

Peacebuilding Commission Organizational Committee Meeting

25 June 2018

Chairperson's Summary of the Discussion

Background

On 25 June 2018, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened a meeting of the Organizational Committee (OC). The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Ion Jinga, Chair of the PBC, and addressed the following agenda items: 1) Report by the Chairs of the PBC Country configurations; and 2) Update on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Briefings by the Chairs of the Configurations

1. Before inviting the Chairs of the Country-configurations to report on their activities, the Chair informed Member States that he was invited, together with the PBC Vice-Chairs, to participate in an Informal Interactive Dialogue of the Security Council (29 June) focused on the advisory role of the PBC when the Council is discussing the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions' mandates. In this regard, the Chair encourages all Members to submit inputs and suggestions the Chair could convey to the meeting.
2. The Chair also informed that he would circulate soon the provisional workplan of the PBC for the third quarter of 2018. He reminded Member States that the workplan builds upon the five priorities identified by the Chair in January 2018 and that it remains a flexible instrument that can be adjusted when needed.
3. The Chair of the Burundi Configuration (Switzerland) reported on his visit to Burundi (27-30 March). He informed the Commission of the informal exchange he hosted in May between UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Garry Conille, Members of the Burundi Configuration and UN representatives on international cooperation and resilience in Burundi. The Chair also mentioned that during his visit to Addis Ababa in the context of the Global Compact for Migration, he had several meetings on the situation in Burundi with H.E. Mr. Smaïl Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security; Mr. El-Ghassim Wane, Chief of Staff and Chief Advisor to the AUC Chairperson, and representatives of the diplomatic community. He outlined the latest developments in Burundi including passage of the referendum on revisions to the constitution on 17 May and the announcement by President Nkurunziza that he will not run for the presidency in 2020. The Chair announced 20 July as the tentative date for the next PBC Burundi Configuration meeting and reported that he plans to visit Burundi in Autumn 2018. The main objective of the visit would be to organize another round of the socioeconomic dialogue between Burundi and its partners. The Chair outlined the Configuration's key priorities, which include the promotion of coherence within the international community and among UN actors, support to the EAC effort mediation efforts, continuation of the socioeconomic dialogue, continuous attention to humanitarian needs in Burundi, preservation of gains through the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement and continued support to reconciliation efforts.

