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Statement

by the

**Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the
United Nations**

H.E. Ranko Vilović

**on the occasion of his election as Chairman of the
Peacebuilding Commission**

United Nations

28 January 2013

Ambassador Momen, outgoing Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC),
Distinguished Ambassador, Vice-Chairperson of the PBC,
Distinguished Chairpersons of the Country Configurations (CSCs) and Chair of the
Working Group on Lessons Learned
Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support;
Distinguished Permanent Representatives;
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking all of you for the confidence and trust you've placed in my country and me by electing me to this high post. I certainly hope that with your help and support I'll live up to your expectations and successfully steer the work of the Commission in the year ahead. In these efforts, I'll consult many instructive examples of my predecessors which, by their wise guidance, laid the foundations for the Commission's central role within the UN peacebuilding architecture and significantly contributed to its present achievements.

In particular, I would like to thank Ambassador Momen for his able guidance of the work of the Commission in 2012 and all his efforts aimed at strengthening the Commission's role and influence within the UN system and beyond. At the same time, we all agree that the Commission's achievements will be measured by its capability to bring about tangible results for people on the ground in the countries on its agenda. In that regard, I sincerely thank all Chairs of the Country Configurations for their tremendous efforts and express my readiness to continue to work with them to ensure that the internal synergy among the Commission's various configurations will reach its highest level.

As you are aware last year, Croatia served as one of the Commission's Vice-Chairs. This duty necessitated my full and comprehensive engagement with the work of the Commission and provided me with a full insight into the Commission's every day formal and informal activities and endeavors. The valuable experience I gained while holding this position will undoubtedly serve me well in execution of my current duty. This practice, adjusted to the recently adopted amendments to the Commission's Rules of Procedure, should be continued and I strongly recommend it to the Commission. I hope that the expected Vice-Chair from the GRULAC region could be nominated and elected soon and could subsequently be nominated next year by his group as Chair of the Commission.

Dear colleagues,

Croatia's interest and engagement in peacebuilding started a long time ago and was additionally accentuated by our bitter recent history and ensuing experience. Our first hand war experience, but also our subsequent efforts to successfully reconnect integral parts of our society and rebuild our own country has significantly contributed to our view that we should share our experiences with others in similar position and help them override challenges they are confronted with. From the very beginning Croatia actively participated in all informal and formal negotiations on the establishment of the Commission and was a part of its first composition. Today, by taking over the leadership of this body, we testify to our determination to meaningfully contribute to current peacebuilding efforts in the countries on the agenda, as well as to the continuing development of the Commission's institutional and substantive capacity.

Of course, the general framework of our chairmanship and vision behind the PBC are set forth by the founding resolutions and subsequent literature, in particular the reports of the Secretary General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict of 2009 and 2012 and women participation in peacebuilding, as well as the most useful Review of the UN peacebuilding architecture undertaken in 2010. However, our day to day activities will be guided by the actions agreed upon in the section on *Conclusions and agenda going forward* of the report which we have just adopted and our intention is to proceed in a pragmatic, compressed, step by step approach in order to tackle immediate challenges facing us in 2013.

Let me here briefly touch upon the areas which, in our view, would significantly enhance our collective peacebuilding efforts and which we intend to vigorously pursue during our presidency:

1. First, relationship between the PBC and the UN principal organs. We would all agree that the PBC role and influence, to a great extent, depends on its relationship with its parent organs, namely the Security Council and the General Assembly. We intend to build upon ongoing discussions in that regard with the aim to help the Commission to fully realize its advisory role and vast potential as a central political platform within the United Nations system.

2. Second, through thorough discussions on the Commission's working methods, our primary goal would be to further improve the Commission's impact on the ground, including through, the adoption of terms of references for the activities of the chairs and members of country configurations, developing success criteria for measuring the results on the ground, further improving the process of the periodic reviews of instruments of engagement and field visits, to mention a few of the areas which we will embark upon over the next few weeks. At the same time, we would not neglect broader strategic issues, including defining the role of the membership, communications strategy or internal dynamics of the Commission.

3. Third, following previous valuable efforts in that regard, we'll keep the resource mobilization function of the Commission high on our agenda. In this context, our intention is to entrench old and explore new avenues for partnerships with non-traditional actors, with emphasis on cooperation with and engagement of the private sector and foundations. We will explore the most practical ways to approach and engage these actors. In addition, we will pursue further policy discussions on related themes which would bring forward the cohesion between the political security and development dimensions of peacebuilding. For example by exploring the role of efficient management of natural resources in generating public revenues, and the role of the private sector in the area of responsible investment in this area, we can contribute to building the capacity of target agenda countries and facilitating private sector investment. I expect that in the nearest future I'll be able to share with you, more formally, much more detailed information on both fronts.

4. Fourth, we believe that an important aspect of the Commission's success in the area of resource mobilization is linked to its success in exercising its important role in forging partnerships with and coherence among key peacebuilding actors. Therefore, our intention is to continue to pursue and deepen cooperation with international financial institutions, namely the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

5. Fifth and finally, the Commission's role in forging coherence would necessarily extend to making a serious effort to properly understand and link up with other relevant global initiatives and processes which could significantly contribute to our common peacebuilding

efforts in the countries on the agenda. It is my intention to continue to explore avenues for better synergy aimed at avoiding duplication of efforts, distraction of attention and imposition on the limited capacity of the countries with which we are engaged. We have to prioritize the efforts to achieve the goals we are trying to achieve over the means at our disposal.

In conclusion, dear colleagues, my first intervention as Chair of the PBC would be incomplete, without explicit mentioning of the important work that the PBSO, headed by Assistant Secretary General Judy Cheng Hopkins, is doing in support of the PBC and its configurations. Without the hard work, skills and determination of the PBSO, we as the PBC could not fulfil our main functions. As the Commission's Vice-Chair I witnessed their dedication and commitment in their endeavors to bring the UN system together, convene peacebuilding expertise and provide solid input to PBC deliberations. I count on their continuous support in dealing with the challenges ahead of us.

The Commission's strength derives from mutual and close cooperation of different members that are carefully drawn from key constituencies of contributors to the work of the goals of the United Nations. The Commission is only as strong as the collective strength of its individual members. Having that in mind, we should put our heads together to generate the requisite commitment and attention to the original vision behind the Commission, be it here in Headquarters, back in our capitals or with our colleagues in the field. I invite you all to lead by example in this crucial exercise and help us to bring the Commission to its rightful place within the UN peacebuilding architecture and beyond.
