

IPI Blue Papers

# Peacebuilding

Task Forces on  
Strengthening Multilateral  
Security Capacity

No. 10

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INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE



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## Foreword

We live in difficult times. Rapid socioeconomic changes, demographic bulges, and intertwined security crises are affecting us all, and most especially the poor. Criminal and violent organizations are gaining control over territory, markets, and populations around the world, complicating peacemaking and generating insecurity. States with ineffective and corrupt institutions prove too weak to deal with interlinked threats ranging from transnational organized crime to infectious disease. Meanwhile, the number of actual and aspirant nuclear-armed countries is growing, as is the likelihood that nonstate actors will acquire weapons of mass destruction through illicit global trade.

Global warming and environmental degradation particularly distress already impoverished regions. Fluctuating food and energy prices put people and governments to the test, while the demand for resources—notably water and energy—increases due to unprecedented development and population growth.

To this already gloomy picture, the year 2008 added tectonic shifts in the economic landscape. A devastating financial crisis is producing dramatic consequences with likely long-term impacts on economic development, aid, and emerging markets alike.

Yet, at a time when common efforts are needed more than ever, division and discord can be spotted in many multilateral institutions, from the United Nations to NATO and the European Union. Peace operations are under serious stress, while political disunity undermines the authority and effectiveness of the Security Council. The optimistic embrace of a “flat” world of responsible sovereign states is challenged by those who push for a return to exclusive state sovereignty and jealously guarded territorial integrity.

However, crises provide unparalleled opportunities for change. These moments are transitory, but they need to be seized upon to

put ideas into action, to strengthen the capacity to meet the challenges we face, which in today's globalizing world means more responsive, effective, and efficient multilateral mechanisms and policies.

In response to these challenges, IPI launched the **Task Forces on Strengthening Multilateral Security Capacity** in 2008. The purpose of these Task Forces was to suggest ideas for action to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations (UN) and its partners to deal effectively with emerging, multifaceted, and global challenges to peace and security. The Task Forces addressed not only the policy steps that are needed, but also the political and institutional strategies required to implement them. This strategic perspective has too often been the missing link in efforts to strengthen the UN system.

Given the links among security, development, and environmental challenges, the initiative opened with a symposium on Development, Resources, and Environment. The symposium provided a larger context for the work of the subsequent Task Forces, which focused on two core dimensions of the security concerns facing the UN and its partners: (1) Transnational Security Challenges and (2) Inter- and Intra-state Armed Conflict (see Annex 3 for details of the process).

The **IPI Blue Papers** are the product of this intense process of consultation, which engaged more than sixty UN member states, half of them at ambassadorial level, and seventy experts in a variety of thematic areas. It included the preparation of more than twenty-five background papers and fourteen multiday meetings. Each Blue Paper includes a section on why action to strengthen capacity in a particular area is needed and a section with ideas for action. The content is based on the Task Force discussions, but does not necessarily represent all the views articulated during the entire process. Although the institutional focus of the Task Forces was primarily the UN, this report aims to assist key stakeholders to prioritize and leverage the comparative advantages of the UN

and other multilateral institutions, including their ability to forge productive and sustainable partnerships with other groups and organizations.

While policy discussions on related topics are taking place in other fora, IPI brings to this initiative nearly forty years of constructive collaboration with the United Nations and its membership, as well as a more long-term strategic perspective than in-house and intergovernmental processes can offer. With these Blue Papers, IPI hopes to continue a process that will produce concrete steps toward stronger multilateral capacity in peace and security.

Despite the difficulties ahead, we believe that tomorrow's world needs more multilateral capacity, not less. It needs a stronger UN, capable of adapting and strengthening its capacity to address the realities of the twenty-first century. It needs a UN able to work with its partners and in particular with member states, which remain the first line of response to many of the threats discussed here.

This is the purpose of the IPI Blue Papers, and I am very pleased to introduce them to you.

Finally, I would like to thank most warmly the co-chairs of the Task Forces, the member-state participants, the experts, and IPI staff, without whose hard work and intellectual contributions the IPI Blue Papers would not have seen the light of day.

**Terje Rød-Larsen**  
President, *International Peace Institute*  
January 2009

## Acronyms

ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
AU	African Union
CIC	Center on International Cooperation
DOCO/UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
DPA/UNDPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
DPKO/UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ERSG	Executive Representative of the Secretary- General
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
IFI	international financial institution
IMPP	integrated mission planning process
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NYU	New York University
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
RC	Resident Coordinator
SC	Special Coordinator

SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research



## Executive Summary

Peacebuilding involves implementing a range of reconstruction and reform efforts in countries with some of the most fragile, fluid, and unpredictable political environments. These situations present tensions and contradictions that often cannot be fully reconciled and require trade-offs between competing needs and goals. Moreover, each postconflict situation is unique, defying general theories and blueprints for action.

However, experience does suggest where improvements are needed to equip decision makers with the tools, resources, and political support necessary to manage these complex situations. Past peacebuilding efforts have paid insufficient attention to the political dynamics of postconflict situations. Actors' diverging viewpoints, interests, and objectives have hampered the development and implementation of coherent peacebuilding strategies. International actors have failed to sufficiently orient their support toward reestablishing national capacities for governance and service delivery. Finally, the UN's new peacebuilding architecture has yet to deliver on its full mandate. Concrete steps to address these challenges will better enable policymakers and practitioners to manage peacebuilding in each unique context.

### IDEAS FOR ACTION

- I. **Strengthen UN leadership in the field:** This requires focusing on multifaceted leadership teams, delegating decision-making authority to field-level leaders, and enhancing the preparation of and support for the UN's senior leaders. Delegating decision making could be done by enhancing the authority of leaders to (1) facilitate agreement among national and international actors on the priorities for international assistance; (2) agree on roles and responsibilities for delivering on the ground, especially within the UN;

and (3) hold field-level actors accountable for delivering on agreed roles.

- II. **Expand flexible funding and seek more strategic and coordinated external support:** Donors and international organizations should establish concrete mechanisms for strategic coordination that mobilize political support for peacebuilding in New York, in capitals, and in the field. Member states should also enhance the flexibility, predictability, and transparency of postconflict financing.
- III. **Prioritize building national institutions:** Develop modalities for (1) identifying and reinforcing existing local capacities and (2) identifying, matching, deploying, and managing international civilian capacity to perform core functions where necessary in the short term and to enhance local capacities in the medium to long term.
- IV. **Reinforce UN integration in postconflict situations:** Strengthen cross-system capacity for integrated planning by developing a relatively small reservoir of cross-system planning staff, and harmonize policies and procedures to facilitate integrated action.
- V. **Further adapt the Peacebuilding Commission:** Focus more on monitoring progress in the field and holding national and international actors accountable for delivering on their commitments.



**WHY** ACTION IS NEEDED

## Peacebuilding: The Challenge of Navigating Complex and Contested Terrain

1. Postconflict environments are characterized by an extraordinary degree of complexity where a range of reconstruction and reform efforts have to be implemented in some of the most fragile and unpredictable political climates. These situations typically are riddled with tensions and contradictions where, for example, actions that are required to address immediate needs or priorities can often undermine peace in the medium to long term. Every decision implies difficult trade-offs and a careful balance between political, security, and economic imperatives. Moreover, each postconflict situation is unique, defying general theories and blueprints for action. However, experience does suggest certain areas where improvements are urgently needed to ensure that decision makers have the necessary tools, resources, and political support to navigate this difficult terrain and forge a coherent support strategy for countries emerging from war.
2. Peacebuilding is a highly contested concept, with definitions ranging from the narrow “negative peace,” or absence of war, to the expansive “positive peace,” which encapsulates the need to redress root causes and deliver social and political goods, including justice, equity, and reconciliation. For the purposes of the Task Forces, the focus was confined to postconflict peacebuilding and defined as “those actions undertaken by international or national actors to institutionalize peace, understood as the absence of armed conflict (‘negative peace’) and a modicum of participatory politics (as a component of ‘positive peace’) that can be sustained in the absence of an international peace operation.”<sup>1</sup>

