

Peacebuilding Commission Organizational Committee Meeting

4 October 2017

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 4 October 2017, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened a meeting of the Organizational Committee (OC) on the following agenda items: 1) Report by the Chairs of the PBC Country configurations; and 2) Update on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Chair of the PBC.

Report by the Chairs of the PBC Country Configurations

1. The Chair of the PBC stated that this is the third time this year that the PBC is briefed by the Country Specific Configurations Chairs on their activities, and that these quarterly briefings have now become an important part of the PBC's new working mechanism. He then thanked the CSC Chairs for their cooperation in making this happen.
2. The Chair of the Burundi Configuration (Switzerland) reported that, after briefing the Security Council on 20 June, he undertook a visit to Burundi from 10-13 July. The main objective of this visit was to pursue dialogue on the socioeconomic situation and on the cooperation between the Government and its international partners. He informed that during the visit he participated in a socioeconomic retreat organized by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi, which brought together the Government, the UN, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank. He also communicated that on 21 July he briefed the PBC on the visit and reported that several Member States welcomed the intention to continue the socioeconomic dialogue with the Government and its international partners. During the briefing, delegations also underscored the need for a constructive engagement of all Burundian stakeholders in the East African Community-led dialogue process, as well as for significant regional engagement. In connection with the advisory role to the Security-Council, he reported that on 26 July he presented the report on his visit to the Council and that in its PRST adopted on 2 August the Security Council welcomed the "active engagement of the PBC as a viable platform for dialogue between Burundi and its partners, and further welcomed in this regard the socioeconomic retreat held in Bujumbura on 12 July 2017." The Chair also informed that during the high-level segment of the General Assembly in New York, he discussed the situation in Burundi with a number of senior officials from Burundi and other partners. Moving forward, the Chair reported that the PBC will continue to focus on: the dialogue between the Government and its international partners; the question of national reconciliation; and how to create a

fair environment for the organization of peaceful and democratic elections in 2020. He concluded by informing that the next PBC meeting will be an opportunity to discuss the EAC-led dialogue process and the refugee situation.

3. The Chair of the Central African Republic (CAR) Configuration (Morocco) recalled that he briefed the Commission on 31 July on his visit to CAR of 12-14 July, which focused on efforts to engage with the Government of CAR, national, regional, and international stakeholders on the country's peacebuilding and recovery agenda and to discuss the progress made in the implementation of the National Plan for Peacebuilding and Recovery (RCPCA). He also recalled that, at that briefing, he had underscored the deterioration of the security situation, warned against the risks of spreading sectarian violence and its impact on the communities, and recommended that the Security Council undertake a visit to CAR in order to apprise members of the situation on the ground and to inform their decisions on the renewal of MINUSCA mandate. The Chair reported that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco, in his capacity as Chair, participated in the high-level side event on CAR co-convened by President Touadera of CAR and Secretary-General Guterres on 19 September. On that occasion, the Chair recognized that CAR was vacillating between the positive movement towards peace and stability made in 2016 and deterioration of the security situation in some parts of the country in 2017. He deplored the escalation of violence witnessed over the recent months and warned against the ethnic and confessional nature of the violence, which had been recently witnessed in Bangassou. He concluded by calling on the sub-region to continue to support the recovery of CAR, and to look at ways to address some critical issues such as illicit arms trafficking and seasonal migration. Looking ahead, the Chair informed that the PBC would meet in October to discuss the second pillar of the RCPCA and provide input to the Security Council discussions on the renewal of the mandate of MINUSCA. He also notified that he would travel to CAR in November to discuss with the Government of CAR, and national, regional, and international stakeholders, the country's peacebuilding and recovery agenda and the progress made in the implementation of the National Plan for Peacebuilding and Recovery (RCPCA).
4. The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration (Brazil) reported on his visit to Guinea-Bissau and Portugal from 26 to 28 July and briefed the Commission on 21 August. He noted that during the visit he consulted with a broad range of stakeholders, including the President of the Republic, Prime Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly, and members of all political parties represented in the National Assembly. He informed that his consultations in Bissau highlighted the complexity of the political impasse. The Conakry Agreement remained a fundamental point of reference for most political actors, though it remained the subject of conflicting interpretations. The Chair welcomed the efforts of the Group of Women Facilitators to open up lines of communication among key actors and promote de-escalation of tensions. He reported that on his way back he stopped over in Lisbon and met the Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries to discuss the role of the Community in supporting Guinea-Bissau and helping to find a solution to the political situation. Going forward, the Chair said that the Commission will continue to focus on three issues: the political crisis and the implementation of the Conakry

agreement, preparations for the elections, and national dialogue.

