



United Nations - Nations Unies

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Statement by the
Outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

FORMAL MEETING OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE

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[Please check against delivery]

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

Ambassador Olof Skoog, Chair-elect of the Peacebuilding Commission,

Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support,

We finally meet to wrap up the eighth session and inaugurate the ninth session of the Peacebuilding Commission. I congratulate all newly elected and selected members of the Committee. I trust you would all agree that the delay in convening today's meeting caused by the inexplicable delay in the election process serves as a reminder that after ten years from its inception, the innovative election process associated with the Peacebuilding Commission continues to challenge many of us in regional groups and in the Secretariat.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

A year ago, this Committee has entrusted Brazil with the responsibility to lead the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Today, I wish to thank you all for the trust placed in Brazil and for the support you offered throughout the year.

While it remains a tall order to accompany countries emerging from conflict as they take confident strides on - what we would all hope to see as - an irreversible path to peace, stability and development, it is truly rewarding to be associated with such an effort. These countries need the sustained attention and solid commitment that the Commission must continue to catalyze.

I must, therefore, pay tribute to colleagues leading the Commission's country-specific engagements as well as the Working Group on Lessons Learned for their dedication and commitment; and to colleagues representing the countries concerned for their tireless effort to harmonize the perspectives of their respective capitals with those from New York.

This partnership can become even more productive as we succeed in ensuring that objectives are context-specific; carefully articulated and thoroughly communicated to all relevant stakeholders at Headquarters and in the field.

From my experience in the chair, country-specific engagements have been most appreciated whenever the Commission played to its strengths as a platform leveraging the political weight of its members. In this connection, I must stress that it is ultimately up to us, Member States, to make the most out of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We must invest the requisite time, energy and commitment and ensure more regular and deeper engagement from our respective capitals. Greater synergies in the views we express and the positions we take in relevant Member States platforms will help reinforce the weight and relevance of the Commission's advice.

An example of how the Commission can increasingly play to its political strength was the collective and determined position it took in the early stages of the Ebola outbreak. The Commission helped spur the international community and other parts of the UN system to focus

the risk posed by the crisis to the peacebuilding gains in the three affected countries. The Terms of Reference of the United Nations' led Ebola-recovery initiatives have therefore included areas identified by the Commission which deserve special attention in the overall recovery strategies and support programmes.

Moreover, the Commission is uniquely placed to promote greater harmony between the sub-regional, regional and international dimensions of post-conflict response. Therefore, one of the Commission's key priority areas in the past year was to actively engage its African members and to establish deep and dynamic partnerships with Africa's regional and sub-regional organizations. Our experience from Guinea-Bissau to Burundi and the Central African Republic confirm that greater regional and sub-regional coherence is a key factor in support of peacebuilding-related efforts. As we continue to integrate the regional and sub-regional perspectives into the work of the Commission we will further strengthen the relevance and weight of its country-specific engagement. I strongly recommend to my successor that he continues to engage with the African Union members in New York and, if possible, with the AU's Peace and Security Council.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

In 2014, the Peacebuilding Commission convened its first ever annual session with a view to exploring where broader intergovernmental policy development is necessary to help countries reduce the risk of conflict. As it continues to explore various avenues for predictable financing, the Commission's focus on domestic resource mobilization and the fight against illicit financial flows was a critical step towards identifying possible policy areas requiring Member States' individual and collective action.

The challenge posed by illicit financial flows and similar systemic gaps in intergovernmental policy related to financing for peacebuilding highlight the interdependence among security, institutional and socio-economic initiatives in the promotion of peace. The Commission must continue to position itself to promote greater coherence and synergy of policies and actions across the political, security and developmental dimensions of peace consolidation.

We need to reflect further on the nature and scope of the Commission's advisory function to the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Commission is uniquely positioned to complement their work by ensuring that inclusive socio-economic development contributes to peace and security and reduce the risk of emergence or relapse into violent conflict. Through several interventions I made on behalf of the Commission at various Security Council briefings and debates this past year, I stressed that the advisory function to the Security Council should help in strengthening integrated and long-term commitment by the United Nations and other international and regional actors to countries emerging from conflict. In this connection, I believe that the Council can draw more practically and systematically on the Commission's advice, particularly when mandates of missions are being revisited in the context of changing priorities or draw-down and transition. I call on PBC members who are also members of the Security Council, as well as the five permanent members who are also permanent members of the PBC, to provide leadership, guidance and a sustained commitment in this regard.

The gender dimension of peacebuilding deserves our continuing attention and unwavering commitment. While women endure the tragic consequences of violent conflicts, they are also the main agents for societal transformation and emancipation in post-conflict societies. The special event which the Commission hosted in collaboration with UN Women last September shed light on local peacebuilding initiatives led by women in diverse contexts.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

The sharpening of the Peacebuilding Commission's approaches and adapting them to changing circumstances and needs is very much a work in progress. In this respect, the 2015 review offers a timely opportunity to ensure that the Commission is further strengthened as an instrument of strategic utility to the United Nations.

The Terms of Reference for the review, initially developed by and consulted within the Commission, should help identify areas of both, progress and remaining gaps in international assistance to countries emerging from conflict. The agreement to ground the review in specific country studies should help the Security Council and the General Assembly place the challenges, needs and aspirations of the countries emerging from conflict at the core of our future efforts. I am confident that the distinguished members of the Advisor Group of Experts, tasked with conducting these country studies, will be able to deploy their knowledge and expertise to advise us on ways to ensure that the broader peacebuilding architecture will be more effective.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

I wish to conclude my remarks by acknowledging the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office, of Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco and of his predecessor Judy Cheng-Hopkins and their team, in support of the Commission's work and activities over the past year. We will certainly continue to count on PBSO, as we seek to implement the ambitious Forward Agenda and workplan for this year. In addition, we will continue to count on the Office's competent management of the Peacebuilding Fund, which is increasingly gaining credibility across the UN system.

Through the work undertaken by the Commission and the Fund, the synergy and complementarity between the political and programmatic dimensions of peacebuilding would bring greater effectiveness to our investment in the countries concerned.

In closing, I wish to reaffirm Brazil's continued commitment to the Peacebuilding Commission and to the United Nations' peacebuilding agenda more broadly. From its position as Vice-Chair, Brazil will be working closely with the Chair-elect and all members of the Commission to realize the objectives set out in the Forward Agenda for this year.

Thank you.