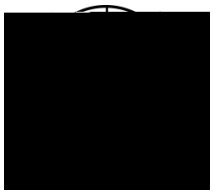

United Nations -Nations Unies

Madame President,

The Commission is pleased to contribute to the Council's interim consideration of the progress made in the United Nations peacebuilding efforts in the aftermath of conflict.

The periodic reporting by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and the General Assembly on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict offer an opportunity to keep Member States and the United Nations operational entities focused on the imperative of joint and coherent efforts to prevent conflict and relapse into conflict.

Peacebuilding is an expression of the international community's recognition that our collective response to conflict must be multifaceted and sustained over the long term. In this context, the Commission recognizes the importance of the main themes contained in the 2012 Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict, namely: inclusivity, institution building, and sustained international support and mutual accountability.

The recent crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan remind us that the nature of peacebuilding requires careful examination of the tendency of sequencing stabilization efforts. Collective and persistent engagement to address this systemic and ongoing deficiency must continue.

In my inaugural statement to the Peacebuilding Commission on 29 January, I noted that while sustaining peace is a central objective of the United Nations' peace and security architecture, we face the systemic challenge of the short span of attention and commitment from the international community to the complex and long-term challenges to sustainable peace. The Peacebuilding Commission was indeed mandated to "extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery".

A key feature of the Commission's engagement with Burundi and Sierra Leone since 2006 was to sustain attention to the ongoing political and socio-economic challenges facing both countries in which the United Nations heavily invested to reestablish security, strengthen governance structures, promote greater respect for the rule of law, support community recovery, and accompany the early stages of the respective political processes. In support of the UN leadership in both countries, the Commission's advised the Security Council over the years on issues requiring immediate attention, while also working to mobilize broader support, from the sub-regions and international partners, for the long-term political and socio-economic dimensions of peacebuilding.

Both countries are approaching the milestone of transitioning from Security Council's security and politically-oriented mandated missions to the development-oriented presence of the UN Country Team. The adequate transition from emergency to development remains an essential, but still to a great extent, an ideal fraught with challenges. The change in the nature of the UN presence and mandate on the ground in both countries calls for calibrated, yet sustained, attention to ongoing political and socio-economic challenges associated with nascent national institutions and governance practices, and strong engagement on the development track.

While we continue to insist that peacebuilding must be nationally owned and that ownership comes with responsibility, the international community must also rise to the occasion and continue to help Burundi and Sierra Leone stay the course. This is also a consistent message that the Commission and the respective UN leaderships deliver in and on behalf of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia.

The importance of inclusive political processes and national institutions and capacities cannot be overemphasized. In Guinea and in Guinea-Bissau, the Commission's collaboration with the respective UN leaderships focused on ensuring that regardless of the outcome of national elections, political dialogue should remain inclusive and the political space should remain available for the opposition to participate in shaping the future of both countries. No majority government can solely face the myriad of challenges facing a society emerging from conflict. As demonstrated by the painful turn of events in CAR, elected governments that fail to keep the various societal and political forces engaged can drive their countries towards untold tragedies. This is the advice which the UN and the Commission jointly continue to extend to the political leaderships in Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

A crucial aspect of inclusivity relates to the participation and contribution of women and youth to the peacebuilding process. While women and youths endure the tragic consequences of violent conflicts, they are also the main agents for societal transformation and emancipation in post-conflict societies. In a declaration adopted by the Peacebuilding Commission last September on women's economic empowerment for peacebuilding, our ministers recognized that "the economic empowerment of women greatly contributes to the effectiveness of post-conflict economic activities and economic growth". In Guinea-Bissau, I was impressed by the potential contribution of women's organizations in strengthening the economic role of women and thus helping to forge a more inclusive political culture in the country, bringing together different identities, religions and political affiliations. The transformative potential of greater women's participation in the economic and political spheres can bring an invaluable contribution to building more peaceful, democratic and prosperous societies. The gender dimension of peacebuilding deserves our continuing attention and unwavering commitment.

Madame President,

Building or rebuilding institutions in a country emerging from conflict is the practical expression of national ownership and the sustainability of peace. At the same time, institutions take a long time to develop into an efficient medium for political participation, as well as for delivery of security, justice, basic social services and economic opportunities. The Commission's observation of the contribution of nascent institutions to peacebuilding, such as the National Revenue Authority and the Anti-corruption Commission in Burundi, the Youth Commission in Sierra Leone, and the regional justice and security hubs in Liberia confirms that institution-building must go beyond establishing and nurturing organizational structures. The capacity of the Government to sustain and empower these institutions to help in rebuilding the social fabric and generating economic opportunities remains a key challenge for the countries concerned. Unless there is a solid commitment from the political leadership, institutions may fall prey to political manipulation of other forms of dysfunctionality. Through its collaboration with the Peacebuilding Fund and by lending its political weight in support of the UN leadership and the

governments concerned, the Commission has supported institution-building related initiatives in Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The Commission can certainly do more to support the development of strategies and initiatives that prioritize institution-building and capacity development. In areas such as natural resource and transparent financial management for development, as well as domestic revenue generation and combating illicit financial flows and organized crime, the Commission can serve as a platform to mobilize targeted technical support, especially in the context of South-South cooperation.

Madame President,

As the Secretary-General prepares to release his next report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict later this year, the Commission emphasizes the need for deepening the analysis, supported by country examples, of how the UN's collective and diversified efforts across the security and socio-economic spectrum of post-conflict response do contribute to long-term peacebuilding objectives. There is a need to know in which way has the UN mandated presence and evolving operational practice made a real difference in the countries affected by or emerging from conflict. The Commission will benefit from this analysis as it seeks to further deepen, focus and calibrate its advisory function to the Council and its support to the UN leadership in the field. This is a critical aspect of the Commission's early preparation for the upcoming mandated review in 2015. In the same vein and in light of the Council's Presidential Note S/2003/515 of 28 August 2013, regular informal interactive meetings with the members of the Security Council will further sharpen the focus on peacebuilding-related topics, particularly in the country-specific contexts.

Madame President,

In June this year, the Commission is convening its first ever annual session. The session will offer an opportunity for Member States, the UN system and other actors to address and focus on a peacebuilding-related theme with a view to elaborating how inter-governmental policy and political support can improve and make a difference for people in countries emerging from conflict. We trust that this annual effort can reinforce and help orient the evolving UN peacebuilding agenda, not least by engaging key partners from regional organizations, international financial institutions and civil society. A viable partnership with these actors is no longer a matter of choice, it is indeed a necessity and this is where the niche of the Peacebuilding Commission resides.

Finally, Madam President, allow me a final word on the interrelated topics of inclusivity, institution building, and mutual accountability. While keeping a focus on the centrality of inclusive national development for peacebuilding, let us not cede to the mental habits of viewing development ultimately as a technology of security. Our efforts must remain people-centered. True peace is also built on an enlarged sense of development, as emancipation and fulfillment of multidimensional human aspirations, including through cultural and social interconnections. I believe we can put this idea at the very center of our peacebuilding efforts, fostering greater reciprocity, mutual recognition, solidarity, and true empathy, so as to dissolve the logic of providers and beneficiaries. For all of us, there is a lot to learn from the struggles of the people