

**PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION
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KEYNOTE SPEECH

BY

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On the topic

**“Innovating to build a lasting Peace:
The role of the Peacebuilding Commission”**

INTRODUCTION

The Peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations (UN) had been established in December 2005, in the framework of the UN reform decided by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 Summit held in New York, on the occasion of the sixtieth Anniversary of the United Nations. It marked the maturation of a decade long work on the issues of peace launched by the Boutros Boutros Ghali report named "Agenda for Peace".

As such, the establishment of this architecture was an innovation, one of the most important structural reforms undertaken in 2005. It was the outcome of intense reflections and deliberations conducted at various levels on the performances of the UN system in discharging its responsibility regarding the maintenance of international peace and security as well in its aspects regarding the prevention of conflict in the first stage and the relapse into conflict of countries after a peace agreement has been signed and implemented.

The peacebuilding architecture became operational since early 2006. As second in charge of the delegation of Benin to the Security Council in 2004 and 2005, I took personally part in the vivid deliberations that lead to the adoption of the GA and Security Council Resolutions which serve as framework for the activities of the Peacebuilding architecture of the UN.

The PB architecture has three components : The Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding architecture was motivated by the need to endow the UN with a set of tools to help achieve a shift from the culture of reaction to the culture of prevention. It meant also the shift from the strategy of freezing the conflict to that of addressing its underlying structural root causes.

The concerns of the international community were linked with the unpreparedness and inefficiency of the UN to prevent crises from sliding into armed conflict in the first place and its inability to prevent resumption of conflicts which have been settled. The fact that in more than 50 per cent of conflicts, the situation reverts to violence within five years of the peace agreement evidenced the problem.

The main concern was to fill a vacuum between the exit of PKO and the transition to early recovery and long term development. The decline of international attention which followed the departure of the PKO and difficulties faced by post conflict countries to mobilize resources needed to cope with the challenges of recovery, reconstruction and development to stay course on the path of peaceful were considered the major factor explaining the relapse of post conflict countries in violence.

It marked the consensus on the need to support efforts of Governments as they face these challenges and to increase the efficiency of the assistance provided by the International community as a whole through a better analysis of needs, the elaboration of coherent strategies and the coordination of activities of all stakeholders on the ground and at the international level.

As was stated during the debate held in the Security Council in 2005, we must implement the lessons of the past and equip ourselves to create the conditions for long-term peace in societies emerging from conflict. We must also pay more attention to prevention so that societies can address their tensions and problems in ways that will avoid the descent into armed conflict in the first place.

According to the founding resolutions of the Peacebuilding Commission, a review of the Commission has been performed in 2010 after five years of operation. The three Facilitators appointed by the President of the GA and by the President of the Security Council have submitted a report containing substantive recommendations. The report had been discussed by the two parent bodies. They adopted on 29 October 2010 two resolutions (the GA Resolution A/65/L.7 and SC Resolution 1947/2010) with similar content requesting the relevant bodies to take forward the recommendations in order to improve the work of the Peacebuilding architecture.

We should not forget it. From the outset, the Peacebuilding architecture and the mandates of its components fell short of the expectations of many developing countries which wanted more powerful tools to address their challenges in situation of fragility and to rally strong support of the international community for countries emerging from conflict. Not only that. The review performed showed that the implementation of the mandates is mixed in many respects.

In the following I will explicit the work of the PB architecture focusing on the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission, the innovations that it brought on board in the spectrum of activities related to the maintenance of peace and security and development, its achievements, the strategic challenges of UN support to Peacebuilding, and the recommendations made to improve its work. To do that I will draw on the various reports of the UN Secretary General and on my own experience in the Commission in the activities of which I have taken part since 2007, as member of the Guinea Bissau Country specific configuration and as member of the Organizational Committee since 2009 and as its Vice Chair for the Africa Region in 2010.

First of all a short presentation of the components of the Peacebuilding architecture:

1- PBC: MANDATE AND COMPOSITION

The Heads of State and Government decided to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body with the purpose to:

- bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery;
- focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development;
- provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

It comprises a standing Organizational Committee, that has 31 Members, including the five Permanent Members of the Security Council; and 26 elected members, of which

- two are elected by the Security Council;
- seven by the General Assembly;
- seven by the ECOSOC;
- five top providers of assessed contributions to United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to United Nations funds; and
- five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions.

