

The President pointed to three main principles that the stock-taking exercise confirmed they should underpin the modality of interaction between the Council and the PBC, namely: a) flexibility and informality; b) engaging Ambassadors, as well as country experts on the Council; and c) follow-up on the outcome of the Council's deliberation. In this regard, the President noted the importance of the role played by some Council's Presidencies in creating an informal space for the chairs of the PBC country configurations and the countries on the agenda to discuss expectations from the PBC ahead of the Council's consideration of the situations at hand. These informal interactions led to formal briefings to the Council and reporting on PBC field visits that were better targeted and more responsive to the Council's needs. The President also noted that the PBC should be equally pro-active by informally engaging the Presidency, the lead country in the Council (the penholder) and other members. This was particularly helpful when the timing of the chairs' field visits and subsequent reporting was aligned with the calendar of the Council's consideration of the situations in the countries concerned.

In the ensuing discussion, one chair of a PBC country configuration noted that it was important to receive feedback from the Council members about the utility of: a) the written communications addressed to the Council transmitting the summaries of field visits; and b) the informal interaction organized ahead of and following these visits. One member of the Council confirmed that informal interaction between the two bodies in smaller groups were very helpful as it allows for free and frank exchange of views. Another member noted that for small size delegations, written communications are more practical and helpful. Other chairs of PBC country configuration suggested that the IID format could be used for exchanging views between the two bodies on particular country situations and strategies. It was noted that this type of interaction could be particularly useful ahead of a Council's envisaged action, including mandate revisions or statements.

Thematic focus: Addressing the recurring relapse into conflict

The President reiterated that the thematic focus for the IID is particularly relevant in view of the upcoming 2015 Review of the UN peacebuilding architecture, which was established to help in reducing the risks of relapse into conflict. He referred to the three questions that were included in the concept note to help guide the discussion. In their subsequent interventions, participants reflected on these questions. The views and perspectives shared can be summarized as follows:

1. What are the factors that help sustain peace and those that contribute to relapse?

National leadership and ownership: Several participants reiterated that national ownership is a fundamental principle underpinning and ensuring the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. It was also noted that in post-conflict settings, "ownership" of the country's present and future often remains contested amongst competing "national" stakeholders. Mandates and programmes that are designed and implemented in a manner which favors' certain geographic areas or social groups in a country emerging from conflict can trigger renewed tensions. It was also noted that national ownership can be reinforced through inclusive political processes that ensure wider participation. International engagement needed to prioritize support to efforts aimed at re-building the fabric of the society and the establishment of a new social contract. These efforts should include support to

re-building critical national institutions and to national reconciliation processes.

National or local institutions and mechanisms: Several participants linked national ownership and the establishment of a new social contract with the government's capacity to build and sustain state institutions that deliver basic services, reinforce security and facilitate access to justice. These institutions offer alternative mechanisms for managing grievances and tensions that would otherwise threaten peace. It was emphasized, however, that building national and/or local institutions is a long-term endeavour and a multi-stakeholders process that calls for sustained national and international commitment. Participants recognized that support to institution-building remained a major challenge as efforts in this regard are hindered by inadequate financial and technical support arrangements, as well as absence of national leadership and will in other instances.

Regional coherence: Several participants emphasized that many internal conflicts are influenced by regional dynamics and may have cross border spill overs. It was, therefore, crucial that regional actors are involved in the design and implementation of international political and accompaniment strategies for countries emerging from conflict. This will help ensure regional support for peace processes and help factor various regional interests and concerns into international engagement. Several participants noted, in this regard, the imperative of establishing dynamic channels of communications and partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations.

2. What are the critical systemic gaps that undermine the effectiveness of the UN and the international system's response to and engagement in post-conflict situations?

It was noted that the complex and challenging nature of post-conflict situations continues to challenge the international system's timely, effective and sustained engagement with countries emerging from conflict. Participants pointed to a variety of systemic policy and institutional gaps. It was emphasized that sequencing and prioritization of the areas of engagement remains a major problem, as mandates and programmatic support do not necessarily target conflict drivers and risk factors. In this regard, one participant noted that while early warning mechanisms and analyses of risks are increasingly in place, the international system continues to hesitate to take early preventive measures. Others stressed that the UN analytical capacity of potential risks to peace needed further improvement. It was also noted that the UN's political and programmatic tools needed to be tailored to country-specific contexts.

Other participants noted that the practical manifestation of the security and development nexus remains elusive. It was stressed in this connection that efforts aimed at strengthening international coherence in post-conflict settings are hindered by fragmented and siloed responses of security and development actors, as well as the lack of sustained attention and mutual accountability. One participant noted that the UN and International Financial Institutions are yet to establish practical partnerships in the field on the basis of complementarity and long term perspectives.

One participant argued that the international community at large is still unable to analyze and address the underlying root causes of conflict. It was noted that the UN and other regional and international actors still lacked practical tools to discern and respond to country-specific historical, political, economic and human factors that cause relapse into conflict.

3. How can the upcoming 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture help analyze and address these systemic gaps?

Several participants noted that the peacebuilding architecture was intended as a dedicated institutional mechanism that would help address many of the systemic gaps that undermined the effectiveness of UN response to and engagement in post-conflict situations. While many noted that the architecture had a positive impact in countries where they have been involved, it was argued that such impact remained context specific and that it fell short of fundamentally changing the manner with which the UN addressed the risk of relapse into conflict.

Several participants noted that the upcoming review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2015 needed to be approached against the backdrop of recent cases of both successes and relapse in order to identify the elements of progress and the ongoing systemic gaps in the UN response to conflict and post-conflict situations. Others emphasized that the review offers an opportunity to revisit the original vision behind the peacebuilding architecture, identify the continuing and emerging challenges and broader systemic gaps and suggest measures for adapting the architecture's functions, structures and resources to address them. One participant noted that the review should help suggest ways for mainstreaming a "peacebuilding" approach into Security Council's mandated peacekeeping and special political missions.

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