

**Peacebuilding Commission
Working Group on Lessons Learned**

**Informal expert-level meeting on
Political Institutions
20 October 2015**

Main findings

I. Introduction

1. On 20 October 2015, the Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL) of the Peacebuilding Commission convened an informal, expert-level meeting to discuss “Institution-building: The challenges for the UN system.

inclusive and accountable political institutions in close cooperation with regional and international partners to defuse tensions, engage in dialogue and include civil society, especially women networks.

6. DPA stressed the importance of a vibrant and empowered civil society as the cornerstone of democracy and referred to several DPA projects. She mentioned several challenges to the building of political institutions, such as institutionalizing dialogue space to enhance state-society relations; apathy and a sense of disconnection among populations; the issue of how to confer democratic legitimacy and promoting a democratic culture based on democratic ideologies, visions and values; the challenge of inclusive constitutional review processes; addressing organized crime and drug trafficking; and ensuring the continued availability of human and financial resources. DPA noted that the UN system provided critical support to tackle those challenges and that national ownership and responsibility and the support of regional actors as well as international actors were crucial, in order to ensure advocacy and essential technical and financial support.
7. UNDP shared five lessons from supporting the development and rebuilding of political institutions in the African context. She underscored the importance of understanding the context within which political institutions were created or evolve, thus understanding the political economy of the country, the nature of the political settlement, as well as the social contract. Secondly, she noted that engaging in design processes of peace agreements and constitutions at the outset was vital and that in this regard a South-South exchange could be very helpful. Thirdly, UNDP noted that it was of utmost importance to balance long-term approaches with "quick wins" in the development of political institutions and that crises like the outbreak of Ebola revealed the weaknesses of existing institutions. Fourthly

9. The representative of Guinea shared the experience of his country in building political institutions. Guinea had established several important institutions, such as the Constitutional Court and the National Independent Commission for Human Rights. Yet,