The elected members of the Organizational Committee serve for renewable terms of two years, as applicable. In the enabling resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council decided a country can be included on the PBC's agenda by:

- Requests for advice from the Security Council;
- Requests for advice from the ECOSOC or the General Assembly with the consent of a concerned Member State in exceptional circumstances on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and with which the Security Council is not seized;
- Requests for advice from Member States in exceptional circumstances on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and which are not on the agenda of the Security Council;

- Requests for advice from the Secretary-General.

The PBC meets in various configurations, comprising the Organizational committee members and interested Member States. We call them "Country Specific Meetings" (CSM). In the first year of operation there were two country specific configurations, one on Burundi and the second on Sierra Leone, both at the request of the Security Council. In both cases Integrated UN missions replaced the PKO after their withdrawal. Guinea Bissau and lately the Central African Republic were also placed on the agenda of the PBC. On 16 September 2010, the Commission agreed to place Liberia on its agenda, at the request of the Liberian Government to address specific challenges to peacebuilding. I will come back to the case of Liberia to highlight the innovations with respect to the recommendations of the review of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Commission has also established a working Group on Lessons Learned which examine in various events the issues related with peacebuilding and challenges facing the countries emerging from conflict

2- THE PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE (PBSO)

The Peacebuilding Support Office has four primary functions:

(1) Strategies for Peacebuilding.

- advise the Commission, through the Secretary-General, on options for comprehensive peacebuilding strategies;
- gather and analyze information in order that the Commission may best work with national authorities in formulating a peacebuilding strategy;
- assess progress towards peacebuilding goals and advise, if necessary on suggested changes in overall strategy;
- provide strategic-level analysis to inform and guide Secretariat operational planning processes for peacebuilding activities;
- assess existing coordination between all national, bilateral, regional and multilateral peacebuilding efforts;
- ensure maximum system wide coordination in formulating and implementing an integrated peacebuilding strategy.

(2) Funding of Peacebuilding and Recovery Activities.

- provide a comprehensive overview of all financing for all peacebuilding activities in a particular country;

- advise on best way to on the best ways to ensure sustained financing of recovery and development activities, including those aimed at national capacity-building.

(3) Best Practices and Cross-Cutting Peacebuilding Issues.

- systematically collect information on lessons learned in UN peacebuilding missions and will provide advice as requested on best practices relevant to peacebuilding;
- develop with the rest of the UN system policy guidelines on UN cross-cutting peacebuilding activities as appropriate.

(4) Other Support to the Peacebuilding Commission.

- advise the Commission as requested on the relevance of requests for Member States for advice;
- assist the Commission in making the outcome of its discussions available to all relevant bodies and actors of the United Nations, including the International Financial Institutions.

3- PEACEBUILDING FUND (PBF)

The PBF allocates money through two funding facilities, the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) and the Peacebuilding & Recovery Facility (PRF). Both facilities fund initiatives that respond to one or more of the following four criteria:

- Respond to imminent threats to the peace process and initiatives that support peace agreements and political dialogue ;
- Build or strengthen national capacities to promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict ;
- Stimulate economic revitalization to generate peace dividends;
- Reestablish essential administrative services.

The PBF is managed, on behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, supported by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). The UNDP Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office (MDTF Office) is the PBF fund administrator.

The PBF relies upon voluntary contributions from Member States, organizations and individuals. It has an autonomous decision making process and provide grants not only to countries on the agenda of the PBC but also to countries in situation of fragility which need quickly available resources to fund critically urgent projects and activities for the prevention of crises or situation representing a threat to peace. Up to now the PBF has offered grants to 18 countries filling strategic gaps funding quick win projects of high relevance for the stabilization and peacebuilding in the recipient countries. The projects are in most cases carried by UN agencies.

In this respect, the PBF is the most efficient component of the PB architecture as regards the prevention of conflict, an important part of the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission, which is not sufficiently addressed at this level.

THE PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION IN PRACTICE: A QUALIFIED RECORD

The support activities conducted by the Peacebuilding architecture are vital efforts allowing peace processes to take a positive course and to strengthen the local dynamic of progress on the path of lasting stability and development. The Peacebuilding Commission has taken very seriously its mandate. The Organizational Committee meets frequently. It exercises strategic oversight over the architecture and deliberates on issues of relevance for the work of the country specific configuration.

