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PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Statement by the
Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

at the Security Council Briefing on
Post-Conflict Peacebuilding
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Mr. President,

I thank the Rwandan Presidency of the Security Council for the continuing commitment to advancing the Council's consideration of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, including by drawing on the Peacebuilding Commission's advice in a considered and meaningful way. My predecessor's presentation of the Commission's report on its seventh session shed light on its country-specific engagements, its ongoing efforts in the area of policy development and the progress made in strengthening its advisory function to the Council. The Commission believes, however, that the annual briefings and the follow-up informal interactive dialogue present the two bodies with a valuable opportunity to reflect on the critical challenges that continue to affect the United Nations' contribution to sustaining peace in countries emerging from conflict.

The recent crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan are painful reminders that our efforts to prevent relapse into conflict remain insufficient and our tools not fully adequate. These crises have also reminded us that the consequences of relapse can cause untold human tragedies and create instability across state boundaries. The Security Council has been mandated to respond to and seek to bring end to violent conflicts using a variety of strategies and tools. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005 to help the United Nations to strengthen these strategies and find complementary avenues to bring long-lasting stability to countries emerging from conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission, along with the Peacebuilding Fund, has continued to work intensively in a variety of scenarios. In the case of the PBC, a particular focus was put in support of the countries on our agenda. The nature of our support and engagement varies according to the nature of the challenges in each situation. Despite the re-emergence of conflict in CAR, the PBC has continued to support the UN and AU missions, seeking to strengthen collaboration in the region and ensure backing for early efforts at institution building. In Burundi, the Commission worked closely with the UN leadership and the World Bank to intensify and sustain regional and international engagement in support of national attempts to address the country's political and socio-economic challenges. In Guinea, the Commission leveraged its political weight in support of United Nations mediation efforts to help resolve the political stand-off prior to this year's parliamentary elections. The Commission is now involved in efforts for strengthening the capacity of the new parliament so that it can play its role as a key part of the country's institutions and fully participate in the definition of Guinea's political and economic development. Similarly in Guinea-Bissau, the Commission threw its political weight behind the efforts of the UN leadership to ensure a smooth return to constitutional order and more inclusive political arrangements in the wake of the 2012 unconstitutional change of government. As Sierra Leone approached the milestone of transitioning from a Security Council mandated mission, the Commission continues to provide an inter-governmental platform which the Government can rely on to support its political and developmental gains and to address outstanding issues and challenges. In each of these situations, the political nature of the Commission's engagement was effectively reinforced by the timely and strategic programmatic interventions of the Peacebuilding Fund.

The PBC's varied context-specific engagements have highlighted areas in which broader intergovernmental policy development is necessary to help countries reduce the risk of conflict.

For example, there is a need to consider the development of international frameworks that can help countries mobilise domestic resources to fund development efforts and build key institutions. In its first annual session convened on 23 June this year, the Peacebuilding Commission examined mechanisms for supporting domestic revenue generation and combating illicit financial flows out of countries emerging from conflict. These included, among others, combating trade mis-invoicing and developing capacity and expertise to negotiate fair contracts with companies responsible for the extraction of national resources. Most states emerging from conflict struggle to develop the domestic revenue generation systems which are necessary to sustain effective institutions and fully re-establish the legitimacy of the state. The necessary political, technical and financial support required for critical institution building in this area is slow to arrive. Support sustained over time is seen as a requirement for the new institutions to become resilient and act as an effective brake against renewed conflict. At the same time, illicit financial flows deprive post conflict countries of vital resources needed for basic services and recovery, often exceeding development assistance in volume.

Mr. President,

Drawing on the experience gained from its engagement with the countries on its agenda, the Commission is able to highlight three elements that should underpin a new generation of political strategies to reinforce our collective efforts to prevent relapse into conflict:

First, national ownership, national leadership and national political commitment are indispensable ingredients for durable peace. There is a need for political strategies to include measures and incentives that allow broad inclusion in political life, ensuring that key national stakeholders remain engaged and committed to the peacebuilding process. As Deputy Secretary-General underscored in his statement at the opening of the PBC annual session, let us not forget that "international aid is, of course, necessary in many situations, but it rarely helps build a new social contract. It can also weaken national ownership. The best way to assist countries going through post-conflict transition is to help them generate their own resources and capacities." In this regard, we would emphasize the importance of efforts towards national capacity building.

Second, regional engagement and commitment are potentially extremely valuable for a stable and sustainable peace. There is a need to ensure that the perspectives, interests and concerns of regional actors and neighbouring countries are factored in a broader political strategy in support of countries emerging from conflict. There is also the need to ensure that regional coherence is attained through active engagement by regional and sub-regional mechanisms and support from the United Nations and other partners. In this sense, one should highlight the positive dynamic that can be now observed between and among the four West-African countries on the PBC agenda (Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Liberia) and the role played by ECOWAS and the Mano River Union, regional organizations to which they are part.

Third, a political strategy must be reinforced by programmatic interventions with particular focus on support to institution-building, involving bilateral partners, regional development banks and International Financial Institutions. There is also a need to prioritize support to those institutions and mechanisms that strengthen the capacity of societies to manage tensions, and the capacity of governments to deliver basic services, protect human rights and facilitate access to justice.

These strategies should naturally be adapted to country-specific contexts. At the same time, they need to be pursued through long term, sustained and mutual commitments between the country concerned and its partners, regional and international organizations

I also wish to highlight the importance of developing improved interaction between the PBC and the Security Council. As Chair of the Country-specific Configuration on Guinea-Bissau, I have been encouraged to experience a high degree of attention on the part of the Council with respect to briefings I made. The diplomatic expertise demonstrated by SRSG Ramos-Horta should inspire us towards attributing greater value to mutually reinforcing strategies between the Security Council and the PBC. In the future we can further refine our procedures in order to maximize the potential gains from enhanced interaction.

The Commission is looking forward to further exchange views with members of the Council on these and other elements in the course of the informal interactive dialogue which is convened by the Council's Presidency this afternoon.

Mr. President,

Next year, the Security Council and the General Assembly will embark on the ten year comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Our collective approach to preventing relapse into conflict as well as our successes and failures must be a central aspect of this review. There is a need for deepening the analysis, supported by country examples, of how the UN's multifaceted efforts contribute to long-term and sustainable peace. There is also a need to analyze how UN political mandates and evolving operational practice made a real difference in the countries affected by or emerging from conflict. The Commission will benefit from this analysis and from the outcome of the 2015 review as it seeks to further strengthen, deepen and focus its advisory function to the Council and its support to the UN leadership in the field as we collectively tackle the complexity of post-conflict situations and try to prevent the recurrence of conflict.

Thank you, Mr. President.