## PEACEBUILDING AS POLITICS<sup>2</sup>

3. If part of the objective of peacebuilding is to enable a government and its people to drive their own recovery and development by establishing stable security and political order, then attention to political dynamics is crucial. International and domestic actors carry complex motives into postconflict situations. The same actors around the table for a mediation process often assume positions in a postagreement government. Peace agreements rarely, if ever, signal the end of a peacemaking process. Political issues that remain unaddressed, or only partially addressed, by peace agreements may require sustained mediation efforts after the agreement is signed, as a part of a coherent approach to peacebuilding.
4. In Burundi, for example, the civil war was formally brought to an end in 2000 when the Arusha Accords were signed. However, two rebel groups refused to accept the Accords and remained outside the peace process. It was not until 2006 that a ceasefire with the Palipehutu-FNL, the final hold-out group, was established. After a number of setbacks, it was finally in April 2009 that they agreed to join mainstream politics by officially registering as a political party. Peacebuilding efforts were nonetheless undertaken by regional, bilateral, and multilateral actors in the midst of this ongoing peace process.
5. Reforming and rebuilding state institutions are high-stakes political processes that generate winners and losers. This raises the danger that peacebuilding processes create new opportunities for domestic elites to capture and manipulate international assistance to serve their own ends, which can result in social exclusion and political gain. As donor funds begin to flow in support of postconflict governments, it is commonplace to find elites treating public-sector institutions as personal fiefdoms, siphoning off funds from

donor projects to service their personal patronage networks. This has occurred in cases as diverse as Liberia, Afghanistan, and Palestine.<sup>3</sup>

6. Strategic analyses of conflict and postconflict situations are therefore essential for effective peacebuilding. Yet the assessments and analyses that currently underpin peacebuilding strategy and programming decisions tend to overemphasize technical needs and pay too little attention to political dynamics. One possible consequence of this imbalance is that peacebuilding efforts may promote institutional and governance models that are poorly suited to a given situation and may even play into the hands of potential spoilers. Or, a technocratic approach to institution building may crowd out attention to the need for postconflict political reconciliation.
7. Above all else, international actors need to acknowledge the political nature of peace processes throughout all phases of implementation and peacebuilding. This places enormous pressure on senior leaders and mediators to manage ongoing political negotiations and strategic decision making. The international community is increasingly looking to the UN to play this role as evidenced by a May 2008 UN Security Council Presidential Statement in which “[t]he Security Council highlight[ed] the need for the United Nations to play a leading role in the field in coordinating international efforts in postconflict situations.”<sup>4</sup> In order to do so effectively, the Secretary-General’s senior representative in the field<sup>5</sup> needs to have the authority and resources to corral the political, financial, and operational assistance of the international community in support of the peace process.

## CHRONIC FRAGMENTATION

8. All aspects of multilateral security are plagued by coordination problems. This challenge is magnified in

postconflict situations where political, security, development, and humanitarian dimensions need to converge and mutually reinforce one another. The experience of the last two decades has shown that peacebuilding is not a sequential process that follows neatly and only after peacekeeping. Countries emerging from war are messy, complex, and often experience periodic political setbacks and sporadic violence. However, the international architecture that has evolved since 1945 to respond to armed conflict and rebuild societies in its wake has not kept pace with these lessons. This architecture is characterized by separate bureaucratic silos for political, security, developmental, and humanitarian engagement. Similarly, donor governments that provide assistance to postconflict countries are typically organized with often rigid divisions between foreign, defense, development, and finance ministries. All of this colors the way external actors perceive and structure their engagement with postconflict countries and creates the incentives that cause fragmentation of peacebuilding efforts.

9. Although these problems have been on the table at the UN at least since the Panel on UN Peace Operations issued its report in 2000 (commonly referred to as the Brahimi Report),<sup>6</sup> there was no dedicated focus on peacebuilding at the intergovernmental level until the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)—collectively known as the UN’s peacebuilding architecture—were established following endorsement in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. According to its founding resolutions, the PBC was created to forge a more coherent and strategic approach by international actors in postconflict settings.<sup>7</sup> However, the peacebuilding architecture has yet to stamp its authority on this challenge. In fact, the PBC’s activities remain very limited, focusing only on four countries from among the dozens of conflicts in which the UN is currently engaged. Moreover, the PBC is

only one small part of a much larger policy and operational architecture for peacebuilding within the UN and the international community more broadly.

10. Beyond the UN, several donor countries have initiated a process of harmonizing their defense, diplomacy, and development bureaucracies—the so-called “3D” approach—to provide more coherent support to postconflict and fragile countries. The World Bank and several regional bodies have also reorganized themselves to better address peacebuilding challenges.<sup>8</sup> Yet, while all this activity suggests a strong recognition by international actors of the need for more coherence in peacebuilding, it paradoxically risks giving rise to competing approaches.
11. Within the UN system, the dispersal of expertise relevant to peacebuilding across the UN secretariat, agencies, funds, and programs contributes to a lack of clarity about roles, responsibilities, and accountability for results. There have been a number of efforts to improve coordination and integration—for example, through the integrated mission planning process (IMPP) and a program to pilot integrated field presences known as “Delivering as One,” which were advocated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence. But these pilots remain in their infancy: “Delivering as One” is confined to eight pilot countries, none of which is considered postconflict.
12. Recently, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reaffirmed “integration as the guiding principle for all conflict and post-conflict situations where the UN has a Country Team and a multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation or political mission/office.”<sup>9</sup> A great deal of work is underway among the UN secretariat and the agencies, funds, and programs to put this decision into practice, building on earlier initiatives originally proposed in the Brahimi Report. These efforts are spearheaded by an interagency working group on integration,

which, among other things, is currently revising headquarters and field guidelines to improve integrated mission planning in situations where the UN has an integrated field presence. One of the central elements of this effort is to devise an approach for developing an integrated strategic framework at the country level that lays out a shared vision and associated timelines, as well as a division of labor for the UN's contribution to peacebuilding efforts.

13. Notwithstanding these ongoing efforts, persistent political and bureaucratic obstacles<sup>10</sup> continue to stymie progress within the UN. At the political level, any government's willingness to commit diplomatic, financial, and military resources to a peacebuilding effort will pivot on whether or not it perceives the effort to be in its national interest. This is a fundamental and unchangeable fact of international politics. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that this often plays out in perverse ways. For example, it can be manifested in delays or impediments to taking action, as seen in Rwanda in 1994. Or, as a lack of sufficient resources to effectively implement a course of action once it is decided upon, as seen in the difficulty of amassing troops and resources to support the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and later the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).
14. External interests also drive the allocation and delivery of financial and technical assistance for peacebuilding and recovery efforts. This creates a supply-driven and incoherent approach, whereby UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) bend their mandates and goals to respond to disparate donor prerogatives and compete with each other for donor funding, rather than contributing to a common strategic approach that responds to the needs in the country. No technocratic planning tool or coordination mechanism can solve these challenges; they need to be

addressed at the political level. Recognizing this, the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, which was signed in 2005 and has activated donor efforts to rethink their aid policies for postconflict and fragile situations, emphasizes alignment of donor funding with host-country priorities.<sup>11</sup> Ultimately, it will be political decisions taken in donor capitals that create the financial incentives to drive coherence in peacebuilding situations.