Each Country Specific Meeting is chaired by an Ambassador. For the four first countries, the Commission adopted a Strategic Framework for cooperation. The Strategic Framework outlines principles of cooperation; objectives, analysis of major challenges and identification of threats; mutual engagements of the government, the PBC, and other international and national stakeholders; and review of progress and monitoring.

Issues considered ranged from Promotion of Good Governance, (ii) Global Ceasefire Agreement between war parties (iii) Security Sector (iv) Justice, promotion of human rights and the fight against impunity (v) Land issues and socioeconomic recovery (vi) Mobilization and coordination of international assistance (vii) Regional dimension (viii) Gender dimension.

The Commission meets frequently through video conference with the country various national coordination bodies to discuss ongoing issues concerning the implementation of the Strategic Frameworks. The follow-up and monitoring by the Commission puts pressure on the stakeholders to take necessary steps to implement the mutual commitments taken. At the level of the Peacebuilding Commission the burden rests mainly on the shoulders of the Chair of the Country specific configurations. They discharge their responsibility with a high degree of devotion. They undertake alone or as head delegations of Member States, Member of the Organizational Committee to the agenda countries, to engage in direct dialog with their authorities and civil society representatives to meet their commitments.

They also conduct consultations with the International partners to mobilize resources for the countries especially for the preparation and holding of elections and other activities to strengthen the state and to promote good governance and national dialog between stakeholders. The direct participation of representatives of the IFI in the deliberations of the country specific configurations is of great importance, since it helps bring more coherence in their policy towards the countries emerging from conflict. I think that this interaction has helped raise in the World Bank the awareness of the dire difficulties facing the Countries emerging from conflict or in situation of fragility. This evolution has been highly beneficial for the countries covered.

But all coins have two sides. This is the one side of the coin. On the other side, the strategic cooperation framework increased the reporting burden on the limited capacities of the Countries. They lacked focus and hence their impact is also mixed. In that respect, two countries (Burundi and Sierra Leone) have tried to work out with their international partners a single integrated framework document to allow for better coherence and coordination and to ease the reporting burden.

Sierra Leone has adopted its "Agenda for Change" which has been discussed at a high level event in New York allowing the adoption of an Outcome document that serve as basis for follow - up on actions agreed with the PBC, so asserting the national ownership on the peacebuilding process. Burundi has also attempted to put in place a joint and common document. This is worth mentioning notwithstanding the fact that process is not yet completed.

The new agenda country, Liberia has taken these lessons learned into account and opted for a slimmer document focusing on a limited set of priorities of high relevance to the peacebuilding process in the country. The new formula elaborated in this case is called "Statement of mutual commitments". It is intended to extend it to all countries on the agenda because it is easier to manage.

The efficiency of the cooperation depends on the accuracy of the priority set up, on the level of mobilization of resources to reach the goals set, as well financial as human resources. The records in this field have been modest. In this connection the need to have at disposal civilian capacities to deploy to support the countries in the immediate aftermath of conflict has been stressed and the UN Secretary General has even convened a high level Committee headed by the former Chief of the Department of Peacekeeping operations to study this issue of civilian capacities. Its report is due for 2011.

On the other side, more attention will be devoted to the role of the PBC in the field of mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of actions agreed in the Statement of Mutual Commitments, the aim of which is to set the stage for long term development.

The importance of such active role of the Commission is justified by the fact that sustainable peace depends on economic progress, since successful reintegration of ex-combatants, and the creation of employment opportunities for young people to have a better life, and a stake in the maintenance of a long term stability to draw them away from the cycle of conflict, require sustained development assistance, and the creation of conditions so that the people in the country can bring about investment, from micro-credit through to financing small- and medium-sized industry or, indeed, attracting outside investment, for sustainable economic growth.

One additional major issue in this field is the disconnection between the PBC and the PBF. The PBF main purpose is to ensure catalytic funding for quick pace dividends but also to prepare the ground for larger investments. The Review of the PBC recommended to establish a stronger synergy and complementarity between the two bodies, but to keep the autonomy of the PBF as regards its decision making on the appropriation of PBF resources, while also ensuring that this is not seen as a primary tool for the PBC.

