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**Peacebuilding**

**Implications of the IPBS process for the UN system**

Paper by the Peacebuilding Support Office

HLCP identified peacebuilding as a priority issue for its work programme in 2005, prior to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. The UN Secretary-General, addressing the Peacebuilding at its retreat in January 2008, underscored his “commitment to enhance the coherence of the peacebuilding effort across the UN system”.

This paper has been prepared by the Peacebuilding Support Office in order to initiate the Committee’s discussion with a view to developing better modalities for UN system engagement in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, including with regard to the development and application of integrated peacebuilding strategies.

**I. Background**

1. One of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery<sup>1</sup>. In the founding resolutions of the PBC, the General Assembly and the Security Council also decided that the Commission should provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations.

<sup>1</sup> See General Assembly resolution A/60/180 and /Security Council resolution S/1645; Para 2 (a)

2. In February 2007, the PBC agreed on the basic concept for an integrated peacebuilding strategy (IPBS) as a critical instrument for engagement with countries on its agenda. An IPBS would identify aspects critical to sustaining a country's transition from conflict to sustainable peace in order to reduce its risk of relapse into conflict. An IPBS is designed to provide an agreed framework to spell out commitments from the Peacebuilding Commission and the country under consideration in the areas of political, security, development and human rights and to ensure greater coherence and coordination of peacebuilding efforts. An IPBS would include a monitoring and review mechanism in order to assess progress and ensure successful implementation of and follow-up to agreed commitments
3. The PBC would use an IPBS as a framework to mobilize additional resources and ensure sustained international attention for the country's peacebuilding process through ensuring a coherent and coordinated approach of all internal and external partners. It would neither replace existing instruments nor be a programmatic or a planning document for long-term recovery and development and would not attempt to provide a comprehensive listing of all existing priorities or challenges to peace and development. The elaboration and ownership of an IPBS would be firmly vested with the national government and supported by the PBC, the UN and other relevant stakeholders (civil society, private sector, and other international actors). The development of an IPBS in countries on the agenda of the PBC and other countries provides an additional opportunity for the UN system to work together to support peacebuilding efforts in those countries.
4. The Secretary-General's Policy Committee on 22 May (decision 2007/28) endorsed the concept that integrated peacebuilding strategies (IPBS) should serve as the basis for peacebuilding activities agreed by the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the national governments and also guide UN system's peacebuilding activities in the country. The decision also mandated the Peacebuilding Support Office to initiate a discussion among UN partners to determine the process of applying the IPBS in countries under consideration by the PBC and explore the potential of applying IPBS as a tool more generally to countries not on the PBC agenda.

## **II. Progress and role of the United Nations System**

5. During its first year of operation, the PBC developed integrated peacebuilding strategies (IPBS) for the two countries on its agenda, namely Burundi and Sierra Leone. The Commission adopted a Strategic Framework and a Monitoring and Tracking Mechanism for Peacebuilding in Burundi on 20 June and 5 December 2007 respectively<sup>2</sup>. On 12 December 2007, it adopted a Cooperation Framework for Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone<sup>3</sup>. Guinea Bissau and the Commission have

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<sup>2</sup> PBC/1/BDI/4 and PBC/2/BDI/4

<sup>3</sup> PBC/2/SLE/1

launched the process of developing an instrument for their mutual engagement in January 2008. It is expected to be completed by mid-year.

6. The United Nations system, both at headquarters and country levels played a central role in the process of implementing the integrated peacebuilding strategies for Burundi and Sierra Leone and development of an IPBS for Guinea-Bissau. At the headquarters level, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) coordinated the efforts of the UN in support to the inter-governmental process in New York. An ASG-level Senior Policy Group chaired by PBSO and composed of representatives of EOSG, DPKO, DPA, OHCHR, UNDP, OCHA and DGO provided internal policy orientation at key stages of the process. The work of the Senior Policy Group is supported by a working-level Peacebuilding Contact Group. At country level, existing UN coordination mechanisms, led by the Executive Representatives of the Secretary General (ERSGs) who are members of the Country specific configurations of the PBC, were used to support the development of the IPBS through an inclusive consultative process, which included the Government, CSOs, the private sector and international partners.
7. Initial discussions on the “application” of the IPBS of Burundi and Sierra Leone were held at the ECPS, with the participation of both integrated missions via videoconference last year (31 May 2007). The discussion highlighted that in Sierra Leone, the process allowed the international community to address residual aspects of the conflict and offered innovation and fast track measures in support for the peacebuilding process. In Burundi, the UN is using the IPBS as an advocacy tool. During the ECPS discussion, it was underlined that although the IPBS is not a programmatic tool, it has operational implications for the various actors on the ground, including the UN system. It serves as a lens to identify, from among the existing frameworks, those peacebuilding activities which most directly support the agreed upon priorities. It was also noted that lessons should be pulled from the experience of the two countries so as to be applied elsewhere. Discussions on the application of the IPBS were also held within the Peacebuilding Senior Policy Group (11 September 2007) and are ongoing.
8. In support of the peacebuilding priorities, the PBC declared both Burundi and Sierra Leone as eligible for support from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), on the basis of which the Secretary-General allocated US\$ 35 million each for the two countries. Against this funding envelope, the UN together with Government counterparts has been approving detailed projects in support of agreed upon peacebuilding priorities. The disbursement structure of the PBF has been set up to allow for a decentralized decision-taking process at country level which relies on agencies, funds and programmes to take an active role in project implementation. The PBF has also been activated in support of countries which are not yet on the PBC’s agenda (Liberia, Nepal, Central African Republic), in addition to a growing use of its emergency window( e.g. Cote D’Ivoire and Guinea-Conakry). The PBF has evolved into an important financing tool in countries emerging from conflict and has helped address critical funding gaps.