15. There are also several bureaucratic challenges. First, there is a lack of strategic planning capacity in the UN. Interagency planning processes often focus on negotiation and compromise over various agency prerogatives rather than producing an approach that is truly strategic. Moreover, any planning capacity that exists at headquarters is rarely mirrored at the country level, leaving the Secretary-General's senior representative with little or no support to bring the many national and international actors together around a coherent peacebuilding vision, even when he or she is mandated by the Security Council to do so. Second, the UN Secretariat, and UN funds, programs, and agencies each have their own governance structures, holding them each accountable to a particular configuration of member states. Unless the member states within these governance structures push in the same direction, or these structures are revised, there is little incentive for the various UN entities to work together toward common goals. Third, administrative policies and procedures are fragmented and cumbersome raising barriers to collaboration and resulting in significant delays in getting the necessary people and assets in place to support peacebuilding efforts. A study on rapid deployment of civilians for UN peace operations notes that the vacancy rate in start-up missions is estimated at 53 percent.<sup>12</sup>



## HARD CHOICES IN PROGRAMMING

16. Fragmentation of efforts is only one part of the challenge. Even if international and national actors were prepared to work coherently, the inherent tensions and contradictions of postconflict situations make designing strategies and programs very complicated. Some of the most difficult choices arise in programming decisions, when principled policy positions must be reduced to pragmatic funding and operational decisions. One example of such a hard choice concerns the delivery of funding, whether to deliver it through the state budget, outside it, or via some mix of both. The vast majority of assistance delivered in postconflict countries is project-based and channeled outside the state budget. Yet, two important and competing views exist on this question.
17. Seen from one perspective, the project approach can foster a counterproductive dependence on parallel systems of service provision in areas such as health or education. These parallel systems can out-compete state structures, but are rarely sustained over time. They often draw the best and brightest professionals from the local population by offering much better compensation and training opportunities than does the civil service. Instead of building or rebuilding the public systems required to deliver services sustainably, the government risks being displaced by donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. This may detract from the state's legitimacy to the extent that it is perceived to be unable to meet the population's expectations.<sup>13</sup>
18. However, seen from another perspective, such costs may be a necessary evil, given the other objectives served by adopting such an approach. Reliance on external actors may be necessary during and for some time after a crisis to deliver life-saving and other essential services (such as health, education, and food) directly to the population,

and to avoid shoring up an ineffective or corrupt public system. Additionally, routing programming through external partners may be necessary by reason of donor policy prerogatives. Donors are accountable to their tax payers for the money they spend in postconflict countries. Consequently, where the recipient government or its institutions cannot handle funds with appropriate accountability and transparency, donors often have to use other methods of delivery, such as through international agencies.

19. Each of these two approaches—one favoring support to state institutions, one using alternative approaches—has its merits and its limitations. Reliance on external actors and nonstate domestic actors in the short term may be necessary to alter the prevailing conflict dynamics or to uphold UN Charter values. But, long-term capacity and institution building may also be at risk of falling away as donors lose interest. This may, in time, create domestic dependence on foreign support.
20. Historically, the international community has a mixed record on making the transition from delivering services directly to people to supporting the national and local structures that should provide those services over the long run. The challenge is to calibrate short-, medium-, and long-term interventions and approaches, balancing the imperative of meeting immediate needs with helping to lay the foundations for sustainable domestic structures to deliver on those needs. Each postconflict situation will require a different balance of approaches. It may not be a matter of sequencing, as is often assumed; rather, in some cases, the groundwork for medium- and long-term activities may need to be laid in the short term.

## SUPPORTING DOMESTIC FOUNDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

21. Countries in conflict often experience a serious deterioration or the complete destruction of their systems of governance, service delivery, and economic production. In addition to physical destruction, a large proportion of the educated population often migrates in search of security and better opportunities abroad. Young people's development is often stunted by deprivation or direct participation in the fighting. The productive sectors are often abandoned or diverted to war aims. Similarly, the institutions of governance and security—parliament, the civil service, the judiciary, and the police, among others—are often crippled or channeled toward war-fighting. Successful peacebuilding requires helping societies reverse these trends.
22. There are many weaknesses in international actors' current arrangements for assisting societies to reestablish effective systems and capacities for governance and service delivery. First, such arrangements often operate on the assumption that there is no capacity to begin with.<sup>14</sup> While local capacities may have been destroyed, diverted, or crippled by war, societies are never completely devoid of skilled people and functional systems (both formal and informal). International actors typically fail to identify and support such capacity and, as a consequence, may inadvertently undermine it.
23. Second, there is no overarching system for identifying, training, deploying, and overseeing the wide range of international civilian expertise that may be required to help restore local capacities. This includes expertise in areas as diverse as law enforcement, justice and corrections, public financial management, health delivery, education, and customs and border management. Further reflection is needed to (i) determine how to assess what capacity already exists locally and how it can be leveraged; (ii) clarify exactly

what types of international capacity are required; and (iii) figure out how to recruit and manage international civilian expertise for effective and rapid deployment.<sup>15</sup>

24. Policies and programs also need to ensure that such deployments lead to true knowledge *transfer*, and not to *dependence* on outside service-providers. Too often, programs designed to build peace instead simply temporarily perform basic state functions, leaving a precipitous capacity gap once the foreign presence withdraws, as occurred in Timor-Leste.
25. Despite decades of development work, very little is known about how to transfer skills and knowledge effectively, especially in postconflict settings. There is a tendency, especially in the UN, to focus on building capacity to plan and design development strategies, rather than focusing on the types of teaching, training, and mentoring expertise that may be needed to ensure local learning and create the conditions necessary for sustainable peace.

## THE UN PEACEBUILDING ARCHITECTURE

26. Since their establishment in 2005, the UN's Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) have preoccupied member states and dominated the intergovernmental debate on peacebuilding. The PBC has offered an innovative approach to the dilemmas of inclusivity in intergovernmental bodies by drawing its membership—according to an agreed formula—from the membership of the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as well as the top financial and troop contributors to the UN. This broad-based membership increases the legitimacy of the Commission's deliberations, working with the governments of the countries on its agenda. It is one of the few places where countries of the global South and North regularly debate and engage in dialogue on substantive issues. But

the breadth of its membership also necessarily prolongs and complicates its consultations.

27. The PBC has demonstrated a tendency to become overly focused on the internal politics of these consultations and negotiations, neglecting the real issues of peacebuilding that exist outside the architecture—including in the dozens of conflicts *not* on its agenda. The jury is still out on whether the peacebuilding architecture will in fact have a major impact on the practice of peacebuilding in these other situations over time.
28. The bulk of the PBC's time has been focused on its country-specific work. For each of the four countries on its agenda (Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone), the Commission has established country-specific meeting (CSMs). The CSMs in New York are meant to be mirrored in the field, through a committee or group that brings together the host government, the UN, bilateral actors (including donors and nondonors), international financial institutions (IFIs)—including the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and regional development banks—and civil society representatives. In the field, these groups are co-chaired by the host government and the UN. Making the interaction between actors in the field and in New York more regular is intended to inspire greater engagement from capitals, creating a triangle of communication, attention, political support, and, ultimately, funding for the country concerned. In practice, this arrangement has played out differently in each case because of the unique political situation in each country, the preexisting relationships between national and international actors, and the nature and configuration of coordination mechanisms that existed prior to the PBC's engagement.
29. Many member states feel that the PBC has achieved some early—if modest—results in its first four years through

these CSMs.<sup>16</sup> It has begun to produce greater conceptual coherence among participating stakeholders by providing a platform for security, political, and development actors to come together on peacebuilding issues. It has facilitated direct engagement by member-state representatives based in New York with government and civil society actors on the ground. Given the importance of understanding political context and building consensus on a vision for peacebuilding, this direct engagement with local actors seems particularly relevant for the development of coherent peacebuilding strategies. It has also generated interest from a handful of donor capitals, but not enough to shift political decision making in a way that would produce significantly more coherence and additional funding on the ground.

30. Many member states support the strong emphasis on national ownership within the Peacebuilding Commission. However, as with other internationally driven development processes, there is a danger that the PBC will tend toward a “one-size-fits-all” approach in structuring these arrangements. Already, the so-called “strategic frameworks” that the PBC uses to engage the countries on its agenda risk becoming the automatic mode of operation, rather than taking into account the most helpful way to engage a given postconflict country in particular. There is a danger that such tools can take on a life of their own, imposing a pace that does not always match local realities. In the worst case, the need for local actors to satisfy reporting deadlines and play to donor priorities can restrict and undermine much-needed dialogue and mediation at the national and local levels.
31. In addition, the mantra of national ownership has sometimes negated the potential role of the PBC, giving the impression that it serves merely to rubber stamp decisions taken by the host government without any critical appraisal. The core challenge lies in being a true partner by simultaneously

promoting national ownership while ensuring effective oversight. In some cases, this may even require doling out stern criticism to the host government. Yet much more thinking should be done to consider how such a role for the PBC can be best married to ongoing political engagement by the international community in each unique postconflict country.

