

Peacebuilding Commission
Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee
5 June 2013

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 5 June 2013, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission convened an informal meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and addressed the following agenda items: (1) Briefing by H.E. Mr. Jan Knutsson, Chair of the Advisory Group of the Peacebuilding Fund; (2) Discussion on the outcome of the consultations with joint members of the three UN principal organs; (3) Presentation on the outcome of the working-level consultations and informal adoption of the initial product "Compendium of PBC Working methods".

Briefing by H.E. Mr. Jan Knutsson, Chair of the Advisory Group of the Peacebuilding Fund

1. The Chairperson welcomed Ambassador Jan Knutsson, Chair of the PBF Advisory Group (AG), connected via video conference from Geneva, and recalled the importance of previous briefings of the Chair of the AG to further strengthen PBC and PBF synergy. The Chair noted that the Organizational Committee would be particularly interested in listening to the findings of the AG's visits to Nepal and Guinea, as well as in learning how the recent meeting of the AG (23-24 April 2013) tackled the issue of the forthcoming review of the PBF and that of the synergy between the PBF and similar global funding instruments for peacebuilding.
2. Ambassador Knutsson opened his remarks by informing on the visits of the AG to Nepal and Guinea. In Nepal, he noted that, thanks to the effort of the UN Resident Coordinator, the PBF is used in a catalytic way to promote continued engagement of development partners in peacebuilding efforts. He added that PBF in the country is well managed and that the work of the UN on peacebuilding should be considered as a case study for the value of PBF support. He also noted that in Guinea the AG heard a positive assessment, in particular regarding the Fund's catalytic role in the area of SSR. However, efforts to support political dialogue are not considered as successful; hence the role of the PBC in this regard was emphasized.
3. Regarding the strategic positioning of the PBF, Ambassador Knutsson reported that the AG has underscored the importance of close collaboration with the PBC. Regarding the support to PBC Countries, he noted that PBSO reported on how it has tightened its collaboration with the Chairs of the PBC Configurations, especially in the identification of strategic priorities. He also said that the AG has requested, for its next meeting in October, that a specific briefing by PBSO be prepared detailing the ways in which the PBF seeks to support the work of the PBC. Regarding PBF activities in countries not on the agenda of the Commission, he noted that, in 2013, the Fund will focus on Yemen,

Somalia, Niger, Papua New Guinea and South Sudan. He noted that the AG continues to believe that the PBF has an important role to play in countries beyond those on the PBC's agenda, but that the overall number of countries in its portfolio should still remain limited and focused. He concluded by recognizing that PBSO has taken important steps to improve its communication (for example the monthly newsletter) but that it should do more to collect data and produce a clear narrative that cites successful projects.

4. With regard to the relations between PBF and IFIs, the Chair reported that the AG continues to advocate that the Fund must seek ways to link with the larger financing streams of the IFIs. However, he said that in neither field visits to Nepal and Guinea did the Advisory Group find such partnerships to be particularly effective. He noted that the AG took positive note of PBSO (PBF)'s efforts, along with the World Bank (State and Peace Building Fund), the African Development Bank (Fragile States Facility) and UNDP (Disaster Management and Conflict Prevention Trust Fund), to organize a dialogue series amongst global transition financing instruments. In particular, he said that the AG has recommended that the PBF undertake joint missions from headquarters with the IFI's, in order to identify an explicit list of opportunities for collaboration.

5. The AG Chair also referred to the 2013 review of the PBF and, in particular, to the M&E component of its revised Application Guidelines. He said that the AG has welcomed the work done so far on M&E and urged PBSO to continue in that direction. He noted that the 2013 review, which will start in June with expected results early next year, will focus on two key issues, business model and strategic positioning. He concluded by welcoming that, in 2012, nearly 11 percent of the Fund's support went to women's empowerment.

6. Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, ASG for Peacebuilding Support, praised the quality of advice and support received from the current members of the AG and highlighted the crucial advisory role of such high calibre advisors in a field such as peacebuilding which is new and constantly evolving.

7. Member States welcomed the AG Chair's briefing and agreed with ASG PBSO on the importance of the AG. Members focused their interventions on the following issues:

- In recognizing the work done by the AG, more interactions between the Group and the PBC should be organized, with particular focus on country-level discussions;
- An improved cooperation between the PBF and other financing instruments is to be welcomed;
- Monitoring and evaluation is an important element in the management of the PBF and members welcomed substantial improvements in this area.