### **III. United Nations support for the implementation of the IPBS**

9. The founding resolutions of the PBC invite all relevant United Nations bodies and other actors, including international financial institutions, to take action on the advice of the Commission, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates<sup>4</sup>.
10. The 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) of operational activities for the development of the United Nations invites “the United Nations development system, taking into account, in its assistance to countries emerging from conflict that are on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the advisory role that the Commission can play in relation to peacebuilding and recovery strategies, with a view to supporting their long-term economic and social recovery and development with full respect for national ownership and leadership in identifying priorities and development strategies”<sup>5</sup>.
11. The United Nations system’s capacity to support the work of the PBC, and particularly in the implementation of the IPBS, should be leveraged at the various levels at which it operates, namely global, regional and country levels. Existing resources, including United Nations coordination mechanisms at the three levels, should be used to ensure coherence and collaboration in the system’s support to the realization of the goals of the IPBS.
12. Based on the call made to international partners, including the United Nations system, to support the implementation of the IPBS through their existing programmatic instruments (SC mandates, UNDAF), the Chairs of the Burundi and Sierra Leone configurations of the Commission intend to approach the respective governing bodies and Chief Executives of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes, as appropriate, in order to ensure that their operational activities are in line with the peacebuilding priorities of the government as reflected in the IPBS.

### **IV. Proposals for strengthening the UN system’s support for the work of the PBC**

13. The following proposals to strengthen the UN system’s support to the Commission in 2008 are submitted for consideration by the HLCP:

#### *At Headquarters level*

14. In accordance with the founding resolutions, the United Nations has a formal role in the PBC and should participate more actively in the activities of the

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<sup>4</sup> A/RES/60/180 and S/RES/1645 (2005) Para 14

<sup>5</sup> A/62/424/Add.2 Para 51

Commission. Moreover, in the Policy Committee Decision of May 2007<sup>6</sup>, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) was tasked with advising the Secretary General to catalyse the UN system as a whole to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding, convening all relevant actors to launch strategic discussions on priorities related to peacebuilding, and serving as a knowledge base for peacebuilding lessons learned.

15. A few entities of the UN system already participate in the various meetings of the various configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission in New York. Moving forward, what will be more important is for departments, agencies, funds and programmes to commit to maximizing the UN system's support to (i) the current development of the IPBS for Guinea Bissau and (ii) implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi and Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework for Sierra Leone, including preparations for the biannual reviews (June and December 2008) of the Burundi and Sierra Leone.
16. The engagements and commitments reflected in the IPBSs of Burundi and Sierra Leone should more systematically inform the discussions of the Policy Committee, the ASG-level Senior Policy Group, the ECPS and other UN coordination mechanisms when considering these countries.
17. The IPBS should inform the mission mandate reviews and recommendations on the most appropriate structures/configuration of UN presence on the ground.

*At Regional level*

18. Individual entities of the UN system have different configurations for their regional presence and operations. At present, the work of the PBC is focused mainly in Africa. But that will change over time. Meanwhile, the UN system working in Africa can join efforts to support the regional peacebuilding framework known as the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PRCD) programme. Such effort should be coordinated under Regional Consultation Meetings of UN agencies in Africa and linked to evolving framework of the AU Ten Year Capacity Building Programme (AU-CBP). The question for the UN system is whether this is an approach that all interested entities can support.

*At country-level*

19. Based on legislative mandates from the governing bodies and/or directives from agencies, funds and programme, the IPBS should be taken into account in the annual review of the strategic planning processes such as the UNDAF.
20. Under the leadership of the relevant Government authorities, the IPBS should be taken into account by the UN system (inclusive of World Bank and IMF) in the

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<sup>6</sup> See Policy Committee Meeting Decision N0.2007/28 of 22 May 2007

preparation for the annual review or subsequent generation of PRSPs and other nationally owned strategies.

21. The entities of the UN system should provide support to the development of the IPBS, in countries where such instrument is being prepared.

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