## MOVING TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE PEACEBUILDING

32. As the preceding analysis argues, an effective peacebuilding response requires balancing difficult political trade-offs and interests and bringing many fragmented efforts together to create a whole greater than the sum of its parts.
33. When they were established, there was a hope—if not an expectation—that the PBC and PBSO would encourage further engagement by member-state capitals with ongoing peacebuilding efforts. To date, this does not appear to have occurred. In part, this may be due to the weakness of the Peacebuilding Support Office. The PBSO has taken steps to improve coordination across the UN system on peacebuilding matters—such as the conclusion of an agreement on a common conceptual basis for peacebuilding, and participation in the interagency working group on integration discussed above. But the Office has not yet been able to serve as the focal point of peacebuilding within the UN system originally envisioned. Some member states feel that the PBSO still lacks the support and authority it requires from other parts of the Secretariat if it is to become an engine capable of driving a more effective international peacebuilding response.
34. But it must also be acknowledged that the UN is doing almost as well (or as poorly) as some member states in this respect. Donor countries continue to shy away from the changes

within their own bureaucracies and practices that would allow more coherent and effective peacebuilding efforts to emerge. At the national level, political commitments, resources, programming, and other mechanisms of engagement are still disconnected from the long-term strategies needed for effective peacebuilding. Funding poses a particular challenge because the mechanisms used in “regular” development situations have long lead-times and cumbersome bureaucratic processes that are not suited to the unpredictable and urgent needs of postconflict situations. As a result, there is a lag between the time when funding for humanitarian relief begins to diminish and development funding begins to flow, often leaving urgent priorities unaddressed at very fragile moments in a peace process.

35. “3D” efforts bringing together defense, development, and diplomacy assets are a step in the right direction. They have begun to show some results by producing more-coordinated strategy; but they have not yet generated significant changes in donors’ conflict analysis, country-level policies, or their financing architecture. In each of these areas, diplomatic, defense, and development personnel continue to operate according to distinct paradigms.
36. As a result, the PBC has had only limited impact as a platform for strategic coordination between New York, donor capitals, and the field. Such coordination is particularly difficult—if not impossible—given the limited authority of senior UN representatives on the ground to coordinate the UN’s field activities, let alone the activities of other bilateral and multilateral actors. This requires intense and ongoing political negotiations among the multiple domestic factions as well as international actors on the ground, in capitals, and as represented in intergovernmental organs like the PBC and the Security Council.



**WHAT** SHOULD BE DONE

## Ideas for Action

37. Peacebuilding is an art not a science. It involves a delicate political balancing act between competing interests, priorities, and goals. Because each postconflict situation is unique, it is not possible to develop a generic blueprint for peacebuilding engagement. Forging a coherent approach and an effective response often depends on the individuals involved and the quality of leadership at the local, national, and international levels. The reforms proposed below aim to ensure that decision makers are better equipped with the necessary tools, resources, and political support to manage these difficult situations.

### I. STRENGTHEN UN LEADERSHIP IN THE FIELD

38. Given that postconflict situations are replete with tensions and contradictions, senior UN leaders should be endowed with the authority and capacity to understand competing tensions, mediate between conflicting interests, and facilitate strategic decision making among the key players. Their core task must involve forging a coherent political and operational approach among UN and non-UN actors, as well as being able to adjust such an approach in the face of changing circumstances.
39. **Focus on developing multifaceted leadership teams** with complementary political, operational, and analytical skills and support. This will require attention to the selection process and candidate pools for heads of mission as well as other senior mission positions. It may also require establishing a high-level internal mechanism at headquarters that can regularly review whether leadership teams are functioning effectively and can make adjustments as necessary.
40. **Decentralize decision making to the field to the fullest extent possible:** Member states will retain overall decision-making

and oversight authority through intergovernmental organs (including the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the governing boards of the agencies, funds, and programs). However, if senior UN leaders in the field are going to ensure that the UN is responsive to dynamic and complex political circumstances, it may be necessary to consider expanding their delegated decision-making authority. Decentralizing more decision making to the field could focus on the authority to (i) facilitate agreement among national and international actors on the priorities for international assistance; (ii) agree on roles and responsibilities, especially within the UN; and (iii) hold operational actors accountable, particularly within the UN family, for delivering on agreed roles.

41. **Enhance the preparation of and support for senior UN leaders:** Regular preparation or orientation for senior UN leaders could emphasize the complex and interrelated nature of the peacebuilding endeavor and the need to balance multiple goals with the demands of multiple external and internal actors. This could be achieved through regular preparation prior to deployment and improved headquarters- and field-based support that are attuned to the complexity of such endeavors. Some continuity in the analytical support provided to senior leaders would be particularly important in terms of calibrating the short-, medium-, and long-term imperatives of peace consolidation. Diplomats, for instance, may require exposure to the worlds of development, humanitarian relief, and security. Development practitioners may require orientation on the security or humanitarian dimensions of an operation. To do so, the UN should draw on the resources of DPKO's integrated training service, the UN System Staff College, and UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), as well as independent peacekeeping training centers. Member states should ensure that the relevant departments and agencies (such as DPKO, DPA, PBSO, the Development Operations Coordination Office

[DOCO], and UNDP) have the necessary resources to prepare and support senior leaders effectively.

## II. EXPAND FLEXIBLE FUNDING AND SEEK MORE STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED EXTERNAL SUPPORT

42. **Establish clear frameworks for engagement between international and national actors at multiple levels:** A coherent peacebuilding strategy needs to be forged at the country level through a dialogue with national actors. However, once this strategy is agreed upon, efforts to build political support and momentum need to go beyond the country level. As discussed above, the Peacebuilding Commission was established to activate three-way engagement between New York, capitals, and the field. However, experience has been mixed and so far the Commission is only engaged with four countries. Building on the PBC's early lessons and drawing on past experience, senior UN leaders in the field and member states should establish concrete mechanisms that facilitate strategic coordination among all relevant actors in the field, in their capitals, and in New York. Such mechanisms will vary country by country depending on the nature of the situation, the number of actors represented on the ground, and the relationships among them. Regardless of the specificities of the structure, the objective should be to provide a forum that focuses efforts and ensures that political and funding decisions are driving in the same direction.
43. **Improve internal donor coherence:** As discussed above, several donor countries have made significant progress in joining up their own defense, diplomacy, and development departments/ministries to enhance the coherence of their policies in postconflict and fragile countries. However, these efforts are still in their infancy and have not penetrated very far beyond headquarters structures. Donor countries

should build upon these efforts in order to reduce conflicting pressures on host governments.

44. **Make existing financing mechanisms more predictable, sustainable, and flexible:** Financing mechanisms for traditional development assistance are not well-suited to the task of peacebuilding because they are too slow and rigid for the fluid and unpredictable nature of postconflict situations. Postconflict countries continue to face critical shortfalls of international funds in the early months and years of recovery. In addition, the question of financing runs up against the difficult dilemma discussed above regarding whether to channel funds through state structures or around them. New financing mechanisms are not necessarily needed; rather, existing mechanisms should be made more predictable, sustainable, and flexible, taking into consideration the potential need for specially adapted oversight.
45. The UN and donors should explore creative ways to provide budget support in postconflict settings coupled with the necessary oversight to satisfy demands for accountability. For example, different solutions have been found in places as diverse as the West Bank and Gaza and Liberia, where donors have worked with the World Bank to craft unique methods for channeling funds to the government with their own particular methods of oversight.
46. Multidonor trust funds are one possible solution. These mechanisms have proved successful in lessening the reporting burden on the recipient government, providing more space for recipient governments to direct the funds, and fostering greater coherence among donors to the fund. However, their benefits are counterbalanced by their political and operational drawbacks. Donors lose visibility and allocation control when they channel funds through these mechanisms, which creates disincentives for contributing large sums. In some cases where these funds could really add value, they have exhibited

serious management problems. In South Sudan, for example, it took over eighteen months for a multidonor trust fund to make its first disbursement. The UN and the World Bank have agreed a *Fiduciary Principles Accord* to improve the management, delivery, and oversight of these instruments. This accord needs to be put into practice.

47. Another major challenge is the discrepancy between the levels of accountability and transparency demanded of recipient governments by donors and the lack of such demands placed on donors vis-à-vis recipient governments. This discrepancy reduces the ability of donors and recipients to build a genuine partnership. Donors should level the playing field in terms of the transparency of pledges, commitments, and disbursements, including disaggregating commitments to make clear how much money is actually reaching the local government and society.