4. The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration (Brazil) informed the PBC of the appointment of Mr. José Viegas Filho of Brazil as Special Representative for Guinea-Bissau (SRSG) and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). He pointed out that there have been significant positive developments in Guinea-Bissau, showing that the country is on its way to overcoming a long political crisis. He informed that Mr. Aristides Gomes was appointed as the new consensual Prime Minister and that 18 November was confirmed as the date for legislative elections. After almost three years, an extraordinary plenary session of the National People's Assembly was convened on 19 April, during which the body elected a new leadership for the National Electoral Commission and extended its tenure until November 2018. The Chair noted that discussions on a stability pact, as envisioned by the Conakry Agreement, are underway. Regarding election preparations, the Chair highlighted the contribution of the Government of Guinea-Bissau to the basket fund, noting as well a contribution from UNDP to the fund, and the European Union's ongoing consideration of support. The Chair reported that the first Forum of Women and Girls was held on 25 May with the participation of around a thousand Guinean women from different regions of the country. He highlighted the engagement of ECOWAS and the role of ECOMIB, and emphasized the importance of ensuring ECOMIB's continuity until the necessary conditions for its withdrawal are fully met, and at least until the 2019 presidential elections. Regarding activities of the last quarter, the Chair informed the commission of Ambassador Vieira's intention to visit Guinea-Bissau during the last week of July to consult with a broad range of stakeholders on how the PBC can continue to support peacebuilding efforts in the country.
5. The Chair of the Liberia Configuration (Sweden) reported on Liberia's notable progress, including the successfully completed 2017 elections of 2017. He mentioned that Ambassador Olof Skoog had travelled to Liberia at the end of March to meet with the new government and to discuss the way forward after UNMIL's drawdown, together with the Deputy Secretary-General, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping. The Chair recalled the configuration's three primary areas of focus and support for the previous year: i) the UNMIL drawdown, ii) drafting of a Peacebuilding Plan; and iii) accompaniment through the election process. He underscored the challenging nature of the new era for Liberia, with strong expectations of the new government. The Chair stated that the National Development Plan would encompass and build on Phase II of the Peacebuilding plan and the PBC Statement of Mutual Commitment. He congratulated UNMIL Deputy Special Representative, Mr. Yacoub El Hillo, on his appointment as the Resident Coordinator. He pointed out that Mr. El Hillo's office is still struggling to secure resources to support the development of the National Development Plan. The Chair called on the international community and the Commission to prioritize the implementation of the country's ongoing peacebuilding priorities through support to the Liberia Multi Partner Trust Fund.
6. The Chair of the Central African Republic Configuration (Morocco) reported that in the previous quarter, several meetings and activities took place, as reported in the configuration's previous report. These included the 23 April meeting in the margins of the High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace with the participation of H.E President Faustin Touadéra and Bedializoun Nebie Moussa, Special Representative of the African Union to CAR. On 31 May, at the invitation of the PR of Ethiopia, the Chair participated in an AU Security Council ad hoc working group on conflict prevention in Africa. The Chair reported that during the meeting, most of the participants agreed that the Council needs to give more attention to the peacebuilding priorities in CAR. Going forward, the Chair informed the commission of the next CAR configuration meeting scheduled for 11 July, with the intent to invite ASG for Peacekeeping Mme. Bintou Keita to give a briefing on her recent visit to CAR, which took place at the same time as a visit by a delegation representing PBF donors. The upcoming configuration

meeting will also provide an opportunity for a detailed update on the progress of the Special Criminal Court and broader reform of the judiciary system. In September, the Chair planned to visit CAR, in advance of the renewal of the MINUSCA mandate. The Chair has also met the team in charge of the independent strategic review of MINUSCA headed by Mr. Gabriel Valdés, former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Chile; former SRSG in Haiti and former Head of MINUSTAH. The Chair is looking forward to the upcoming meeting between the PBC and the AU Peace and Security Council and expressed hope that CAR would be a topic on the agenda.

7. The Chair of the Sierra Leone Configuration (Canada) reported on the 7 March legislative and presidential elections, as well as their run-off, and the accompaniment provided by the configuration during the electoral process through expert and ambassadorial-level meetings and press statements. The Chair informed the PBC on the ambassadorial level briefing following the elections, with the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs for Sierra Leone on 23 May, which was an opportunity to hear the new government's priorities. He reaffirmed the configuration's continued collaboration with the new government and highlighted national reconciliation and social cohesion as government priorities. In addition, outreach to International Financial Institutions (IFIs) was identified as a key area for PBC support. She mentioned the upcoming visit to the World Bank and the IMF at the expert level later in the week, organized in collaboration with PBSO as a first step towards greater partnership with these institutions. The Chair commended Sierra Leoneans for their peaceful conduct during the elections and highlighted the success of the election exercise as a good practice to be further discussed to enhance shared learning among PBC members and configurations. The Chair thanked the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone for their excellent collaboration.
8. Member States welcomed the briefings and highlighted the following issues:
 - a) The PBC is making progress in providing space for interactive, open and transparent discussions and in bringing a broad range of partners together to consider countries at various stages of peacebuilding to enhance coherence and share good practices and experiences;
 - b) The centrality of political solutions to peacebuilding challenges;
 - c) The importance of enhancing UN work on prevention;
 - d) The role of the PBC in ensuring that the reforms of the Secretary-General are integrated across the system;
 - e) The importance of aligning the workplan of the PBC to that of the Security Council, with a view to further strengthening the Commission's advisory role;
 - f) The need to further enhance the engagement of all Member States in the PBC.

