



31 January 2006

Excellency,

The adoption of the General Assembly resolution on the Peacebuilding Commission on 20 December was an historic achievement. In my letter of 22 December I stressed the importance of a speedy operationalization of the Commission.

To achieve this end I invited to an informal exchange of view on 20 January the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, the Chairs of the regional groups and the ten top providers of assessed contributions to United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to United Nations funds, programmes and agencies and the ten top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions.

I have encouraged the Chairs of the regional groups to consult with their members on the issues raised at that meeting. But I wanted to share with all of you my views on how we might proceed.

The basis for our decisions is operative paragraphs 4-6 of resolution 60/180. Op 4 sets out a clear sequence for the election/selection process starting with the Security Council followed by the ECOSOC, then the top financial and troop contributors and finally the General Assembly. It is of great importance that this sequence be followed.

The Security Council has communicated to the Secretary General - with a copy to my office - the names of the seven members it has selected as members of the Organizational Committee.

All Permanent Representatives and  
Permanent Observers to the United Nations  
New York

The Bureau of the Economic and Social Council has commenced its discussion on how to conduct its elections. I am grateful to the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Hachani, for his commitment to conclude this process as early as possible.

The Secretary-General presented on 6 December a list of the top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions. On 13 January I circulated the Secretary-General's Note containing an initial list of the top financial contributors of assessed contributions to the United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies, including a standing peacebuilding fund. These two lists establish the ten top contributors in both categories for the purpose of the selection to the Organizational Committee.

I have requested the Secretary-General to provide me with finalized lists of the two above mentioned contributors for the purpose of the selection to the Organizational Committee by 1 February.

I am encouraged that the Member States within these two categories have already started to consult each other. At the meeting on 20 January Member States within those groups volunteered to facilitate early consultations.

As per operative paragraph 4 (e) of resolution 60/180, and as I emphasized in my introductory remarks to the resolution on 20 December, the selection of members from the General Assembly is intended to achieve a balanced geographical representation from all regional groups in the overall membership of the organizational committee. This implies that the distribution between the different geographical groups in the General Assembly can only be decided after we have noted the results of the elections and selections in the first four categories.

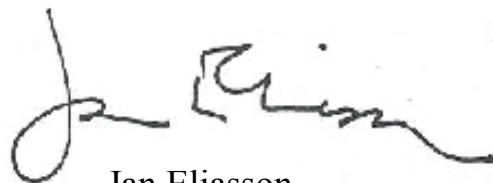
As soon as I am informed of these results I will revert to you with proposals on how we may proceed with the distribution of the seven seats in the General Assembly. As stated in resolution 60/180 the election in the General Assembly should be conducted in accordance with rules and procedures decided by the General Assembly. I foresee that we will need to take a decision on modalities for the election in the form of a brief resolution.

In accordance with the resolution 60/180 the Economic and Social Council as well as the General Assembly are requested to ensure that in their election processes due consideration is given to those countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery.

On the issue of the term of serving in the organizational committee (operative paragraph 6) I would hope that we can agree that it would be most useful for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission if members could serve for two years. I encouraged all participants in the meeting of 20 January to keep this in mind in the election and selection processes.

I would hope that we should, with joint efforts, be able to take the necessary steps to enable the Secretary General to convene the first constituting meeting of the Organizational Committee in the first weeks of March and the Peacebuilding Commission to become operational also in its country specific setting during the spring.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest considerations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Eliasson', written in a cursive style.

Jan Eliasson