

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
23 November 2010

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

1. On 23 November 2010, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an informal meeting. The PBC Chairperson presided over the meeting. The agenda for the meeting included the following items: (1) Taking forward the recommendations of the report of the Co-Facilitators on the "Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture"; and (2) Other matters.

Taking forward the recommendations of the report of the Co-Facilitators on the "Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture";

2. The Chairperson referred to the four questions indicated in the concept note circulated ahead of the meeting. He invited the Chairs of the PBC configurations followed by the members of the Committee to address these questions.

3. The **Chairs of the PBC configurations** emphasized the following **ongoing improvements** corresponding to relevant recommendations emanating from the review:

[a] The Commission has been systematically **aligning its strategic frameworks with national strategies and identified priorities**. The Chairs used concrete examples from the engagement with Sierra Leone, CAR, Liberia and the ongoing efforts to align the upcoming Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) for Burundi with the existing Strategic Framework for this country.

[b] The Commission has been **intensifying efforts for resource mobilization** beyond the catalytic funding which the countries on the agenda receive from the PBF. The Chairs of the CAR and Guinea-Bissau configurations referred to ongoing efforts to organize donor conference/roundtable for the two countries. The Chair of the Liberia Configuration noted that the new Priority Plan for Liberia is being developed with a view to facilitating resource mobilization for the three priority areas identified by the Statement of Mutual Commitments (SMC).

[c] The Commission has been increasingly focusing on certain **developmental aspects of peacebuilding**, such as youth employment. The Chair of the WGLL referred to the recent meeting which was designed to draw on lessons and practices gained by the international community in this area. The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration referred to the ongoing youth empowerment programme in that country supported by the PBF. The Chair of the Sierra Leone Configuration referred to a regional seminar (organized by Austria and PBSO) on the topic (3 December 2010, Freetown, Sierra Leone).

[d] The Chairs also referred to differentiated, yet ongoing, progress in the **relationships with the Security Council, the IFIs and regional and sub-regional organizations**.

4. In addition, Chairs have elaborated on **ongoing efforts** undertaken by the respective configurations in support of critical peacebuilding priorities in the countries on the agenda, such as emphasis on: the regional dimension of peacebuilding, including by improved collaboration with other country configurations; and national capacity development/ownership in the areas of security, border control and combating narco-trafficking. Chairs have also emphasized their intention to place additional emphasis on: seeking **more consistent and coherent support from the Secretariat and missions** (also in relation to exploring more dynamic interaction between Headquarters and the field); **intensifying resource mobilization**; exploring **more dynamic interactions with principal organs and IFIs**. Chairs referred to the potential role of the Organizational Committee in facilitating cross-learning among country configurations and the WGLL.

5. During the subsequent discussion, members made a number of comments and suggestions with respect to **the most immediate priorities** for taking forward the implementation of the recommendations emanating from the 2010 review as follows:

(a) In the field/role of the Country-specific Configurations (CSCs): The majority of members underscored the need to place due emphasis on improving PBC's field relevance and impact. In particular, members linked this objective with the need to ensure that PBC continues to adopt **flexible and adaptable instruments of engagement**, which are derived from existing national strategies, and able to respond to changing priorities in the field. Members called for evaluation, in due course, of the SMC in Liberia, with a view of determining the applicability of similar instruments for future country engagements. Members also stressed the need for the PBC to **demonstrate added value** by promoting a focused approach to national capacity development in critical peacebuilding priorities (e.g. security apparatus; employment-generation; economic revitalization). A number of members also referred to the need to consider **better use of the Commission's political weight and potential "convening power"** as it exercises its mandate to align relevant actors behind a common vision for peacebuilding. Others highlighted the need for the PBC to consider the most **practical approach to its role in resource mobilization**, building on more substantive support and analysis from PBSO.

A number of Chairs were also opened to exploring **the need for a local "liaison committee/configuration"** to ensure a more structured linkage with the field, while one chair preferred increasing field visits and convene an annual CSC meeting in the field.