5. The Chair of the Sierra Leone Configuration (Canada) recalled that the priority of the PBC's engagement with Sierra Leone was to support the country in holding free, fair, transparent, peaceful, and credible elections in March 2018 and to ensure a peaceful transition, including by providing advocacy and political accompaniment, mobilizing political, technical, and financial resources, and engaging with civil society and other stakeholders. The Chair reported that in July he hosted an Ambassadorial-level working breakfast with SRSB Chembas of UNOWAS to discuss with key partners how to support Sierra Leone at this critical time. He briefed that he continues to engage various partners to ensure financial support for the elections, particularly via the UNDP electoral assistance project. The preparation for the elections was also discussed at an expert-level meeting on 11 September, which brought together UN partners in New York, including DPA, UNDP, PBSO, and PBF, the Resident Coordinator, and Sierra Leonean partners working to prepare for the elections, including officials from the National Electoral Commission, the Political Parties Registration Commission, and civil society watch groups. The Chair said that he intended to continue monitoring the situation, including through a visit to Sierra Leone in November.
6. The Chair of the Liberia Configuration (Sweden) noted that Liberia was a test case of how the UN transitions when peacekeeping missions drawdown. He said that there was broad agreement among Member States that in view of the upcoming elections and the transfer of power to a new government in early 2018, Liberia must continue to receive political accompaniment and support from the good offices. In this connection, the Chair reported that over the past couple of months, the PBC had discussed the drawdown of UNMIL, as well as the capacity and resources of the UNCT. He noted that there is a need for continued robust UN engagement on peacebuilding, empowered by predictable resources. He stressed that with UNMIL's departure in March 2018 there would be an urgent need to secure predictable sources of financing to cover approximately \$130 million needed for next year. In the upcoming months, the PBC would need to monitor the implementation of the peacebuilding plan; ensure that Liberia continues to receive political accompaniment; help secure resources to avoid the resource and financial "cliff" after the departure of UNMIL. The Chair noted that Liberia was an excellent case where sustaining peace needs to be taken from paper to practice. With the peacekeeping missions moving out, other parts of the UN system have to step in in a timely manner. He informed that he had engaged with the Security Council on the Presidential Statement adopted on 24 July with the aim of providing for smooth transition. He concluded by noting that the PBC would continue to work to ensure that all options are explored for the UN to continue to deliver the political support needed by the Government.
7. Member States welcomed the briefings and highlighted the following issues:
 - The quarterly briefings by the CSC Chairs contributed to improving the Commission's working methods. These briefings provide an opportunity to give Member States a broad perspective on the work of the PBC and to

reinforce the concept of “one PBC.”

- The advisory and complementing role of the Commission to the Security Council needs to be fully recognized. While there is growing confidence between the Council and the Commission, and the Council has often referred to the importance of the advisory role of the Commission, there is still room to strengthen the synergies between the Commission and the Council. The informal interactive dialogues represent useful ways to strengthen those synergies and should be further utilized. The advisory role of the PBC is of particular importance when the Council is addressing transitions from peacekeeping operations. In this connection, a study could be conducted on how the Commission could support the Council during transition phases.
- It is important to maintain strong relations between the PBC and the PBF and to match programming tools with political objectives.
- The PBC has done important work in prioritizing national ownership throughout its deliberations.