In the first years of operation the pace of disbursement was not as quick as it was supposed to be. The review of the PBF conducted in 2009 had streamlined the disbursement procedure to allow for a quick mobilization of the resources granted.

A regards the agenda countries priority has to be granted to funding activities foreseen in the Strategic Framework for cooperation or Statements of Mutual Commitments.

The Liberia Case brings in an additional innovation in the records of the Peacebuilding Commission. The country has been placed on the Agenda while still maintaining a full-fledged Peacekeeping operation headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary General. This creates a situation that will increase the need for a closer interaction between the PBC and the Security Council. The weak interaction between them is deemed detrimental to the efficiency of UN efforts in the field of maintenance of international peace and security and in the consideration

of development factors affecting the peace and security situation in the Countries on the agenda of the Security Council.

Moreover, the experience of Liberia unique so far, will help master the issues arising from the desired synchronization of Peacekeeping operations and Peacebuilding efforts.. Taking into account shortcomings in the past, it is now agreed that thinking in terms of sequencing the peacebuilding activities is an illusion and that peacebuilding activities should accompany the peacekeeping activities so as to develop a harmonious synergy in applying the resources mobilized for an increased efficiency.

At each stage of the normalization process there are peacebuilding activities that should be performed and scaled up until the phasing out of the PKO and the by the withdrawal of the peacekeepers. In that sense peacekeepers have to be at a certain stage early peacebuilders. That is the motivation of the quick impact projects performed by PKOs to win the hearts and minds of the People where the Missions are deployed. These projects require a close collaboration between the Missions and the other UN agencies on the field.

An early introduction of peacebuilding elements such as reintegration, rehabilitation and recovery programmes, the restoration of basic social services, identifying and addressing the root causes of the conflicts and promoting dialog between the stakeholders or being sensitive to cultural realities and ethnical configuration and relationships in the implementation of security measures can be of great benefit to the PKOs and help conceive an exit strategy which is realistic and timely.

But as stated in the report on the review, the international community must understand the limits of its role as midwife to a national birthing process. In this sense, the PBC role has been to assess how much progress was made in performing such basis imperative of peacebuilding as building administrative capacity, promoting dialogue, monitoring how inclusive the process has been, how coherent are the strategies adopted to set the stage for sustainable peace and development.

In the countries concerned, ownership is crucial but it cannot be approached as a right wrested from the international community. The report on the review recognized the importance of national ownership. National ownership means that the nationals are in the driver's seat, shaping the democratic institutions that will manage public affairs, elaborating and setting the priorities, implementing the appropriate strategies in the pursuit of desired goals, and articulating the type of assistance required for this purpose with the understanding that peacebuilding has to be a long-term commitment and is about creating sustainable social, developmental and governmental structures, to pave the way for durable peace.

One major innovation which we are calling for would consist in establishing a representation of the PBC in the countries emerging from conflict side by side with the PKO as part of the leadership team to ensure direct participation in the dynamic processes on the field, to develop a closer knowledge of the situation on the ground in the Peacebuilding perspective and to offer mediation and accompany the stakeholders in their day to day interaction, in order to facilitate the management of challenges facing them.

In the larger framework of the UN support to peacebuilding in aftermath of conflict, many strategic challenges have been identified in the last two reports of the United Nations Secretary General on this issue.

While recognizing that peacebuilding is primarily a national challenge and responsibility, the SG stressed that the international community, including the United Nations, has a critical role to play in supporting the national

agenda, and that the response must be a collective effort, with all the pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights, development and humanitarian — fully engaged in support of a common vision, on the basis of the international Standards.

Actions in support should expand to a large realm of items, including stronger leadership, more effective strategies and planning, strengthening our coordination within the United Nations system and our capacity to deliver, predictable deployment of civilian capacities, more productive United Nations- World Bank engagement, furthering national ownership, strengthening national capacity development and improving peacebuilding financing.

It is obvious that the United Nations cannot achieve these goals in isolation, since the UN is not alone on the field and could benefit from strong partnerships with Member States, regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, the international financial institutions and other multilateral stakeholders.

To this end, the Co –facilitators of the review of the PBC encouraged United Nations Actors in all Peacebuilding Commission agenda countries to further integrate their activities on the ground under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary General, and to utilize the Commission's political weight to align international actors on the ground behind agreed overarching objectives and ensure clear inventories of peacebuilding activities in agenda countries to avoid duplication.

