

**Peacebuilding Commission  
Working Group on Lessons Learned**

**Relationship between the PBC and the Security Council:  
Possible areas and situations for advice**

**Transition of UN Missions in PBC agenda countries**

**21 November 2012**

Chairperson's Summary

**I. Introduction**

1. On 21 November 2012, the Peacebuilding Commission's (PBC) Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL) held a meeting on *the Relationship between the PBC and the Security Council: Possible areas and situations for Advice*, with particular focus on *Transition of UN Missions in PBC agenda countries*. The meeting was convened as a follow-up to the discussions which took place in the WGLL on the evolving partnership between the Commission and the Council (December 2011) and during the Council's consideration of the PBC's annual report on 12 & 13 July 2012.

2. In his introductory remarks, the Chairperson of the WGLL noted that the meeting will focus on the advisory role of the PBC to the Security Council in the context of UN Missions' transitions in the countries on its agenda. The Chair added that the issue of transition is particularly relevant because three countries on the Commission's agenda are undergoing or are about to start the process of transition or drawing down of their missions, namely Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Chairperson further recalled the evolving UN policy on transitions in the context of draw down and withdrawal of UN missions which aims at improving the planning and management of UN transitions.

3. The Chairperson also recalled that on 7 November, an informal working-level meeting was held with relevant departments and entities of the UN system, the chairs of the three concerned configurations, the lead countries in the Security Council, as well as the chair of the Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations. He informed that a number of important issues were raised at that meeting which pertain to the role of the PBC in: 1) introducing a development perspective into peace and security considerations; 2) ensuring that an adequate system, based on national priorities, is in place to take on after the mission withdrawal; and 3) ensuring a smooth transition in the field.

4. The Chairperson invited the following speakers to reflect on the topic:

- Mr. Nega Berhanemeskel, Deputy Head of Mission for United Nations

Integrated Peace building Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)

- Mr. Edmund Mulet, Assistant-Secretary-General, DPKO

The Chairperson also informed that representatives from DPKO's Division for Policy Evaluation and Training, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, DPA and DOCO are invited to make interventions from the floor to share their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges presented by transitions of UN missions and the possible scope of the advisory role of the PBC in support of these transitions.

## **II. Presentations by Panelists**

### **Sierra Leone**

4. Mr. Berhanemeskel opened his presentation informing member states that the elections held in Sierra Leone on 17 November are perceived as credible, free and transparent. He added that elections represent a main benchmark for UNIPSIL transition. Mr. Berhanemeskel noted that UN Missions are set to respond to specific needs in the field and that a transition is a process and not a one-off event. Therefore, it is crucial that transition planning start early. He noted that a number of key elements should be highlighted during the planning phase: a) an assessment mission should take place at the final stage of the process and not as an initial step; b) each transition situation is unique and there is no one size fits all; c) transition planning should ensure that national capacities are in place in order to transfer key responsibilities assumed by the mission; 4) transition planning should build on existing mechanisms and previous country-specific lessons learned.

5. In this regard, Mr. Berhanemeskel listed the key features that have characterized successful transitions undertaken by previous UN missions in Sierra Leone, namely: a) Clear benchmarks and time frame decided by the Security Council; b) Role of UN leadership in the field. In Sierra Leone, the ERSG also served as Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, thus facilitating continuing coordination among UN actors; c) The need to conduct a separate but coordinated planning for the transition of the civilian and the military components; d) Ensure consultations with national authorities at all stages of the process; and e) involve and keep international partners informed of emerging and expected needs and/or gaps.

6. In addressing the role that the PBC can play in transition settings, Mr. Berhanemeskel noted that, in the case of Sierra Leone, the Commission was a very proactive actor. The Commission has contributed to improving the coordination of international assistance and in addressing the need of the country for sustained attention. For this reason, he suggested that: a) the PBC could consider taking part in the technical assessment mission planned for January 2013 with a view to looking into the transition planning, b) The PBC is expected to continue to be engaged following UNIPSIL's withdrawal in order to help the country address emerging needs and gaps resulting for the mission's withdrawal; c) The PBC's support in continuing accompaniment and assessment of international coordination and commitment to the country will be required for some time following

UNIPSIL's draw-down; and d) PBC's direct link with the Security Council, through regular reporting, will help alert the Council to possible risks and/or needs. This might require the PBC to consider more dynamic mechanisms to link with the UN, key national and international actors in the field.

## **Liberia**

7. Addressing elements in relation to UNMIL's transition, Mr. Mulet informed member states that, as decided by the Security Council in its resolution 2066 of 2012, the mandate of the Mission has been extended for another year and a reduction in the military component of the Mission has begun. Mr. Mulet noted that there are clear gaps in critical areas such as security and rule of law, which are among both the key benchmarks for UNMIL's transition and the priorities addressed by the PBC in Liberia. He also noted that the Liberian Peacebuilding Plan (LPP), encouraged by the PBC as a tool for resource mobilization, has also become a useful instrument for an integrated and coordinated approach to a host of peacebuilding and capacity needs in Liberia. He also emphasized the importance attached to the concept of justice and security hubs endorsed by the PBC and supported by the PBF, as a major contribution to ensuring the gradual extension of state authority outside Monrovia. Mr. Mulet further underscored that as UNMIL's transition proceeds, the international community will be expected to enhance its engagement in order to impart confidence among national actors that peace dividends will not be compromised by decreasing attention and commitment from international partners following the draw-down of the mission.