(b) Role of the Organizational Committee: Members referred to the need for the Committee to become a platform for broader policy discussion on: the various forms of PBC's instruments of engagements and its relationships with national planning; critical peacebuilding priorities which could contribute to consensus-building in UN principal organs (e.g. role of SSR and promotion of rule of law; MDGs in post conflict settings; nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding).

(c) Role of the WGLL: Some members recognized the need to consider how the recommendations emanating from WGLL discussions could be applied or made more

directly relevant to the PBC's engagement with countries on its agenda or its role in developing and disseminating lessons learned on peacebuilding.

(d) Relationship with UN principal organs: Chairs and members agreed that while it is crucial for the PBC's work to feed into the deliberations and decision-making process of all UN principal organs, the relationship with the Security Council is crucial to ensuring appropriate response to needs of and progress in the majority of countries emerging from conflict. In this regard, members also recognized that members of the Security Council who are members of the PBC may need to reflect more thoroughly within the Council on how best to draw on the Commission's advice. One member suggested that ASG PBSO could be invited to brief the Council periodically and referred to recent progress in facilitating informal dialogues of the Council with the Chairs of country configurations, on a case-by-case basis. Members also called for PBC's engagement in the expected discussion on the peacebuilding/peacekeeping nexus at the GA's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34).

(e) Support from Senior UN leadership: In connection with ensuring a more systematic, consistent and coherent support from the UN system, numerous members stressed the need to approach the Secretary-General for additional political and operational support at Headquarters and in the field. Members echoed the recommendation pertaining to the need to call on the Secretary-General to demonstrate the evolution of peacebuilding as a strategic UN priority. Members also underscored the need to seek the constructive engagement of and commitment from relevant senior UN leadership.

(f) PBSO's capacity: Some members echoed the Co-Facilitators' recommendation concerning the need for more analytical capacity in the PBSO, in particular in the areas of political and risk analysis, without increase in its current size and relying on its convening role within the Secretariat and the wider peacebuilding community; and the mapping of peacebuilding actors, resource flows and gaps, including through drawing on relevant capacities within and outside the UN system. Members also referred to the need for PBSO to promote imaginative PBF programming in priority areas identified by the PBC. Members noted the need to determine the level of expanded PBSO capacity in relation to its capacity to perform its core functions.

6. In commenting on a number of observations addressed to the role and capacity of the PBSO, **ASG Cheng-Hopkins** reassured members of PBSO's continued commitment to support the PBC. She also underlined the recent progress in ensuring a more streamlined consultative process with the CSCs on the activities of the PBF in the countries on the Commission's agenda and referred to the innovative approach to designing the Liberia Priority Plan. Moreover, ASG Cheng-Hopkins referred to ongoing improvements in the analytical capacity of the Office, drawing on UN and non-UN based expertise, including from think tanks in the Global South. She also clarified that it is important for PBSO's improved performance that staff performing **core functions** could be funded from the UN regular budget.

7. Comments from the members also addressed issues related to the **process in taking forward the recommendations** of the review within the PBC. The following points were entertained during the discussion:

(a) The **mechanism to track progress in the implementation should be light and practical**. While a number of Chairs and members supported the Chairperson's idea to that the suggested mechanism is coordinated by the Chairs' Group and open-ended to all PBC members, other members suggested that while ensuring that it remains open-ended and inclusive, the mechanism should be led by the Organizational Committee.

(b) The matrix developed by PBSO could be revised to provide indicative suggestions on the roles of the OC, CSCs and WGLL in taking forward the PBC-related recommendations.

(c) Members from each category of membership need to reflect on how the respective entities/UN organs could support the implementation of the recommendations.

8. The Chairperson concluded by promising to revert with a suggested roadmap for the Commission's possible work on implementation of relevant recommendations and the suitable mechanism to track progress. This roadmap would also include suggested topics which the Organizational Committee could suitably consider.

Other matters

There were no other matters raised by the Chairperson or other members of the Committee.
