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FOR PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT

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REMARKS TO THE OPENING SESSION OF THE PBF HIGH-LEVEL  
STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

New York, 22 November 2011

H.E. the President of Kyrgyzstan,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Secretary-General

Last year at around this time, during the first Stakeholders meeting of the Peacebuilding Fund, I told you what I thought were our accomplishments as well as our shortcomings, what we were doing about them, and where we planned to take the Fund in the future. One year later, I am pleased to see the PBF realizing its potential to be, in the words of a DFID-commissioned, multi-donor review, the *quote* critical funding instrument in difficult transition contexts *unquote*.

The Fund is achieving this through a willingness to take risks and a determined focus on timeliness and accountability. We have adhered to a self-imposed, three-week turnaround time in responding to all funding requests. For the Immediate Response Facility, it is often much faster. Our staff have worked with Country Teams to design projects that produce concrete peacebuilding outcomes. Our accountability, meanwhile, has been strengthened through the consistent application of a results framework and the commissioning of independent evaluations at the country level.

I am deeply gratified that these enhancements have met with increased donor confidence. I would like to thank all of the Member States that have contributed so generously to the PBF over the past year. Since the beginning of the year, we have raised \$67 million in new contributions and pledges, a remarkable show of support in the midst of a global economic crisis.

With the PBF's internal management systems now firmly in place, we have had the time and space to concentrate on strategic direction – not only for the PBF but also for the Peacebuilding Architecture as a whole. I would like to devote the remainder of my remarks to this.

Let me start with the strategic positioning of the PBF. Two of the key questions that we have tried to answer are these – When should the Fund engage? What does it mean for the PBF to be catalytic?

I believe that the fund should engage during key transition periods in the peace consolidation process, when there is a significant risk of missing out on critical peacebuilding opportunities. This could include transitions immediately after armed hostilities have ended. It can also refer to the transitional periods that follow the signing of a peace agreement, the formation of a government that is committed to peacebuilding, or the drawdown of a peacekeeping mission. In each of these contexts, there is a pressing need to consolidate the gains of peace and to ensure that national actors are able to prevent relapse into conflict.

The past year has seen major political transitions, in the form of movements toward more democratic forms of government.

- In Kyrgyzstan, as you have heard from H.E. the President, the PBF provided timely support for the implementation of her peacebuilding agenda – promoting ethnic reconciliation, assisting vulnerable groups, and ensuring that the transition to parliamentary government is an inclusive one.
- Guinea a year ago held its first freely contested election since independence in 1958 and this past February came on the PBC agenda. The PBF will support security and defence sector reform, national reconciliation, and women's and youth employment.

Amidst this global opening, we have had to be selective in where we direct our assistance. The PBF is still determining whether and how to engage with the Arab Spring, as many of these countries are at least middle income and the comparative advantage of the Fund is less clear.

Apart from political transitions, the PBF has also been called on to support mission transitions – ensuring that governments have the capacity and support needed to prevent and manage conflict after the withdrawal of a UN peacekeeping or political mission.

- In Liberia, the construction of justice and security hubs and the training of police represent part of the “unfinished business” of the UNMIL mandate, which will enable the extension of government authority to the entire country and help prevent a security vacuum after peacekeepers are withdrawn. In Chad, the PBF provided a \$3 million contribution to UNDP and UNHCR to ensure that the significant gains to stability in the East by the peacekeeping mission would not be lost after its hastened withdrawal. These funds supported a special Chadian security force, the DIS or Détachement Intégré de Sécurité.

The PBF aspires to be catalytic. Chad's DIS, following the initial contribution from the PBF, is now receiving support from the EU and United States. But being catalytic is more than just about scaling up investments; it means also pioneering innovative approaches to peacebuilding and leveraging the capacities of different actors to respond to a common challenge.

- A year ago, I initiated a discussion with the World Bank on ensuring that the PBF's investment in Liberia's justice and security hubs was fiscally sustainable over the long term, through the national budget. The UN and World Bank are now undertaking a joint public expenditure review of the security sector that will seek in part to address this issue. The review will be financed by the UN-World Bank Partnership Trust Fund, established by the Swiss government and supported by a staff exchange that is being co-hosted by PBSO.

Excellencies,

The PBF is part of a larger Peacebuilding Architecture created in 2005, whose individual components were designed to work in tandem and with the wider UN system. PBSO brings together the UN Secretariat and the Agencies, Funds, and Programmes with a view to ensuring peacebuilding policy coherence. We are now working to achieve closer integration across the Peacebuilding Architecture, between the PBC and the UN system, and between PBSO and the wider community of peacebuilding actors.