8. In this regard, Mr. Mulet identified areas where the PBC's contribution would facilitate a successful transition of UNMIL, namely: a) advocacy and fund-raising to address critical capacity and funding gaps emanating from the transfer of the mission's responsibilities to the Liberian Government; b) advice to the Government on the development of a viable resource mobilization strategy throughout the transition process; and c) ensure that issues related to the sustainability of the justice and security hubs are addressed with a view to enabling the Government to gradually assume full management and financing responsibilities in time for the draw-down of UNMIL.

## **III. Reflections from the UN system**

9. Before opening to floor to member states, the Chairperson invited representatives of UN lead department and operational agencies, namely DPKO, DPA, UNDP and DOCO, which are involved in the development of the UN policy on transitions in the context of draw-down and withdrawal of UN missions, to take the floor and share their thoughts on the issue.

- DPKO: Ms. Leanne Smith briefed on the process of developing the UN policy, which outlines key principles that should apply across all UN transitions, as well as roles and responsibilities of UN actors. Building on the lessons learned from past and current UN transitions in countries like Timor-Leste, Liberia,

Burundi and Sierra Leone, the policy identifies key transition principles: a) Early Planning, b) UN integration, c) National Ownership, d) National capacity development, e) Clear and consistent Communication. Ms. Smith also noted that as drawdown of missions often coincides with reduced international attention for the host countries from the international community, the PBC can play an important role in ensuring sustained engagement throughout and beyond the transition processes. She noted that benchmarking should apply to all phases of the implementation of the Mission's mandate, in order to facilitate decisions on transition, noting that UNMISS is piloting this approach on the basis of earlier lessons learned.

- DPA: Mr. Vincent Pasquini reiterated DPA's commitment to support UNIPSIL in its transition phase. He underlined the importance of coordination and UN planning and recognized the important advocacy role of the PBC.
- DOCO: Ms. Sofia Carrondo stressed the importance for the PBC to ensure an early and continuous engagement with the Security Council, national authorities and UN leadership. She emphasized that the design of a transition plan needs to be informed by the assessment made throughout the life span of such engagement in order to: a) identify the gaps resulting from draw-down of missions where certain mandates do not normally fall within the competence of and, thus, can not be transferred to UNCTs; b) ensure that a comprehensive view of operational actors' perspectives at the country-level is factored into Security Council decision-making on transitions; and c) ensure that the government is empowered to receive and govern resources and that donors are encouraged to use country-systems when channeling resources.
- UNDP: Ms. Natasha Van Rijn noted that the critical aspect of the transition is first and foremost the handover of responsibilities to national authorities. In this regard, and recognizing that the support of the international community has to be guided by the needs identified by national actors, the PBC can play a central role in convening early discussions on post-transition scenarios at headquarters level. Recalling the recent partners' conference for Burundi, she noted that the sustained political attention and advocacy that the PBC can secure for a country on its agenda can help sustain financial attention long after a peacekeeping mission has withdrawn. In this connection, Ms. Van Rijn added that the role of the Peacebuilding Fund in countries such as Chad shows how financial support can play an instrumental role in managing UN transition process on the ground. Addressing the issue of the relations between the Commission and the Security Council, Ms. Van Rijn noted that a sustained engagement between the two bodies could lead to a better linkage between development and peacebuilding issues on one side and political/security on the other.

#### **IV. Member States' views**

10. The majority of ensuing interventions made by Member States focused on the potential role of the PBC during transitions, as follows:

- **National ownership:** ensure that support of the international community is aligned behind national plans and priorities. The use of country systems need to be encouraged in order to contribute to the development of national institution's capacity to assume the majority of UN mission responsibilities following draw-down. In addition, there is need to encourage national revenue generation through different means (e.g. taxation, natural resource management, private sector investment...etc).
- **Coordinated support:** promote coordination among key actors involved in the transition planning, and offer a platform to respond to emerging needs and/or challenges during and following the transition. In this regard, the capacity of the UN presence beyond draw-down of missions is an area requiring attention during the transition planning process.
- **Sustained engagement:** certain peacebuilding-related processes (e.g. national reconciliation, economic dividends) are of long-term nature and would require longer term accompaniment and attention beyond the draw-down of missions.
- **Relations PBC-Security Council:** The PBC could offer advice to the Council on key peacebuilding goals and the level of national and international commitment to meet these goals during and following the transition. To this end, the PBC can also contribute to the outcome of assessment missions with a view to including the aforementioned elements in transition planning and benchmarking, as well as to factor in sustainability issues and possible conflict drivers in post-transition UN engagement.

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