### III. PRIORITIZE BUILDING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

48. A credible exit strategy for international actors depends on the capability of national actors to take over from the international community and drive their own recovery. However, in the interim, when such capability may be limited, a variety of governance and service-delivery tasks often have to be performed by external experts. Managing these immediate needs against the medium- to longer-term objective of nationally driven recovery requires a mix of local and international capacities.
49. **Identify and reinforce existing local capacity:** The UN, interested donors, and international NGOs could develop a system for identifying existing capacities (i.e., educated and skilled people and functional systems) in postconflict environments. Such a system for assessing national capacity could be integrated into early needs assessments and planning

exercises. On this basis, international actors should make a more sustained effort to reinforce local capacities, perhaps by making a greater commitment to hire and subcontract local people, organizations, and businesses, as well as to build on local coping mechanisms and institutions.

50. **Build a system for deploying “blue suits,” and not only “blue helmets”:** As recommended in other reports in this series, interested member states should build on existing initiatives to promote the development of surge capacity and on-call rosters of civilian experts to deploy to postconflict situations at short notice to undertake critical technical tasks (including law enforcement, public financial management, border control, and service delivery, among others). Experience suggests that civilian expertise will be most effective when international capacity is well-matched to the needs of particular situations and channeled through multilateral mechanisms, which deploy the vast majority of civilian experts. As a basis for developing these capacities, independent researchers, with the support of the UN, should undertake a study to determine what capacities are required, what already exists, and where the gaps are.
51. It is worth noting that *international* civilian experts need not come only from donor countries. South-South exchange should be encouraged through this study to draw more systematically on expertise that exists within the immediate region or in other postconflict countries. Such experts may be more likely to have the appropriate language skills, a better understanding of the cultural environment, and a more realistic sense of the constraints to implementing reconstruction and reform.
52. **Emphasize transfer not dependence:** International civilians should be recruited, tasked, and held accountable (through performance reviews) for enhancing national capacities. This means that international experts who are deployed to

postconflict countries have to be prepared, through training or orientation, to transfer as well as use their technical skills. There is a role for peacekeeping training centers and other training institutes in this regard.

53. **Clarify “capacity building”:** The concept of “capacity building” suffers from a lack of specificity and has become a catch-all term. Capacity building appears to mean different things to different people, lacking a generally accepted definition of what it really means and what it is meant to achieve. The UN system, with the support of independent researchers, should take stock of how capacity building is conducted and how it could be improved.

#### IV. REINFORCE UN INTEGRATION IN POSTCONFLICT SITUATIONS

54. The UN has made important strides in promoting integrated peacebuilding efforts. However, it still has a long way to go to clarify common objectives, divisions of labor, and common policies and procedures. The upcoming report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict offers an important opportunity to address these challenges.
55. **Enhance capacity for integrated planning:** The UN system is making considerable progress in developing tools for integrated planning in postconflict situations. However, it still does not have the requisite capacity in the field or at headquarters. With support from member states, the UN system should invest in the capacity for analysis, planning, and coordination across the entire system. A relatively small reservoir of qualified senior staff with experience of postconflict situations and deep knowledge of the different parts of the UN system would be a valuable asset to senior UN leaders in the field in articulating and operationalizing a strategic peacebuilding approach.



56. **Harmonize policies and procedures:** Strategic and timely action on the ground depends on being able to reconcile the budget cycles, financial rules, procurement procedures, and human resources policies of the various UN entities. Building on experience with the “Delivering as One” pilots, member states should encourage UN entities to implement system-wide coherence in postconflict settings.
57. **Create incentives for coherent peacebuilding action:** Member states should drive a coherent and consistent approach for each country situation through the governing bodies of the UN entities, including the Security Council and the boards of the agencies, funds, and programs. This would require coordination and consistency among the various representatives of each member state in these bodies.
58. **Strengthen the PBSO:** As a nonoperational entity, the PBSO cannot develop its added value without strong leadership, a clear strategic vision, and authority endowed from the highest level. The UN should invest in the leadership of the PBSO and strengthen its capacity in order to make it not only relevant but integral to the UN’s efforts to promote a more integrated and strategic response in postconflict countries.

## V. FURTHER ADAPT THE PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

59. The PBC has gathered momentum and demonstrated that it can help promote a convergence of views among member states on peacebuilding through sustained interaction on the subject.
60. **Keep PBC deliberations focused on forward momentum:** The PBC can only be as effective as its members wish it to be. Member states should try to keep superfluous intergovernmental politics to a minimum during the Commission’s deliberations in order to maintain a focus on the critical

needs of postconflict countries, whether in the country-specific meetings or on thematic questions that cut across cases.

61. **Reorient focus toward monitoring and mutual accountability:** In its three-year lifespan and in spite of many weaknesses, the PBC has demonstrated significant flexibility by adapting its processes to early lessons. Moving forward and in view of the upcoming review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2010, member states should consider possible modifications to the way the PBC engages with the countries on its agenda. Member states should build on the Commission's modest success as a forum that brings together a broad range of actors to mobilize political support. Member states should also learn from the challenges posed by the Commission's cumbersome processes for developing strategic frameworks with the countries on its agenda. In light of these experiences, the Commission could consider reorienting its focus toward monitoring and mutual accountability. This would enable the PBC to sustain attention on the countries on its agenda, and to keep national and international actors focused on making progress toward meeting their commitments.

## Conclusion

62. It is easy to reach agreement on the abstract objective of building the foundations for peace in a war-torn society. Agreeing on what this means and how to get there is much more challenging. Postconflict situations are tremendously complex and require balancing competing goals and interests. It is usually necessary to draw on institutional mechanisms in creative and flexible ways to respond to the multiple and contradictory demands posed by each particular context.
63. Despite progress in stabilizing countries after war, the international community continues to experience difficulties in consolidating durable peace. The ideas for action presented

here offer concrete suggestions to help ensure that decision makers have the necessary information and resources to navigate this difficult terrain and forge a coherent support strategy for countries emerging from conflict. Without these steps, the international community will continue to operate incoherently and sub-optimally in postconflict situations, ultimately letting more countries slide back into war.

## Endnotes

1. Elizabeth M. Cousens and Charles T. Call, “Ending Wars and Building Peace,” Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series (New York: International Peace Academy, March 2007).
2. Elizabeth M. Cousens and Chetan Kumar, *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001).
3. See Rex Brynen “Palestine: Building Neither Peace Nor State,” in *Building States to Build Peace*, edited by Charles T. Call with Vanessa Wyeth (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2008), pp. 217-247; Jake Sherman “Afghanistan: Nationally Led Statebuilding,” in Call and Wyeth, *Building States to Build Peace*, pp. 303-334; and Mike McGovern “Liberia: The Risks of Rebuilding a Shadow State,” in Call and Wyeth, *Building States to Build Peace*, pp. 335-361.
4. United Nations Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, UN Doc. S/PRST/2008/16, May 20, 2008.
5. Depending of the configuration of the UN’s field presence, the senior UN leader may be a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), an Executive Representative of the Secretary-General (ERSG), a Resident Coordinator (RC), or a Special Coordinator (SC).
6. These issues were also raised in an earlier report by the Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, see Fafo Institute, “Command from the Saddle: Managing United Nations Peace-building Missions,” Fafo report series no. 266 (Oslo, 1999).
7. UN General Assembly Resolution 60/180 (December 30, 2005), UN Doc. A/RES/60/180; and UN Security Council Resolution 1645 (December 10, 2005), UN Doc. S/RES/1645.
8. See Nora Bensahel, “International Perspectives on Interagency Reform: Testimony Before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations,” (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, January 2008), available at [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org).

org/pubs/testimonies/2008/RAND\_CT298.pdf ; Stewart Patrick and Kaysie Brown, *Greater than the Sum of its Parts?* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007); for information on the World Bank Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries Group, see World Bank, “Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries,” May 27, 2008, available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/STRATEGIES/EXTLICUS/0,,menuPK:511784~pagePK:64171540~piPK:64171528~theSitePK:511778,00.html>.

