

**Statement by Ambassador Kenzo Oshima Permanent Representative of Japan
Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission**

27 June 2007

Ambassador Martins, Distinguished Members of the Peacebuilding Commission, Distinguished Participants,

I feel truly honored and most grateful to accept the privilege of chair of the Organizational Committee of the PBC on behalf of Japan to succeed Angola, so ably represented by Ambassador Gaspar Martins for the past year. I thank all the members of the PBC sincerely for the trust you have put in Japan by doing so, and I pledge Japan's full commitment to ensuring smooth and effective conduct in the work of the Organizational Committee in the coming months, in full consultations with the Members, in carrying out the mandate entrusted to the PBC pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 60/180 and Security Council Resolution 1645 (2005).

As the annual report shows, since June 2006 when the Commission started its work, it has achieved important progress in developing the necessary institutional mechanisms, including addressing key organizational, procedural and methodological issues during the past year. In addition, the country-specific configurations of the Commission have been put in place and they have gotten off to a good start. Moreover, elaboration of an integrated strategy in the country-specific meetings has begun and it is expected to provide the strategic peacebuilding framework in the next few months.

In the Secretariat, the Peacebuilding Support Office is up and running with reasonable staffing, and the envisaged standing fund for post-conflict peacebuilding has been established and has become operational with initial disbursement of funds.

These are quite significant achievements in the first year of the existence of the PBC. First and foremost, I would like to take this occasion to express on my own behalf and on behalf of all the members of the PBC, the deepest appreciation to my predecessor, Ambassador Gaspar Martins, for his exemplary dedication and skill in guiding the work of this Committee. Under his able leadership, and with the support of the two Vice-Chairs, Ambassador Løvald and Ambassador Gallardo Hernandez, we have made remarkable progress towards laying the foundation for the Peacebuilding Commission in the short time since the world leaders decided on its establishment.

We already have a Peacebuilding Support Office headed by someone of high confidence and rich experience, Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie, supported by a dedicated staff, to give us appropriate input. We also have a Peacebuilding Fund, which stands ready to respond quickly with the resources required whenever the need arises. This progress was achieved in large part thanks to the efforts of the Chair, the Vice-Chairs, and the Secretariat. I also commend the Chairs of the country-specific consultations, Ambassador Løvald and Ambassador Majoor, for their commitment and dedication and the great skill with which they have drawn the attention of all the relevant actors, including regional and financial institutions, to the situations in Burundi and Sierra Leone, respectively. I also commend Ambassador Gallardo Hernandez for her work in the area of accumulating best practices.

All this, of course, is not to suggest that we have no unmet expectations, both inside the PBC and outside it. In spite of the initial encouraging progress, the Commission still faces daunting challenges and will continue to do so as long as there are countries around the

world that are in need of support and assistance for post-conflict recovery and towards sustainable peace and development. No one member of the PBC is being complacent in that regard. We are all too well aware that we need to do much more and work harder to fulfill the main tasks entrusted to us, in implementing the decisions of world leaders in the Outcome document and the subsequent relevant resolutions.

From this point of view, I would like to share with the Members how I see some of the key issues that lie ahead of us and my sense of priority as we move into the second year of the PBC's work.

First, in all of its undertakings, the Commission should do its best to deliver tangible results that will meet the requirements of the countries under consideration and their people, as much as possible. The country-specific approach therefore will remain the core of our activities. We need to ensure that we continue to work aggressively in Burundi and Sierra Leone, so that we can achieve tangible results in these countries, including full development of integrated strategic framework.

While we do this, we should at the same time start to streamline the work method and to lessen the workload in the PBC and the PBSO, as we take on more countries for consideration. For this purpose formulation of some sort of standard operating modalities or template of working method under country-specific approach might be worth considering. Although every post-conflict situation is unique, it would be advantageous to create such standard modalities as a model for drafting an IPBS and for monitoring its implementation.

Second, with regard to additional countries for country-specific consideration, I believe we should consider positively on this in the second year, and I would like to initiate preliminary consultations with the members of the Committee as well as with other UN bodies, including the Security Council at an appropriate time.

Third, in addition to country-specific considerations, the Commission can play other unique roles in the area of peacebuilding, such as acting as a focal point of information on best practices and as a forum from which appropriate political messages could be dispatched to the international community. To this end, the relationship of the Commission with the academic and research community and the media organizations, as well as with the IFIs, UN Funds and Programs and civil society should be strengthened.

Fourth, we should also consider taking up cross-cutting issues relevant to post-conflict countries, such as, for example, problems of youth unemployment, rule of law, and security sector reform. The Commission is probably the most suitable place to discuss these issues with the wide participation of different players in these matters.

Fifth and finally, I cannot overstate the importance of engaging in close cooperation with the rest of the UN system. Since the Commission as an advisory body is mandated to provide advice in response to requests of the Security Council, and in response to referrals from the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and the Secretary-General, we must work to strengthen interaction between the Commission and these key organs, and as Chairperson I intend to make an effort to that end. In addition, I look forward to closer communication and cooperation with the Secretariat to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Distinguished Members,

I have just shared with you some of my initial thoughts on where we should go from here.

We intend to have candid exchanges of views with all the Members and other participants and players during the coming months on these and other matters to ensure smooth and effective functioning of the Commission, and I look forward to working very closely with all of you.

Thank you for your attention.