



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8 February 2007

Excellency,

I have the honour to bring to your attention the attached summary of the meeting of the General Assembly on 6 February 2007, on agenda items 47, 113 and 149, in order to discuss the progress achieved in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Member States for their active participation in the debate. The number of speakers and the quality of the debate is a testament to the importance Member States attach to universal peace and security. It also reflects Member States commitment to ensure that the decision to create the Peacebuilding Commission is translated into practical action that can bring hope to millions of people trapped in post-conflict situations. The Organisational Committee should take this strong support as encouragement to move forward, particularly where progress is needed.

As emphasised by many of you during the debate, the General Assembly should continue to play an important role in advancing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

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


Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

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

MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TO RESUME CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEMS 47, 113
AND 149, TO DISCUSS THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THE
WORK OF THE PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Summary

Member States welcomed the opportunity to review the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in the General Assembly, as it was the main deliberative and policy organ of the United Nations.

Many delegations stressed the critical role the United Nations plays in promoting peace, security and development, and, warned that without peace and stability, achieving economic development and promoting human rights would be unsustainable over the long term.

In this regard, Member States stressed that the Peacebuilding Commission was set because there was a need for a dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging, and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development. In addition, Member States recognised that the establishment of the Commission constituted one of the most concrete outcomes from the 2005 World Summit, and an important element of the overall reform process. In this regard, some speakers noted that public expectations were high concerning the potential impact the Commission could have.

Many speakers recognized that the Commission benefits from its unique composition, but also stressed the potential risks should the Commission come to be perceived as a donor-recipient forum

Some Member States underlined that the United Nation's new peacebuilding architecture was still in the early stages of becoming fully operational, and that it was "learning by doing". Many Member States also suggested that additional organisational and administrative measures were needed to strengthen the work of the Commission. Many also emphasised that while there had been and continued to be difficulties (especially concerning the procedures and their interpretation) the Commission's success would ultimately be judged by the impact of the body's work for people on the ground.

In this context, many delegations emphasised the need for the continued engagement of all parties and organs involved, and sustained commitment from Member States to ensure the success of the Commission. Delegations also pointed out that the Commission benefits from complementary contributions from the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and that, the success or failure of the Commission will depend upon these bodies working together in partnership, and drawing on lessons learnt in order to achieve progress.

Many Member States stressed that the Commission's annual report to the General Assembly would provide the opportunity to debate progress, adding that having open debates in the Security Council and the General Assembly should not substitute for the full consideration of report.

Many delegations also recognized that each country emerging from conflict would have a different set of national wounds to heal, and, that this may require the Commission to take tailored-made approach that supports national authorities to create the conditions for sustainable peace. Many supported field missions and for these to become integral elements of the Commission's work.

Different positions were voiced on the degree of the involvement of non-state actors, particularly NGOs and civil society: while this was encouraged by some, others preferred to stress the intergovernmental character of the Commission's work.

In addition, many Member States also recognized that at this early stage, it was important that the membership remain engaged and supportive, and continued to take a flexible approach to the Commission's work, as lessons would continue to be learnt while the Commission expanded its basic capacities and expertise and engaged in new activities.

The Commission's important early achievements were acknowledged by many Member States. The Chair of the Organisational Committee and Chairpersons of the two country-specific meetings briefed on developments in their work, laying out future plans and the division of responsibilities between respective governments, the UN system and other stakeholders.

In particular, important steps had been taken to restore peace and stability and promote post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone. While in Burundi, the Commission remains focused on strengthening national dialogue and the provision of basic services, by promoting good governance, the rule of law, security sector reform, and, including women in the consolidation of peace. Most speakers at the debate referred to the two cases, many underlining the importance of field missions to these countries. Some however cautioned against a trend to accord more weight to the country-specific meetings rather than the Organizational Committee.

All member states agreed that faster progress on the ground was needed. In order to achieve this, and live up to the Commission's main purpose, as defined by the 2005 World Summit Outcome, to bringing together and marshal resources for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, it was critical that the Peacebuilding Fund was fully financed, and that disbursement decisions were implemented promptly.

The President of the General Assembly undertook to write to potential donors to encourage them to give serious consideration to making a contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund so that the financing target of US\$250 million was met. Many Member States acknowledged that without the resources required to implement its important mandate the Commission's ability to play an influential role in peacebuilding activities could be undermined.

Many delegations noted that the General Assembly ought to continue to play an important role in the work of the Commission, and many emphasised that, in addition to reviewing the Commission's annual report, it would be fitting for the Assembly to meet, as appropriate, to discuss the progress of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.