9. United Nations Secretary-General, *Decisions of the Secretary-General – 25 June 2008 Meeting of the Policy Committee*, UN Decision No. 2008/24, June 26, 2008.
10. For an elaboration of these obstacles, see Jenna Slotin and Vanessa Wyeth, *rapporteurs*, “Improving International Responses to Armed Conflict,” (New York: International Peace Institute, February 2009).
11. See Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “Development Co-operation Directorate,” 2009, available at [www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_35401554\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html).
12. The study cites statistics from the UN Department of Field Support. See Rahul Chandran, Jake Sherman, and Bruce Jones, “Rapid Deployment of Civilians for Peace Operations: Status, Gaps, and Options,” (New York: NYU Center on International Cooperation [CIC], April 2009).
13. Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart; *Fixing Failed States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); James K. Boyce and Madalene O’Donnell, eds., *Peace and the Public Purse: Economic Policies for Postwar Statebuilding* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2007); Clare Lockhart and Michael Carnahan, “Peacebuilding and Public Finance,” in Call and Wyeth, *Building States to Build Peace*, pp. 73-102.
14. Sarah Cliffe and Nick Manning, “Practical Approaches to Building State Institutions,” in Call and Wyeth, *Building States to Build Peace*, pp. 163-184.
15. Robert Perito, Michael Dziedzic, Beth DeGrasse, “Building Civilian Capacity for US Stability Operations: The Rule of Law

Component,” USIP Special Report No. 118, (Washington, DC: USIP, April 2004); Rahul Chandran, Bruce Jones, and Natasha Smith, with Yoshino Funaki and Gigja Sorensen, “Recovering from War: Gaps in Early Action,” (New York: NYU Center on International Cooperation [CIC], July 2008).

16. This conclusion is based on research conducted for CIC and IPI, “Taking Stock, Looking Forward: A Strategic Review of the UN Peacebuilding Commission,” (New York: CIC, 2008) based on interviews with representatives of all thirty-one members of the PBC as well as other interested states, and UN and civil society representatives in New York, Burundi, and Sierra Leone. This conclusion also reflects views expressed in the Task Forces.

## Further Reading

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## Annex 1: Background Non-paper

JUNE 6, 2008

Peacebuilding, a fairly recent addition to the international agenda, is characterized by an extraordinary degree of *complexity*: by multiple goals that often exist in tension, by multiple external actors, by multiple and conflictive national actors, and by confused and contested understandings of concepts and priorities.

In contrast to most other security challenges, peacebuilding recently experienced institutional innovations in the UN system—the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)—precisely to address some of the main shortcomings identified by experts, especially the High-Level Panel in 2004.

However, these new institutions address only a small part of the global challenge for postconflict societies. The international financial institutions (IFIs), bilateral donors, other UN departments and agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are and will continue to be responsible for most international engagement in postconflict peacebuilding. A full analysis of peacebuilding challenges thus requires addressing not only this new UN architecture, but the full global peacebuilding architecture.

Many donor countries (viz., through harmonizing their defense, diplomacy, and development bureaucracies), some regional bodies, and the World Bank have also reorganized themselves to better address peacebuilding challenges. Nevertheless, the UN will probably remain the single most prominent global actor in peacebuilding due to the linkages to peacekeeping operations, to the universal membership of the United Nations, and to the UN's experience of these matters. This non-paper draws heavily on Charles T. Call and Elizabeth M. Cousens' working paper for IPI's *Coping with Crisis* program, "Ending Wars and Building Peace."<sup>1</sup>

## 1. What are the current policy and institutional shortcomings in multilateral capacity for peacebuilding?

- Inadequate international will, attention, and resources, especially in the near and medium term. Related to this problem is the tendency of new innovations or institutions (e.g., the PBF or civilian rosters) to merely rechannel existing resources or commitments, rather than enlarge them.
- A lack of deployable and appropriate civilian capacities, and their interface with military actors.
  - ◆ The international community needs to reflect further on exactly how international civilians can best support peacebuilding processes and, specifically, institution-building (it may not be through hundreds of civilian judges). However, peacebuilding operations clearly require more international civilians with specialized expertise, who can operate in foreign contexts and understand and adapt local practices, and who exhibit an ability to foster the development of local capacities. The numbers depend on country and sector, and we need better estimates of those needs.
- Gaps in contextual knowledge of postconflict societies and in how to deploy that knowledge and the capacity for continually reassessing the context in international operations.
- Inadequate mechanisms for mobilizing participation of local peoples in international endeavors.
- Multiple and overlapping terms and concepts used in this area, with different connotations. We see this most recently in discussions of the Gordon Brown initiative on early recovery and peacebuilding, but also in different nations' and agencies' approaches. This conceptual confusion is important because the machinery to address postconflict societies is different, but overlaps with, the machinery set to address weak or fragile states, humanitarian crises, and development challenges more broadly. These difficulties aggravate persistent problems in measuring success—of peacebuilding, statebuilding, and economic recovery.

## 2. Why have previous attempts to address these shortcomings failed?

- Each member state (of the UN system and of regional and other multilateral fora) has its own interests and priorities that will understandably present obstacles to achieving better coherence and strategic coordination.
- The PBC has been the site of contestation between groups of member states and between the UN's principal organs, stringing out and complicating the PBC's progress. Yet the PBC has also served as a forum for member states to work alongside one another, to achieve common understandings, and to directly engage postconflict states and civil society—one of the only fora for such engagement.
- The IFIs and UN funds, programs, and agencies have their own governance structures that are independent of one another and of the Secretariat, generally answering to a particular configuration of member states.
- The resource gap lies in the immediate short term *and* the middle term before long-term sustainable development projects can begin to have an impact. Besides the need to mobilize money more quickly for immediate needs, the mindset, staff, and procedures of development agencies have not been transformed to fill this resource gap more nimbly.
- International actors persistently exhibit practices that do not adequately bring local peoples and national leaders into strategies, processes, and evaluation, and that undermine, rather than enhance, existing capacities within a postconflict society. The lack of national consensus within countries emerging from conflict permits, even invites, each international actor to put forth its own interpretation of local needs and priorities and to act with local partners who lay claim to genuine, though partial, ownership. This reinforces the need for coherence among international actors.
- Lack of a nuanced understanding of the political dynamics of the postconflict society, the actors, their interests, and existing practices that govern behavior. This lacuna facilitates support for inappropriate institutional models, harmful sequencing, and ineptitude in balancing the multiple and competing tasks of

peacebuilding.

### 3. What policies and institutional renovations, including legal frameworks and financial arrangements, are needed?

- Despite the caveats above, progress has been made and further progress is possible in developing the role of the PBC and the PBSO. Strengthening, rather than abandoning, these institutions seems the prudent course at present.
- UN funds, programs, and agencies have their own systems and rules for hiring personnel, for issuing contracts, for budgeting resources and accounting for performance. Greater harmonization of these systems and rules is feasible within existing governance structures, mainly through creating positive incentives to reward integration of efforts and coherence across UN entities (e.g., harmonizing evaluation systems; explicit budgetary allocations for coordination; and cross-agency, cross-functional career patterns rather than stovepiped careers).
- Embarking on a campaign to modify these UN fund/agency governance structures is also an option, though a more challenging one.
- International institutions have already developed innovations to address a number of related but slightly different objectives with slightly different timelines. These include the UN peacebuilding architecture, bilateral joined-up responses, peacebuilding development and humanitarian reform (including early recovery), and endorsement of principles of aid effectiveness in fragile states. All hold promise. However, adding new institutional mechanisms is not necessarily needed. Rather, empowering local actors and senior international officials, especially in the field, to set priorities and harmonize these different objectives and bureaucratic mechanisms and even different organizational cultures and systems remains paramount.
- Enhancing the role of local peoples in peacebuilding remains a challenge. Rather than imposing greater burdens of reporting and of developing plans and strategies on such governments, external actors should reinforce national abilities to enhance local voices in developing these documents. One mechanism for popular access would be standards for transparency in

national government budgeting, especially in transitional administrations supported by international actors.

