

# **PBC ANNUAL SESSION - 2016**

**Thursday 23 June 2016**

**Transitions as a challenge to consolidating peace and security:**

**The role of the PBC in diplomacy and political accompaniment**

**Background and indicative questions for the informal working sessions**

*(Prepared by the Peacebuilding Support Office)*

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## **Purpose**

The Peacebuilding Commission's Annual Session in 2016 offers a platform to further strengthen the Commission as the key intergovernmental advisory organ on sustaining peace and peacebuilding at the United Nations, including on the development of policies. This year's topic will focus on key challenges faced by countries undergoing various types of political and socio-economic transitions and on how the Peacebuilding Commission can support those countries, building on the recently adopted resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)). The Annual Session will be structured around two open sessions and two interactive working sessions. The working sessions will draw attention to the implications a major UN transitions continues to have on the host country and the persistent mismatch between findings on good practices and implementation, as well as to address the potential and challenges of the PBC in supporting countries during transition processes in order to achieve sustainable peace.

## **Background**

The question of transitions is one of the most crucial ones for successfully sustaining peace. Much attention has been paid to the topic of the management of transitions of UN missions and overall country transitions, and yet, a severe mismatch remains. The three recent reviews in the peace and security areas (the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (AGE), the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and the Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325) specifically address the issue of transition processes, taking into account past analysis and findings. They list crucial issues that need the attention of the international community and key actors including the national authorities and contain concrete recommendations on how to improve mission transitions, including drawdown and withdrawal, in order to achieve sustainable peace. With the adoption of the historic resolutions in the General Assembly and the Security Council on sustaining peace, it is incumbent on the Peacebuilding Commission to address the issue of transitions and to further commit to a constructive way forward.

## **Working session 1: Countries undergoing transitions: key challenges**

Specific challenges have been identified around the issue of UN and country transitions, including:

the coherence and coordination of key actors across the three UN pillars of peace and security, development and human rights; the planning and timing of different types of engagement; adequate resourcing of peacebuilding components of peace operations and special political missions and funding of peacebuilding activities of the UN Country Teams; broad and inclusive national ownership of transition planning and implementation processes; sustained attention and political, technical and financial support from the international community and regional and subregional actors, as well as continued commitment by national actors.

It is of particular interest to look at the implications of these key challenges taking into account existing recommendations. To this end, the following indicative questions may help guide the preparation for the interactive discussion at this working session:

### General:

- What specific challenges countries in transition face in laying the foundations for sustaining peace for the long haul?
- What has been the role of national authorities in initiating the transition process and taking ownership for implementing its various phases?
- What are the main good practices and lessons drawn from UN led or UN facilitated and executed transitions?
- How can these practices and lessons be translated into concrete action by the host country in transition and by the UN system?
- In what ways can optimal cooperation between the national authorities, the UN, and key international and regional actors be ensured throughout all phases of a transition (including international financial institutions)?
- In what ways can regional and subregional partnerships, in particular with the African Union, improve UN and country transitions?
- What are the specific challenges for women and youth during UN and country transition processes? How can their needs be adequately met? And how can contribution in transition processes be ensured?

### Country transitions:

- How can countries be supported to take ownership and responsibility for planning and executing transition strategies in light of sustaining peace challenges, alluded to above?
- What are examples of good integration of political, social and economic aspects in countries' transition?
- What are the most critical areas in need of support from the UN during transitions? If such needs had not been met, why?

- How can countries ensure a people-centred and inclusive approach to transition?

UN transitions:

- How can we ensure that the UN transition is in line and supports countries' transition?
- In particular, how can the UN ensure a better policy coherence with the World Bank?
- How can the UN strengthen people-centred and inclusive approaches to transition processes?
- What are examples of good integration of aspects of all three UN pillars in mission transitions, including in strategic integrated planning and joint assessment?

### **Working session 2: What role for the PBC in accompanying countries undergoing different types of transitions**

The PBC has a distinctive role to play in assisting UN and country transitions. The Working Group on Lessons Learned thematic discussion on transitions in 2014 identified some of the key opportunities and challenges for the PBC in its unique function as an intergovernmental advisory body, including the PBC's role in closing the gaps between different approaches, reinforcing sustained political, financial and technical support, and bringing together various key actors. The Security Council emphasized in resolution 2282 "the importance of drawing upon the advice of the PBC when major agreements that relate to UN mission mandates and transitions, are agreed between the UN, national governments and authorities, and the other relevant stakeholders" and expressed its intention to "regularly request, deliberate and draw upon the specific, strategic and targeted advice of the PBC, including to assist with the longer-term perspective required for sustaining peace being reflected in the formation, review and drawdown of peace operations and special political missions", thus highlighting the PBC's role in this regard.

This working session will address how the PBC can implement this aspect of the resolution and live up to its full potential in accompanying countries undergoing transitions by strengthening political accompaniment, partnerships and ensuring coherence including with the principal organs, the UN system as a whole, international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations. To this end, the following questions may help guide the preparation for the interactive discussion at this working session:

- What are some of the lessons learned and good examples of the PBC's accompaniment of countries in transitions?
- In what ways can the PBC constructively support country-led national strategies and priorities of transition processes?
- What are good examples of collaboration between the PBC and the UN system in planning for transitions, for instance how can the UN system strategic integrated planning and joint assessment missions constructively contribute to the discussions?
- What PBC advice would be useful for the Security Council and how could the UN system provide the relevant issues to the PBC for consideration?
- In what ways can the PBC further strengthen partnerships with key actors including the international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations?

- Building on the resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)), how can a more flexible PBC better support countries undergoing transitions?

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