Discussion on the outcome of the consultations with joint members of the three UN principal organs

8. The Chair recalled that policy discussions on the role of the membership and the PBC relations with principal organs, as well as on the working methods of the Commission are designed and held in order to feed into and support the work of the country

configurations. In this regard, he stressed that the Organizational Committee, as the custodian of the Commission's mandate and institutional development, is the natural platform to address the topics of broader implications for the effectiveness and impact of the PBC in the countries concerned.

9. The Chair also recalled his report on the outcome of the initial consultations with the members of the PBC elected or selected by the three UN principal organs, which took place between 30 April and 23 May. Following-up on those discussions, and in order to address the need for leadership from among the members elected/selected by each of the three organs to help guide and champion concrete actions, the Chair informed that South Africa has indicated readiness to facilitate/coordinate an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly. With regard to the Security-Council, the Committee invited Rwanda, in its capacity as the former President of the Security Council for April 2013, to participate in the meeting and brief on the second interactive dialogue with members of the Security which took place on 26 April under its Presidency. The Committee has also designated Rwanda as a coordinator whose role will be to facilitate the development of shared understanding and concrete proposals to take forward the ideas and suggestions emanating from the informal interactive dialogue. Finally, in as far as the links with ECOSOC are concerned; the Chair informed that the Secretariat is expected to revert with a concrete plan for taking forward the proposals made during the meeting with the joint membership and the Bureau.

10. Member States stressed the following points:

- The seven members elected/nominated by each of the principle organ have an important role to play in order to identify constructive and flexible ways to improve the relations between these organs and the PBC;
- Coordinators are a useful innovation which will help the broader membership find concrete actions to strengthen those relations, but emphasized the need for concrete outcomes and result-oriented discussions;
- The ultimate goal of these discussions would be to help the Country-Configurations improve their impact in the field. The interactions have to be pragmatic, flexible and country-specific;
- ECOSOC represents a useful platform to broaden the base of partners for the countries on the PBC agenda (for example through its annual Partnerships Forum with civil society, private sector and philanthropic organizations);
- With regards to the General Assembly, a number of Member States noted that the annual debate on Peacebuilding could be strengthened with the addition of a thematic discussion (for example on natural resource management, youth employment....etc);
- With regards to the Security-Council, members reflected on the most appropriate modality for interaction, calling for more frequent, yet flexible and informal interactions. One delegation suggested that the Committee could be an appropriate platform to discuss peacebuilding-related elements in Security

Council mandates in countries that are not on its agenda. This proposal has drawn favourable reactions from a number of delegations.

Presentation on the outcome of the working-level consultations and informal adoption of the initial product “Compendium of PBC Working methods”

11. The Chair presented the report on “PBC Working Methods – Part I” and noted that it represents the outcome of a series of working-level discussions in the Organizational Committee during February and March in connection with the implementation of actions under the "Working Methods" priority area of the 2013 PBC Forward Agenda. He also noted that implementation of certain aspects of the working methods as it relates to meetings planning is already underway, referring to the matrix developed and shared with the Committee for tracking the progress in the implementation of the actions contained in the 2013 forward agenda. The matrix does not only provide a planning and tracking tool of the actions required, it is also an attempt to improve the predictability in the scheduling of PBC meetings. The Chair noted that he had invited the Country Configurations to join in this approach.

12. The Chair highlighted that the Compendium also contains a proposal – made by Indonesia – of convening an annual session of the Committee, which will require further discussions on practical modalities for its planning, organization and projected outcome. In order to bring forward that proposal, the Chair invited Indonesia to coordinate the consultations on these practical modalities. Indonesia accepted the designation and stressed the importance of the annual session in order to allow the PBC to strengthen the relations with a broader segment of stakeholders in NY, the field and capitals.

13. A number of speakers took the floor to highlight the following issues:

- The Organizational Committee has an important role to play in setting guidelines for the work of the CSCs;
- The working methods of the Commission need improvements but no new mechanisms have to be established. The Commission need to improve by learning from past experiences;
- Through an improved interface with the field, the PBC has to become more relevant at the country-level.

Other matters

15. One delegation noted that documents and statements issued on behalf of the Country Configurations need to be developed and agreed by consensus amongst all the members of the concerned Configuration. This means that such documents and statements need to be circulated in its final format ahead of its formal adoption by the Configuration.
