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PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Statement by the

Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Peter Wittig
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

at the first Informal Meeting on the

2010 Review of the Peacebuilding Commission

New York, 17 February 2010

(Check against delivery)

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Mr. President of the Security Council,
Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Facilitators,
Excellencies,

First of all allow me to congratulate the three facilitators for holding the Informal Consultations on the Peacebuilding Commission's 2010 Review. As the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, let me pledge my full support and cooperation throughout the process.

As a committed body with unique structures, mechanisms and membership, the Peacebuilding Commission was given a very ambitious role. At the same time, the situations in which it would naturally engage are complex and involve multiple actors and strategies which are hardly derived from a common vision.

Yet, the Peacebuilding Commission has certainly demonstrated that it has significant potential to become a viable political platform and framework for mutual accountability and for galvanizing support and engagement from national and international actors.

The 2010 review offers a unique and timely opportunity to tap into this potential.

In my view, we need to begin our work with a clear understanding of the most critical issues and questions which need to be addressed during the review process. We need to structure our discussion in a manner which would help defining the scope of the review.

I am confident that the co-facilitators will lead this aspect of the process in a way which would unite the membership behind a common goal, namely helping the Peacebuilding Commission to realize its unfulfilled potential.

In order to define the scope of the review, we need to take stock of the progress made by the Commission and the significant challenges the PBC is still facing at the country-level. Simply put: Let us have a clear and objective view of the PBC's actual and potential value-added.

In so doing, I welcome the facilitators' intention to visit countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda, fully engage national actors, as well as UN and non-UN partners at the country-level.

As Chair of the PBC, I can not overemphasize the importance of this initial stage of "reality check" and building a common understanding of the objectives and scope of the review process. This would enable us all to focus the intergovernmental process on the issues that truly matters for the countries in question.

Excellencies,

In my view, a critical and desired outcome of the review process would be to strengthen the role of the Commission and making its engagement operationally relevant for peacebuilders on the ground. This would include giving substance mainly to four questions of institutional and operational dimensions:

First, what practical mechanisms could be introduced to facilitate the discussion on country referral? This would also include determination of the country-specific engagement modalities and objectives.

Second, how can the PBC engage the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as international financial institutions and executive and governing boards of UN funds and programmes? What would be the role of individual PBC members?

Third, what type of UN presence is most conducive to ensuring a broader, coherent and integrated approach to peacebuilding? This would also address the question of designing peacekeeping mandates with early peacebuilding tasks, as well as the timely transition from and exit of peacekeeping towards longer-term engagement.

And finally, how can the PBC's engagement promote national ownership and capacity development in critical peacebuilding areas? This would give meaning to our discussion on institution-building and effective channelling of human and financial resources.

Excellencies,

These are just indicative questions to help us thinking through the scoping exercise and are by no means exhaustive.

We need to organize the process in order to maintain the focus on key deliverables.

The review process will be judged by its final outcome. Our collective success will be measured by ensuring that the Peacebuilding Commission is better adapted and equipped to promote the mutually reinforcing linkage between security and development.

I thank you.