In the same vein the Co – Facilitators recommended that the Commission establishes a more structural interaction with the World Bank, in particular by establishing a mechanism for consideration of Peacebuilding input into the Headquarters decision-making processes; strengthens connections to the United Nations Family, promotes and institutionalize linkages with regional organizations to facilitate exchanges of experiences and best practices; ensures fuller collaboration with bodies such as European Union, OECD, and OSCE.

This may be a very ambitious agenda. But it is worth implementing it, with a sense of commitment and in an innovative spirit. In this sense, the report on the review sets a framework for an authoritative overarching outreach for the PBC which has to be taken forward in order to spearhead the efforts of the international community to master the challenges in the field of Peacebuilding while harnessing contributions from all stakeholders and energizing them to deliver efficient support to countries in need, with all components of the Peacebuilding architecture attuned to the purposes for which they were created.

ANNEX 1

Resolution 1947 (2010) - Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture

"The Security Council,

"Recalling resolution 1645 (2005) and in particular its paragraph 27,

"Reaffirming the importance of the peacebuilding work carried out by the United Nations, and the need for sustained support and adequate resources for this work,

"Recognizing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as a dedicated intergovernmental advisory body to address the needs of countries emerging from conflict towards sustainable peace,

"1. Welcomes the Report presented by the Co-facilitators entitled 'Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture', as set out in document S/2010/393, which is based on extensive consultations with the UN membership and other stakeholders;

"2. Requests all relevant UN actors to take forward, within their mandates and as appropriate, the recommendations of the report with the aim of further improving the effectiveness of the Peacebuilding Commission;

"3. Recognizes that the peacebuilding work of the United Nations requires sustained support and adequate resources to meet the challenges;

"4. Requests the Peacebuilding Commission to reflect in its annual reports progress made in taking forward the relevant recommendations of the Report;

"5. Calls for a further comprehensive review five years after the adoption of the present resolution following the procedure as set out in paragraph 27 of resolution 1645 (2005);

"6. Decides to remain seized of the matter."

ANNEX 2 : Peacebuilding Fund Activities

The Terms of Reference for the PBF identifies four thematic areas for PBF engagement:

- Thematic Area 1: Implementation of Peace Agreements and Political Dialogue
- Thematic Area 2: Promotion of Coexistence and Peaceful Resolution of Conflict
- Thematic Area 3: Economic Recovery and Immediate Peace Dividends
- Thematic Area 4: Rebuilding Essential Government Services and Infrastructure

Thematic Area 1 accounts for the largest share of funding by value, while Thematic Area 2 accounts for the largest number of projects.

PBF Key Figures (as of 28 Feb 2010)