- Greater openness and specific entry points to foster synergies between national states and creative ad hoc authority structures that might include some combination of local or regional business associations, youth groups, women's organizations, as well as traditional authorities, international capacity-providers, and regional organizations.
- Enhancing the training and orientation of SRSGs and other leaders of international postconflict operations. The need here is principally to understand the complexity and interrelated nature of the peacebuilding endeavor, and the need to balance multiple goals with multiple external and internal actors—much more than the preparation generally afforded by a career in traditional diplomacy, development, or defense.
- As to the multiple institutions set up to address the diverse but related challenges of peacebuilding, economic recovery and development, humanitarian aid, and fragile states, more work needs to be done to understand and acknowledge (1) when and how these overlapping and diverse mechanisms can be mutually reinforcing; (2) when they may undermine one another; and (3) the role of bureaucratic interests (i.e., turf) in shaping their meaning.

#### **4. What strategy is needed to achieve these renovations?**

- Work with donor-country finance ministers and the executive directors of IFIs to build shared understandings of the urgency and nature of peacebuilding (and other transnational and peace-related) challenges.
- Highlight the disparity between global resources for military versus civilian institutions in addressing complex security challenges like peacebuilding.
- Within donor countries, greater movement toward and understanding of the “3D” framework for organizing efforts to assist weak and postconflict states, especially in planning, financing, and organizing field operations.
- Examine how to improve civilian capacities, including standby arrangements and rosters, and especially for experts with

relevant country-specific knowledge and senior issue-specific experience, emphasizing South-South exchange.

- ◆ Such improvement requires tailored matching of needs and resources, including careful delineation of which civilians are needed (by sector, whether international) and how they will work to enhance national capacities.
- ◆ International civilians should be recruited, tasked, and held accountable for enhancing national capacities, rather than for tasks that may themselves substitute for national capacities.
- ◆ Although duplication of civilian capacities is not as much a danger as insufficient capacity, the UN system, regional organizations, and donor countries should work in close coordination, perhaps sharing rosters, so as to reduce duplication of systems for identifying and deploying civilians.
- Foster discussion on greater integration and coherence within the UN system. Part of this is to move toward providing greater support for senior leaders of postconflict countries and for senior UN leaders in the field (as highlighted by the UK early-recovery initiative), and in integrating and marshaling and deploying resources.
- Consider steps to further enhance the cohesion and capacity of the UN system, including the creation of a High Commissioner for Peacebuilding (and/or Recovery), an idea being studied by NYU's Center on International Cooperation (CIC).
- Urge member states to revisit the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, aligning them with more modest, strategic functions of
  - ◆ generating considered support for countries on the PBC agenda;
  - ◆ providing broad guidance for international engagement with these countries;
  - ◆ bolstering support for peacebuilding in general; and
  - ◆ identifying and propagating peacebuilding principles rather than operational guidelines, uniform or best practices, or lessons learned.
- Urge member states to conceive of the PBC's role in resource

mobilization as going well beyond the PBF, and seeking mechanisms to speed disbursement of such funds, including the PBF.

- Urge clearer communications from the Secretariat and the PBC to member states and civil society about the specific purposes, limited capacity, and procedures of the PBF.
- Strengthen the PBSO in its two separate functions.
  - ◆ In its support for the PBC, the PBSO needs to provide sounder counsel and guidance that more selectively and strategically supports and draws upon Permanent Representatives and their staffs.
  - ◆ In its role in the Secretariat, the PBSO should seek to be of greater utility to the Secretariat and its departments, including for countries in all stages of peacekeeping operations and political missions.
  - ◆ As a new office, the PBSO should continue to invest time and effort in building strong bridges with other Secretariat departments and agencies, funds, and programs to ensure that it can bring the full resources of the UN system to bear on the PBC's work.

#### **Charles T. Call with IPI**

Note:

1. Charles T. Call and Elizabeth M. Cousens, "Ending Wars and Building Peace," *Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series* (New York: International Peace Academy, March 2007).





## Annex 2: Reflections from the Opening Plenary Meeting

JUNE 20, 2008

### 1. What are the current policy and institutional shortcomings in peacebuilding?

- There is growing recognition that peacebuilding requires revolutionary changes and is fundamentally an internal process, which takes much longer than current planning and attention spans allow. Yet, the international community continues to grapple with how to support and enable these internal processes without suffocating them.
- Political commitments, resources, programming, and other mechanisms of engagement have not shifted to reflect the longer time horizons required for effective peacebuilding.
- The policy community lacks conceptual clarity about peacebuilding. Within the UN system, this confusion both furthers, and is fueled by, interagency turf battles, undermining coordination and coherence.
- The UN requires more resources and analytical capacity to closely read political dynamics on the ground resulting in insufficient attention to local context and processes.
  - ◆ The lack of nuanced contextual analysis is often coupled with a tendency to replicate “best practices” from elsewhere without sufficient attention to political dynamics.
  - ◆ A technocratic approach to institution building crowds out attention to the demands of reconciliation, especially with regard to transitional and newly elected government appointments and the budget allocation process.
- It is still too early to judge the PBC. It is not clear whether its current approach to its work can support an increasingly ambitious agenda in the number and complexity of new cases it will take on in the short to medium term.
- The emphasis placed on local ownership in the PBC has been very positive. However, this has created the sense of the PBC

rubber-stamping strategies rather than providing substantive input.

- International actors still lack adequate mechanisms for bringing local actors into peacebuilding processes.
- A lack of deployable and appropriate civilian capacity continues to hamper effective peacebuilding efforts. The general need to mobilize cadres of civilians for peacebuilding activities has received some attention but further reflection is required on what types of capacity are required, how to manage such capacity for rapid deployment and how to match capacity to specific needs.
- Capacity building is an essential part of peacebuilding, but there is a tendency, especially in the UN, to focus on building capacity to plan and develop strategies, rather than focusing on the capacity needed to implement these strategies.

## **2. What have previous attempts to address these shortcomings accomplished? Why have some failed?**

- Early achievements of the UN's new peacebuilding architecture (PBC, PBSO, PBF) should not be underestimated.
  - ◆ The PBC is not a peacebuilding actor per se. It brings together all actors who are involved in peacebuilding to develop a consensus with the postconflict society on strategy.
  - ◆ The PBC has contributed to sustained dialogue between all stakeholders across the security, political, and development dimensions of peacebuilding and made this dialogue more inclusive by opening it up beyond the major donors to the country.
  - ◆ The host government has been brought into coordination in a more systematic way.
  - ◆ The PBC has provided important and useful information and advice to the Security Council regarding the countries on its agenda.
  - ◆ The PBC has marshaled some additional resources for the countries on its agenda.
- Important steps have been taken by the UN system to bridge

the gap between relief and development, by the IFIs to adapt their tools and mechanisms to the unique needs of postconflict countries, and by several donor governments via the “3D” approach.

- Despite these steps and the ongoing efforts of the PBC to mobilize resources and sustain international attention, donors have still not undertaken sufficient policy reforms to allow for more responsive financing mechanisms and sustained support in peacebuilding contexts.
  - Authority and mandates for coordination are often lacking.
    - ◆ Senior UN leaders in the field (SRSGs, DSRSGs, RCs/HCs) still do not have the necessary authority and leverage to coordinate the many bilateral and multilateral actors on the ground.
    - ◆ UN funds, agencies, and programs are not explicitly bound to implement Security Council mandates, even when these mandates contain substantial peacebuilding components.
  - Conceptual confusion about peacebuilding fosters ever-expanding mandates, duplication, and disagreement over priorities.
    - ◆ The dispersal of expertise across the Secretariat, agencies, funds, and programs contributes to a lack of clarity about roles, responsibility, and division of labor.
    - ◆ A lack of coherence among donors creates monetary incentives for the funds, agencies, and programs that militate against efforts to improve coherence in peacebuilding.
  - Many member states are watching and judging the PBC as if it is disconnected from them rather making the necessary investment for it to fulfill its mandate.
- 3. What policies and institutional renovations, including legal frameworks and financial arrangements, are needed?**
- A real and sustained commitment to peacebuilding requires policy change in partner governments, the donor community, and the UN system to better address the intersection of security and development.

