

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

First Annual Session

Closing Statement by

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Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Mr. President of the Security Council,

In addition to marking the “Peacebuilding Day”, this first annual session marks the evolving role of the Peacebuilding Commission in the development of global policy directions relevant to countries emerging from conflict.

In the opening segment of the session, we have had the opportunity to hear reflections from the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as from Nobel Laureate and former President of Timor Leste, Mr. Jose Ramos-Horta, on the main theme of this session, namely: “the national and international aspects of sustainable resources and capacities for peacebuilding”. Both of these addresses provided the strategic framework for the follow-up substantive discussions that we had in two informal working sessions, with the participation and contribution of the honorable ministers from Guinea and Sierra Leone, and representatives of our key partners in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank.

The discussions in the first working session touched upon critical policy gaps in intergovernmental action to ensure timely, targeted and sustained support for countries emerging from conflict in the areas of domestic resource mobilization, and to combat illicit financial flows from countries emerging from conflict.

In this regard, key questions were addressed, including the role of the international community in a) sustaining financial inflows from external sources towards peacebuilding objectives; and b) acting multilaterally, in a more concerted way, to help reduce the volume and negative impact of illicit financial flows.

I was glad to notice that during our first working session, on domestic resources mobilization and revenue generation, participants were able to put forward different perspectives and very concrete policy recommendations, bearing in mind the specificities of post-conflict situations.

They were able to address national and international dimensions. Attention was given to the interrelated issues of public finances management, institutions and capacity building, natural resources management, combat of illicit financial flows, including through combating trade misinvoicing, among many others. The need for further policy development on those issues was highlighted, as well as the contributions of different organizations, as well as national and international actors.

A particular emphasis was placed on the opportunities of regional and subregional approaches, including for technical assistance. The role of civil society was also mentioned. I believe the session was particularly successful in placing those aspects of resources mobilization in the strategic context of some fundamental questions: what do we want to mobilize resources for; how do we ensure maximum benefits for local populations in situations of scarcity, volatility and huge needs; how do we enhance national ownership and timely assistance to overcome the challenges of fragile

stability; how, when, and with which instruments do we engage in very risky situations. I believe the session proved very useful for addressing these very complex matters from the specific point of view of the political economy of post-conflict situations, and I commend the moderator, panelists, respondents and participants for a very rich discussion, with many concrete suggestions.

In the second working session, the importance of continued international commitment to countries undergoing post-conflict transitions beyond the draw down and exit of Security Council mandated missions was stressed. We drew upon the recent transition in Sierra Leone and looked into how the international community can a) help create an enabling environment for the country's capacities to manage and address critical political and socio-economic challenges during the transitions from conflict to stability and development; and b) mobilize and sustain attention on the country's specific capacity and financial needs during transitions.

The discussion also shed light on the issue of financial sustainability in the context of the extended timespan that transitions might require, and the need to adjust institutional arrangements to provide sustained support. It highlighted the importance of inclusivity, and national capacity-building in key sectors, from public administration to education, in order to promote employment and the basis for economic recovery and sustained stability. Here, too, a word of recognition to the excellent contributions of the moderator, panelists, respondents and participants which ensured a very substantive and strategic exchange.

The Peacebuilding Commission stands ready to follow-up on these discussions and to distill practical policy recommendations which we can place before the General Assembly and the Security Council for further reflection and consideration. As both parent organs of the Commission will be soon initiating the comprehensive review of the Peacebuilding Architecture in 2015, the

conclusions that we draw from the substantive deliberations of this session would also highlight areas requiring additional attention from the UN Architecture.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this commemoration of “Peacebuilding Day”, we can find encouragement in the fact that the international community has made considerable progress in addressing some of the critical challenge facing countries emerging from conflict. At the same time, our discussions today confirm that we still need to pursue vigorous and practical policy-making.

This first annual session has demonstrated the potential for the Peacebuilding Commission to serve as an intergovernmental platform for Member States to gather, address and share perspectives on critical policy areas for peacebuilding. It is, however, only the first opportunity of its sort. I trust that for future annual sessions, we will continue to bring to the fore issues and themes requiring our attention as we try to shape and further improve our response to post-conflict challenges.

As previously agreed, the Chair will summarize the deliberations of the first annual session in a report that will be shared with the members of the Commission. Policy recommendations that may be concluded from these deliberations will be the subject of a further consultative process within the Peacebuilding Commission with a view to incorporating these recommendations in the Commission’s next annual report to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

I wish to thank you all for your attendance. I wish to thank and recognize those Member States who participated by delegations from the respective capitals. I also thank delegations and international organizations who participated in and made valuable contributions to the deliberations in the two informal working sessions.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins for the support provided by the Peacebuilding Support Office in the substantive and logistics preparations for this session.

My thanks also go to the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management and the Department of Safety and Security for their support to and diligence in organizing this session.

Thank you.