Update on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund

9. ASG Fernandez-Taranco thanked the Chair and Member States for their support to PBSO and the PBF, as well as for enhancing the synergies between the work of the PBC and the PBF. He informed that PBSO, in consultation with partners, presented its 2017-2019 Strategic Plan for the PBF. The plan takes into consideration the vision of the Secretary-General and his proposals for reform of the Peace and Security Pillar, with five key features that should be highlighted:
 - a) Integrates recommendations from the twin resolutions on Sustaining Peace, by ensuring that the PBF invest before, during and after violent conflict
 - b) Implements the recommendation of the groundbreaking UN-WB report on prevention by emphasizing investments that foster inclusion and national ownership

- c) Proposes three special windows for greater investments: cross-border and regional issues, transitions and; gender and youth
 - d) Reinforces the role of the PBF as a catalyst of the SG's reforms by integrating UN action across pillars;
 - e) Continues to leverage its unique role as a timely, flexible, catalytic and risk-tolerant instrument of first resort for peacebuilding.
10. ASG Fernandez-Taranco reported that the PBF was almost mid-way in the implementation of its three-year Plan. During the first year, the Fund approved \$157.1 million through 82 projects in 31 countries, the highest ever for the Fund since inception, funding 15 UN entities and 7 CSOs. The Fund also mobilized contributions for \$93 million, the highest level of contributions since 2006, a first but major step towards realizing the SG's call for a quantum leap of support for the PBF. He reported that, last year, for the second year in a row, the UK Government awarded the PBF an A+ rating for compliance with international transparency standards, achieving gender empowerment targets and effectiveness at delivery.
11. Furthermore, ASG Fernandez-Taranco noted that a study just published by the UN University reviewed nine country cases to consider critical factors for preventive diplomacy and draw lessons on what works in UN Resident Coordinator-led conflict prevention. One of the critical instruments highlighted across most cases was how Resident Coordinators leveraged the PBF. In summary, the study concluded that the PBF was probably the most important source of funding underpinning Resident Coordinator-led preventive engagement in close collaboration with national authorities. It also found that PBSO staff managing the PBF at UN Headquarters exercise an important quality control function in reviewing project proposals and offering support in their design. In that process, Resident Coordinators are expected to incorporate political analysis and a political strategy agreed with host governments in proposed prevention and peacebuilding programmes.
12. ASG Fernandez-Taranco reaffirmed that in 2018, PBSO intends to continue building on this momentum and aims at approving approximately \$180 million in at least 30 countries, including via a strengthened Gender and Youth Promotion initiative and several new cross border or regional initiatives in Africa (specially in the Sahel), Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Europe. He noted that \$330 million had already been mobilized for this Strategic Plan period but there was still a gap of \$170 million which PBSO would need to mobilize in the next 12 months as it carried out mid-term implementation reviews and evaluates new proposals (May) for the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI).
13. ASG Fernandez-Taranco informed that the first meeting of the new PBF Advisory Group would be convened later in the week.
14. Member States welcomed the briefing and the opportunity to discuss PBF activities. In their interventions, delegations:
- a) Commended the PBF for its efficiency and effectiveness. Members appreciated the performance and the transparency of the Fund;
 - b) Commended PBSO for its work and encouraged the Office to further enhance the visibility of the Fund in support of fundraising efforts;

- c) Welcomed the proposal to establish three windows in the PBF to address issues related to cross-border and regional issues, transitions, and gender and youth;
- d) Called for Member States to explore ways, in the relevant fora, to revitalize PBSO with a view to strengthen the UN peacebuilding agenda;
- e) Noted the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation for peacebuilding initiatives.

Other matters

15. The Chair brought to the attention of Member States a letter he received from the Committee on Conferences pertaining to the allocation of resources dedicated to PBC meetings.
