

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2005 was seen as a ground-breaking step, holding new promise for the populations of countries emerging from conflict. Five years later, despite committed and dedicated efforts, the hopes which accompanied the founding Resolutions have yet to be realised. We are now at a crossroads: either there is a conscious re-commitment to peacebuilding at the very heart of the UN's work, or the PBC settles into the limited role that has developed so far. Our consultations suggest that the membership strongly favours the former path.

Before entering the detail of the Report, the Co-facilitators set out half a dozen issues which frame the exercise: (I) the complexity of peacebuilding; (II) the imperative of national ownership; (III) the illusion of sequencing; (IV) the urgency of resource mobilisation; (V) the importance of women's contribution; and (VI) the need for connection with the field.

In the Field

The Report looks at the mixed experience to date with the four Agenda countries and notes the views of potential Agenda countries. This field perspective brings a number of issues into relief: national ownership (particularly in the planning process) and capacity-building; developmental aspects of peacebuilding; the need for coherence and coordination; the importance of the regional dimension. Given the widespread lack of knowledge of, and misunderstanding about, the PBC's role and potential, we underline the need for an effective communications strategy.

PBC Role and Performance

The Report looks at a number of issues relating to the Organisational Committee (OC), including its composition and representivity, and the potential for distinctive contributions by each of its membership streams. We envisage a more solid relationship between the OC and the Country-Specific Configurations, while allowing for the necessary flexibility. The main OC focus should remain on strategic thematic issues; on building partnerships within and outside the UN; and on developing mutual accountability frameworks.

On the CSCs, we consider the challenge of how to combine innovation and vibrancy with weight and solidity. We recommend adding a country dimension to the chairing role, so as to buttress the support available to the Chair. We also recommend the establishment of CSC liaison committees in the field.

We note the widespread support for possibilities of multi-tiered engagement and suggest some options in that regard.

Key Relationships

To date, the interaction with the Security Council has been limited and falls short of the expectations of 2005. We believe, however, that the potential now exists to create a new dynamic between a more forthcoming Security Council and a better performing PBC. We consider how this might be given substance, and focus in particular on the potential for PBC involvement in relation to Council consideration of peacekeeping mandates.

The PBC's relationships with the General Assembly and with ECOSOC also remain insufficiently developed and we recommend steps that might be taken. On partnerships generally, we note a growing sense of the importance of strengthening the UN-World Bank relationship and suggest a more structured PBC input at World Bank Headquarters.

We consider why a more diverse range of countries has not so far been referred to the PBC. On the preventive dimension, we note the scope offered by the existing mandate and suggest it be utilised to the full.

PBSO and PBF

The Report looks at issues within the PBSO, where we recommend a strengthening of resources and also a better use of existing resources. The weight of the PBSO within the Secretariat also needs to be enhanced; it is important that the Secretary-General puts in place organisational arrangements that properly reflect the priority of peacebuilding.

Despite improvements, a stronger synergy and better communication between the PBC and the PBF is still required.

Summing Up

Our detailed Report builds on high-quality inputs by the membership, the Secretariat, the wider UN and other stakeholders and partners, as well as the valuable insights provided by those who have worked to develop the PBC since its inception. We believe that implementation of the Report's recommendations in an integrated manner will help to pave the way for a revitalised PBC: more relevant, more flexible, better performing, more empowered, better supported, more ambitious and better understood.

Our hope is that this Review will be in the nature of a wake-up call, helping to strengthen the collective resolve to deal with peacebuilding in a more comprehensive and determined way.



Anne Anderson
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Ireland to the United Nations



Claude Heller
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Mexico to the United Nations



Baso Sangqu
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of South Africa to
the United Nations