

DARFT PBC Chair's statement (Former Chair)

BRIEFING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL – PBC ANNUAL REPORT

22 June 2016

Mr. President,

I am pleased to be here today on behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission, to present the annual report of the Commission on its ninth session, as contained in document A/70/714-S/2016/115.

We meet during the “Peacebuilding Week,” at one of several timely opportunities to discuss next steps in terms of implementing the resolutions on sustaining peace, adopted almost two months ago. I look forward to the informal interactive dialogue with members of the Security Council following this briefing and to the PBC Annual Session tomorrow. The two groundbreaking resolutions emanating from the Review of the Peacebuilding architecture provides an excellent basis and strong impetus for an enhanced role of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as a strengthened relationship with this august Council.

Mr. President

I will now turn to the task at hand; to present the activities achievements of the PBC during 2015. The ninth session of the PBC coincided with the first phase of the review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, which inspired the work of the PBC. Over the past year, we took important steps to improve the effectiveness and flexibility of the PBC, thereby striving to further enhance the relevance of our work, broaden the scope and reach of our efforts, and improve the accountability of the Commission. This includes adopting more transparent and strategic working methods, a more flexible agenda and increasing inclusivity; improving partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations; and highlighting peacebuilding needs in the Ebola recovery.

Allow me to highlight three particular areas of progress from the annual report, and also pass on some reflections on how this work can be built on and leveraged in light of the review.

First, regarding the flexibility and effectiveness of the work of the commission:

During its ninth session, the PBC was able to leverage the inherent flexibility of the commission to convene regional and country-specific discussions concerning situations beyond the PBC's established agenda. The Organizational Committee had opportunities to discuss peacebuilding needs and lessons learned in several contexts, such as the peace process in Papua New Guinea, the elections in Burkina Faso and financing for peacebuilding in Somalia. Going forward, this work can, and should be, further expanded. In my view, there is great scope for the commission to keep evolving in this regard. The resolutions adopted in April give the PBC a clear mandate to continue diversifying its working methods in support of sustaining peace.

Second, on regional issues:

The commission has over the past year moved to highlight thematic and regional issues of relevance to its work. For example, to draw attention to the peacebuilding needs within the Ebola recovery, building on the successful work of my predecessor, a PBC chairs trip to West Africa was undertaken. I am very happy that a similar visit to the region was carried out by the current PBC chair in the past two weeks.

Furthermore, a regional discussion on trends and threats to peacebuilding in West Africa was convened in the beginning of this year, where USG Jeffrey Feltman, head of the Department of Political Affairs was invited to identify conflict prevention priorities, and inform the commission's work in the region. Again, it is encouraging that the PBC is already building on what was started during previous sessions, with additional regional discussions convened in this session. The PBC should further use the momentum from the reviews to deepen and institutionalize cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations both in the commission as a whole and in the country specific work. The fundamental peacebuilding and conflict prevention work carried out in particular by the Regional Economic Communities is something the PBC can better link with in its advocacy work and accompaniment. In a similar vein, the PBC is well placed to listen to and incorporate local perspectives and bringing such understandings and approaches to peacebuilding to the fore.

Thirdly, regarding inclusivity:

Few bodies at the UN have a mandate to interact with and draw upon the expertise of such a wide range of actors, as does the PBC. During the ninth session, the PBC worked to advance

interaction with a more diverse group of actors. The drafting of a Gender Strategy for the Peacebuilding Commission was initiated, which will help the Commission to systemize the way it works on gender issues, and to put empowerment of women at the core of the work.

A special session was organized to discuss how to advance the youth, peace and security agenda and champion youth participation for sustainable peace. This is an agenda I hope the PBC can keep on championing, building on the momentum of Security Council resolution 2250.

The convening role of the PBC should be utilized even further, as it is one of the most important tools we have to foster greater coherence in international action, and to help break some of the silos and address fragmentation. This, in turn, is a prerequisite for our ability to support genuine national leadership and ownership in peacebuilding processes.

Mr. President,

Beyond these three topics that I have had a chance to touch upon, there are of course many more achievements that deserve the attention of this body, not least within the country-specific configurations of the commission. 2016 is another important year for the commission, and I am very happy to see how the Commission continues to evolve under the able stewardship of the Kenyan Chairmanship.

Before concluding, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow PBC chairs, as well as the representatives of the countries on our agenda and all the members of the PBC. It has been a productive year for the commission, and the successful steps could not have been done without your active engagement and dedicated support.

In similar vein, I would be remiss if I did not dedicate a special word of thanks to ASG Oscar Fernandez Taranco, and to his entire team at the Peacebuilding Support Office, for the steadfast support throughout the ninth session and their never-ending determination to advance the Peacebuilding agenda at the UN.

I thank you.