Total Portfolio*: \$348,133,956

Pledges: \$2,642,500

Commitments: \$331,543,919

Deposits: \$334,186,419

Interest**: \$13,947,537

Funds Allocated: \$196,160,899

Projects Approved: 115

Approved for funding to projects: \$146,820,300

Transfers to Rec. Orgs: \$146,292,550

Number of Donors: 48

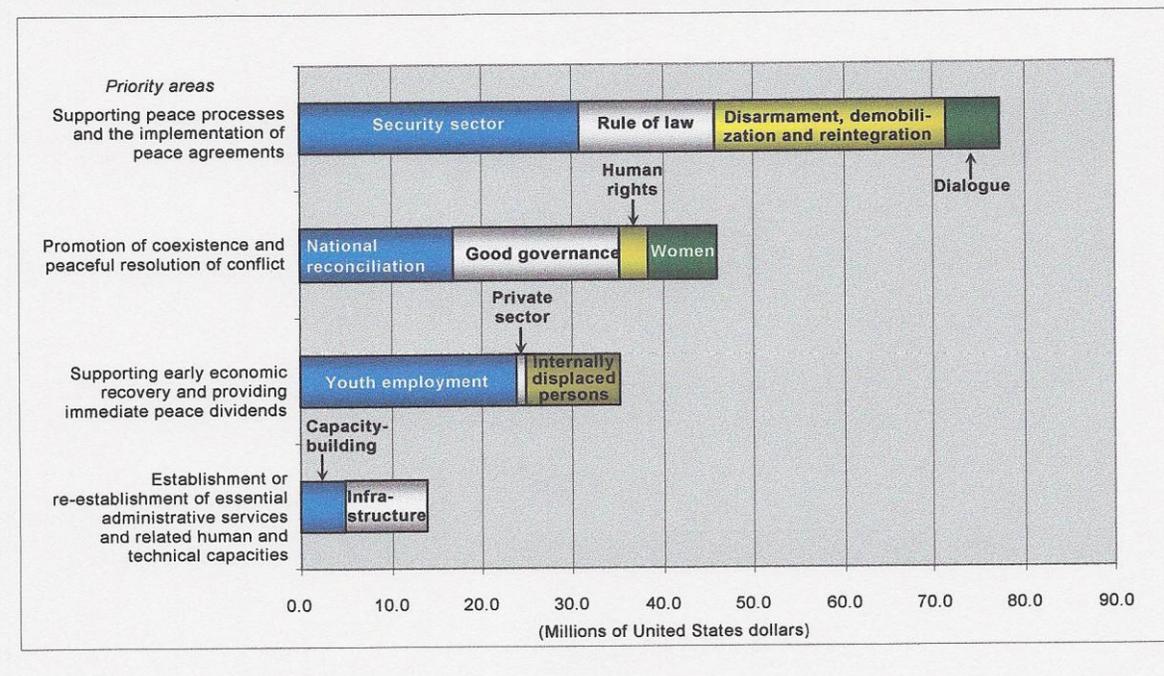
Recipient Organizations: 14

Number of recipient countries: 18

Results in 2009 and update as at 30 June 2010 by priority area

28. The Peacebuilding Fund invests in four priority areas as outlined in its terms of reference, broken down further by the Peacebuilding Support Office into 13 “peacebuilding outcomes”, which will be at the heart of the monitoring and evaluation system under development (see figure III).

Figure III
Fund-approved project budget by priority area and outcome (as at 30 June 2010)



Source: Peacebuilding Fund, Report of the Secretary General A/65/353

Burundi

The independent midterm evaluation conducted in October 2009 acknowledged the important contribution of the Fund to peace consolidation by addressing the drivers of the conflict, filling gaps and improving stakeholder partnerships, such as through its security sector work and support to national political dialogue. The draft report highlighted, however, the need for greater focus on the sustainability of activities delivering peace dividends and improved guidance.

Sierra Leone

A midterm evaluation¹ of the Peacebuilding Fund undertaken in 2009 credited it with filling critical gaps for quick results and building institutional capacity to address root causes, such as the lack of respect for human rights and weak rule of law.

Central African Republic

Since December 2008 peacebuilding in the Central African Republic has centred on the recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue process, in particular the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and preparations for the conduct of presidential and legislative elections. While many Peacebuilding Fund activities have made significant progress, in particular activities related to quick peace dividends in socio-economic reintegration and social cohesion.

Guinea Bissau

The initial Peacebuilding Fund allocation of \$6 million supports the priorities in the strategic framework for peacebuilding developed with the Peacebuilding Commission and includes: the refurbishment of military barracks; support to vocational training programmes; youth employment; and the rehabilitation of prisons. Consultations with the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Government and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau resulted in the agreement to allocate a second tranche of the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility to support a new set of priorities aligned to the strategic framework for peacebuilding adopted by the Peacebuilding Commission.

Liberia

The findings of an independent midterm evaluation conducted in February 2010 found that the peacebuilding process had ensured national ownership, helped develop a common understanding of priorities for peacebuilding, and identified projects that addressed drivers of conflict. Activities highlighted as effective included support to rule of law in two conflict-affected counties, agricultural training of ex-combatants from hot spot areas, professionalization of the police and capacity-building of institutions, including the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Ministry of Justice.

DRC

In June 2009, the Government launched the Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan in Conflict-Affected Areas of Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (STAREC) to consolidate the peacebuilding gains achieved and applied a Peacebuilding Fund allocation of \$20 million approved in October 2009 to help jumpstart those plans, with eight projects for a total of \$13.9 million (as of July 2010) in the areas of: community-based reintegration of 6,000 ex-combatants; support to war-wounded staff of the Congrès national pour la défense du peuple; support for the re-establishment of State presence in mining regions in the Kivus; police reform; infrastructure rehabilitation; local administration; and provincial reconciliation structures.