Update on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund

8. The Chair of the PBC recalled that, at the PBC meeting on UN reform held in September, Secretary-General Guterres emphasized the importance of the PBF, highlighting its catalytic role as a “lubricant” to make the “hinge” between the different pillars of the UN system and appealed to Member States to contribute to the Fund, which requires a “quantum leap” in support. He also stated that the PBC and PBSO have important roles to play in this regard. He thanked the Assistant-General for Peacebuilding Support’s continued efforts to strengthen the synergies between the PBC and the PBF, and expressed hope that the meeting will be another opportunity to discuss ways the PBC and PBSO can work together to mobilize more resources to the Fund.
9. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support briefed on the recent activities and future plans of the PBF. He thanked Member States for their strong support to the PBF and recalled that the Secretary-General had recently referred to the importance of ensuring adequate and predictable funding to the PBF, including through the consideration of assessed contributions. As highlighted by the Secretary-General, the PBF was the “lubricant” to ensure an effective “hinge” or bridge between the peace and security pillar with the development system.
10. With regard to the recent activities of the Fund, the ASG informed that during the first three quarters of the year, the PBF approved over \$55 million of projects. During the 3rd quarter, the PBF responded positively to the requests of United Nations teams on the ground in Bosnia Herzegovina, Central African Republic, The Gambia, Lebanon, and Niger, while also supporting three new cross border initiatives in Burkina Faso/Mali/Niger, Cameroon/Chad and the Great Lakes, specifically at the border between Tanzania and Burundi. He recalled that requests from United Nations teams on the ground are thoroughly evaluated by PBSO according to the criteria set in the Terms of Reference of the Fund approved by the General Assembly. As part of this process, feedback and support is provided to the teams to ensure: 1) solid theory of

change, 2) strong focus on peacebuilding results in one or more of the PBF priority areas, 3) value for money, 4) gender sensitiveness, and 5) a strong results framework with a solid monitoring and evaluation framework. All proposals are then reviewed by the cross departmental Peacebuilding Contact Group and submitted to a final Project Appraisal Committee. This extensive process ensures transparency and due process.

11. Moving forward, the ASG informed that the last quarter of the year will see a high number of proposals, including from Central America countries, Colombia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mali, the Solomon Islands, and an extension to the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border project. He noted that with these proposals, the PBF would have approved an unprecedented level of projects in a single year. He stressed that many of these countries have either already engaged with the PBC while others are preparing to do so, understanding the importance of the PBC as a platform to present and received feedback for their peacebuilding strategies. He noted that the PBF continues to be committed to gender empowerment, and he recalled that PBSO just concluded a new round of its Gender and Youth Promotion initiatives. For this special initiative, the Office received 245 proposals from the 20 eligible countries via the new online application tool.
12. In connection with monitoring and evaluation, he informed that, as set out in the new Business Plan 2017-2019 for the PBF, the Fund had also made significant progress in improving its monitoring and evaluation policy, including new dashboard and financial management mechanisms. He also underlined that the Fund was now for the first time this year reporting all of its data via the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office, using the International Aid Transparency Initiative standards.
13. In conclusion, he noted that the demand for PBF support far outweighed available resources. Assuming an average of \$100 million a year of transfers, and taking into account all commitments and pledges received to date from the 34 Member States in the present cycle, the Fund would still require \$113 million for the three-year cycle ending in 2019. He recalled that, as the Secretary-General underlined, the Fund needed a quantum leap of support.
14. Member States welcomed the briefing on the activities of the PBF and highlighted the following issues:
 - Welcome the recognition by the Secretary-General for the central work of the PBF. The PBF is achieving impressive results.
 - Traditional donors need to strengthen their commitment to the Fund but there is also a need to expand the Fund's donor base.
 - There is a need to further harmonize the work between PBC and PBF. The policy discussions in the PBC and the projects of the PBF need to be better aligned.
 - The PBF is playing a critical role in enhancing system-wide coherence in the UN.

- Activities of the PBF need to be better communicated. The PBC can play an important role in this connection, providing a space to countries receiving contributions by the Fund to share their experiences and advertise the work of the Fund.
- The PBF is playing a role in leveraging funds from IFIs. There is a need to look into ways for the PBC to further strengthen its roles in this regard.
