

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Second Annual Session

Opening Statement by

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Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am delighted to welcome all of you to this Annual Session, the second ever to be held of its kind.

Let me at the outset extend a warm welcome to the distinguished speakers that are joining us today, I am pleased to note the breadth and depth of participation. Let me also thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Taranco and his team for all their work.

The world today is torn by more violent conflict than in a very long time, leaving a wake of displacement at an unprecedented scale.

UNHCR reported this weekend that more people fled last year than at any time since records began, pushing the total number of forcibly displaced people globally to a staggering 60 million. They have been displaced by conflict and persecution. More than half are children. The numbers are growing and accelerating, every single day, on every continent.

It is against this backdrop that we are meeting at the PBC Annual Session today. The refugee crisis is the direct human consequences of the world's conflicts and the terrible suffering they cause.

Peacebuilding is about preventing such conflicts, by supporting countries on a path towards sustained peace, avoiding the continuing risk of relapsing into conflict. What we need is a more effective and coherent international system to support national peacebuilding efforts. And this system must be underpinned by adequate, flexible and timely financing.

We meet on Peacebuilding Day to discuss “Predictable financing for peacebuilding: Breaking the silos.” It is relevant for several reasons:

First - The Peacebuilding Commission is mandated to marshal resources for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. I believe that we have yet to fully deliver on this promise, and that we as a commission can be more innovative in our approach to resource mobilization.

Second - in a few weeks, heads of states and ministers will gather in Addis Ababa to adopt a new agenda on Financing for Development. In light of this, there is need to spotlight the particular challenges related to funding for peacebuilding.

Third – I am certain that financing structures, and the way that the international system is set-up to respond to conflict, will be a central theme in our upcoming deliberations on the three reviews related to the efforts of the UN to sustain peace.

It is soon time to proceed to the first working session.

For our discussions today, I challenge all participants to use the

thematic working session to be innovative, engage in a frank manner and to think outside of the box. These sessions have brought together key expertise in the respective fields and provides a real chance to move the agenda forward.

On the first topic – the fragmented international aid architecture: The way in which we finance peacebuilding has real implications for peacebuilding activities on the ground. The current fragmented system is ultimately limiting and inhibiting our collective impact.

Among the very real consequences of our silo approach is duplication, unhealthy competition, chronic underfunding of crucial peacebuilding priorities, and, perhaps most damaging effect is overburdening the host governments. Today, I am especially keen to hear from the countries on the PBC agenda, as well as other representatives of countries emerging from conflict. What remains the biggest challenge for recipient governments?

The second topic – domestic sources of financing for peacebuilding -

is equally, if not more important, not least from a national ownership perspective. In the long run, we would like to see countries emerging from conflict able to increasingly mobilize their own resources.

Establishing a tax base is fundamental not only for the predictable revenue stream, but it also forms the basis of accountable governance and strengthens state-society relations.