These integration efforts build upon recent innovations by the PBC to make its work even more relevant on the ground and to demonstrate its added value. Here are some examples:

1. First in Liberia and Guinea, the PBC is engaging through a Statement of Mutual Commitments, a light document that identifies what the PBC and the country on the agenda will undertake against an agreed set of priorities.
2. Second the PBC is experimenting with the creation of small Steering Groups within the larger country configurations, consisting of the Chair, two or three neighbouring countries, and the largest donors to the country in question. This enhances the efficiency of the configuration's work, while remaining true to the PBC's mandate of bringing different stakeholders together.
3. Third the PBC is also exploring lighter forms of engagement, for countries currently on its agenda as they begin transitioning off and for incoming countries that favour a lighter engagement from the outset. This will give the PBC flexibility to respond to a variety of contexts, with solutions tailored to the needs and preferences of different countries.
4. Fourth One country configuration has begun to include external experts in its country visits, in order to enhance substantive discussions and bring a fresh perspective on issues of relevance to the PBC engagement.

5. Lastly, the PBC is pro-actively looking to post-conflict countries to share their lessons in peacebuilding. At the initiative of its Chair, the PBC visited Rwanda -- together with several other post-conflict countries -- to hear how it has addressed transparency and accountability, economic revitalization, and ethnic reconciliation. The Commission is also widening its partnerships with financial institutions, including through a recent visit to the African Development Bank, where it discussed the potential application of its Fragile States Facility to peacebuilding priorities in PBC countries.

As the PBC experiments with these new approaches in its work, my office is in parallel strengthening the support that we provide to the Commission.

We have acted on the recommendation of the 2010 Review to achieve closer synergies between the PBF and the PBC. As the PBC Configuration Chairs can confirm, the PBF has instituted systematic consultation with them on all proposals concerning their country configurations. And in Liberia, the PBF is piloting an expanded Priority Plan, to which the PBF is providing a catalytic contribution and for which the PBC and other partners are seeking to mobilize the balance.

We are also bringing the PBC closer to the UN system, so to speak. The PBC as an intergovernmental body can maximize its impact on the ground through direct engagement with the concerned UN operational entities, including DPA and DPKO as well as the Agencies, Funds and Programmes. In recent weeks, we have arranged a first meeting between the PBC Chairs and the Senior Peacebuilding Group, which I chair and that includes ASG-level representation from all UN entities with a major role in peacebuilding. We have also facilitated the participation of PBC Chairs in inter-agency coordinating meetings and invited DPKO staff to brief the PBC Organizational Committee on their Early Peacebuilding concept paper.

Another important initiative: although the PBC has a process for countries to come on its agenda, it does not have a process to determine when and how countries graduate. It is my belief that the PBC can be a credible and dynamic mechanism only if new countries come on the agenda and others transition off. PBSO is therefore working on developing a process and a set of indicators that could be used by country configurations, and indeed the countries themselves, in assessing readiness to graduate.

Lastly, we have revamped PBSO's Policy Branch. It has been strengthened through expert secondments and institutional partnerships. And it has refocused its efforts around two principal goals. First, it is providing demand-driven policy advice and analysis on a range of thematic issues to the PBC and PBF. Second, it is deepening its engagement in global initiatives such as the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, as well as drawing on a growing network of partners and practitioners to address recurring peacebuilding challenges. Working with IPI, for example, it has distilled experience with strategic frameworks, benchmarking, and transition compacts.

Excellencies,

The Peacebuilding Architecture was created because the then Secretary-General had identified a gap in how the UN was configured to respond to peacebuilding challenges. As you can see, lessons have been learned from the Architecture's early experiences and course corrections made. Its components are now not only more integrated with each other but also with the broader UN system and global initiatives to build peace. Going forward, we are therefore in a much stronger position to realize the vision behind the Peacebuilding Architecture.

The PBF, a critical node in this Architecture, delivers catalytic and gap-filling transition financing in a flexible, efficient way. Thanks to your increased contributions this year, and some carryover funds, we have sufficient resources to meet our programme target for 2012 of \$100 million. We are also increasingly benefiting from multi-year agreements or reliable annual support from some partners. But in order to continue playing the critical role for which we are recognized, we need continuity and predictability in our funding. For 2013 and beyond, we have an estimated annual gap of \$30 million to fill. We hope therefore that your much needed continued support will be forthcoming.

Before ending Excellencies, I would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in this afternoon's special side event on Natural Resources Management and Peacebuilding. We have Clare Lockhart co-author with Ashraf Ghani of the incredibly insightful book: *Fixing Failed States* as Keynote Speaker and panelists from Chevron, the Assoc of Mining and Minerals MNCs in India, a Niger Delta activist from Nigeria, a representative from the Great Lakes and Amb Jan Grauls, Chair of the CAR configuration. Again thank you for your wonderful past support and even greater future support.

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