- ◆ Peacebuilding requires more risk-taking than “normal” development;
- ◆ Funding mechanisms must be made more flexible and responsive, including by exploring further opportunities for pooled funding and ways to deliver budget support, even in difficult environments.
- Peacebuilding has to be mainstreamed and upstreamed in the UN’s overall engagement. Peacebuilding should be incorporated during the mediation phase, rather than treating it only as the bridge between security and development.
- A new look at peacebuilding by the Secretary-General, perhaps via a Blue-Ribbon Panel could help to foster a dialogue on the evolving understanding of peacebuilding and its operational implications.
- Rather than creating new entities, the UN system should invest in building strong peacebuilding expertise.
- More focused authority to coordinate peacebuilding activities is needed.
  - ◆ At headquarters, the PBSO has not been able to serve as the focal point envisioned. Creating more peers will not suffice—a person who sits atop the many UN entities and is empowered to coordinate peacebuilding activities is required.
  - ◆ In the field, the necessary authority, resources, and capacity must be delegated to the SRSG to reinforce his or her role in coordinating all international efforts in peacebuilding.
  - ◆ The Secretary-General, via his senior field representative, would benefit from explicit mandates to coordinate the UN system in each field operation.
- The PBSO has a critical role to play in supporting the PBC’s activities and in building, consolidating, and streamlining peacebuilding expertise within the UN system.
  - ◆ Assess early experience and build on approaches that have been effective in supporting the PBC.
  - ◆ Assess how the PBSO can be of more utility to the system.
- The UN system could, with the support of member states,

initiate a process of internal changes, such as harmonizing terms of contracts, personnel recruitment, and budget procedures and enhancing flexibility by instituting family-friendly conditions of employment in the field. It could also explicitly allocate substantial resources for coordination and build harmonized provisions into UN staff contracts encouraging cross-disciplinary experience and cross-agency activity. These would not require Charter reform but would require broad agreement among member states.

- The PBC may need to consider adopting a tiered agenda in response to its increasingly ambitious tasks. Like the Security Council, the PBC could vary its approach from light to moderate to intensive depending on the case. A light approach might entail a “watching brief.” A moderate approach may involve exploring preliminary engagement with upcoming countries or monitoring the implementation of strategies already developed. An intensive approach would be similar to that undertaken in the PBC’s first cases, which have focused on regular dialogue and strategy development.
- It would be useful to assess existing reserves of civilian capacity and new initiatives to create such reserves with a focus on whether they are suited to existing needs as well as how they are managed and deployed.
- The UN system could take stock of how capacity building is conducted.
  - ◆ Is existing local capacity identified and reinforced?
  - ◆ Do capacity building efforts further the recipient society’s ability to implement the necessary reforms for consolidating and sustaining peace?
  - ◆ Is mentorship effectively built into programs?

#### **4. What strategy is needed to achieve these renovations?**

- Member states should raise awareness in their capitals, including in finance ministries and with executive directors of IFIs, around peacebuilding challenges.
  - ◆ Highlight areas where policy change is required, especially as regards slow and inflexible funding mechanisms and the need

for sustained donor commitment.

- ◆ Emphasize the importance of nuanced attention to political context, with a particular emphasis on reconciliation.
- ◆ The PBC should continue its efforts to highlight the specific priorities of the countries on its agenda.
- The current reality in which global military resources dwarf global civilian resources for this work needs to be altered.
- The arrival of a new Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Peacebuilding Support offers an opportunity to address some of the UN system's shortcomings in peacebuilding.
  - ◆ PBSO could be reconfigured based on lessons learned from its first two years of work.
  - ◆ The authority vested in the ASG to coordinate the UN system's peacebuilding efforts could be revisited.
  - ◆ Early but insufficient efforts to establish strong links between PBSO and other parts of the UN system could be reinvigorated.
- Member states should consider how to improve coordination and coherence in the field.
  - ◆ The authority of the SRSG to coordinate the UN family and international efforts more broadly could be specified in Security Council mandates.
  - ◆ Language specifying the role of the funds, agencies, and programs in implementing Security Council mandates could also be included. Such language may help entities on the ground overcome divergent policies and procedures that are imposed from headquarters.
- The PBC's working methods can and should be improved on an ongoing basis in response to the demands of the body's country-specific work. Member states should continue to consider ways for the PBC to be flexible, for example, by adopting a tiered agenda.

## Annex 3: Methodology and Timeline

Four questions guided the Task Forces in helping IPI to generate policy and institutional ideas for action:

1. What are the current policy and institutional shortcomings in multilateral security capacity on these issues?
2. Why have previous attempts to address these shortcomings failed?
3. What policies and institutional renovations, including legal frameworks and financial arrangements, are needed?
4. What strategy is needed to achieve these renovations?

The Opening Symposium on Development, Resources, and Environment served as an essential backdrop to the Task Forces. By examining these critical related issues, the symposium provided a larger geopolitical and economic context for the work of the subsequent Task Forces on security challenges. The two Task Forces, convened sequentially, addressed two thematic clusters of issues, each of which were broken down into smaller roundtables, as follows:

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### Task Force One

#### Transnational Security Challenges

1. Transnational Organized Crime
2. Weapons of Mass Destruction
3. Global Terrorism
4. Small Arms and Light Weapons
5. Biosecurity

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### Task Force Two

#### Inter- and Intra-state Armed Conflict

6. Peace Operations
7. Mediation and Peace Processes
8. Peacebuilding
9. Conflict Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

Each Task Force consisted of members drawn from UN member states, academia, and policy-research institutions. The composition of each group ensured a broad range of perspectives regarding multilateral security capacity on the issues in question. Through this intensive work process, the Task Forces constituted core groups of stakeholders with an interest in developing practical strategies for addressing the institutional and policy shortcomings in these areas.

Task Force members met in opening and closing plenary sessions, as indicated below. Experts, in collaboration with IPI, prepared a series of non-papers, serving as a basis for discussion. Smaller groups gathered between the plenary sessions in roundtables, along with invited guest experts, for more in-depth, topic-specific discussions. Following each roundtable IPI produced a summary reflecting the group's discussions that served as a guide for the closing plenary session. Likewise, IPI drew on the Task Force deliberations to produce the final reports, detailing practical and achievable steps for strengthening multilateral action in the area in question. As noted, the content of these reports is the responsibility of IPI, and does not necessarily represent the positions or opinions of individual Task Force participants.

## TIMELINE

### **Opening Symposium “Development, Resources, and Environment: Defining Challenges for the Security Agenda”**

February 7-8, 2008 [Greentree Estate, Long Island]

### **Task Force One: Transnational Security Challenges**

#### **Opening Plenary Meeting**

April 2-4, 2008 [Greentree Estate, Long Island]

1. Roundtable on **Transnational Organized Crime**  
April 10-11, 2008 [Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, New York]
2. Roundtable on **Weapons of Mass Destruction**  
April 24-25, 2008 [IPI, New York]



3. Roundtable on **Global Terrorism**

May 1-2, 2008 [IPI, New York]

4. Roundtable on **Small Arms and Light Weapons**

May 8-9, 2008 [Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, New York]

5. Roundtable on **Biosecurity**

May 21-22, 2008 [IPI, New York]

**Closing Plenary Meeting**

May 28-30, 2008 [Greentree Estate, Long Island]

**Task Force Two: Inter- and Intra-state Armed Conflict**

**Opening Plenary Meeting**

June 11-12, 2008 [Greentree Estate, Long Island]

6. Roundtable on **Peace Operations**

June 16-17, 2008 [IPI, New York]

7. Roundtable on **Mediation and Peace Processes**

June 30-July 1, 2008 [IPI, New York]

8. Roundtable on **Peacebuilding**

July 2-3, 2008 [IPI, New York]

9. Roundtable on **Conflict Prevention and the  
Responsibility to Protect**

July 8-9, 2008 [IPI, New York]

**Closing Plenary Meeting**

October 15-16, 2008 [Greentree Estate, Long Island]

## Annex 4: Task Force Participants

### Co-Chairs

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H.E. Mr. Abdullah M. Alsaïdi, *Permanent Representative of the Republic of Yemen to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Dumisani Shadrack Kumalo, *Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Claude Heller, *Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Peter Maurer, *Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. John McNee, *Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon, *Permanent Representative of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Heraldo Muñoz, *Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations*

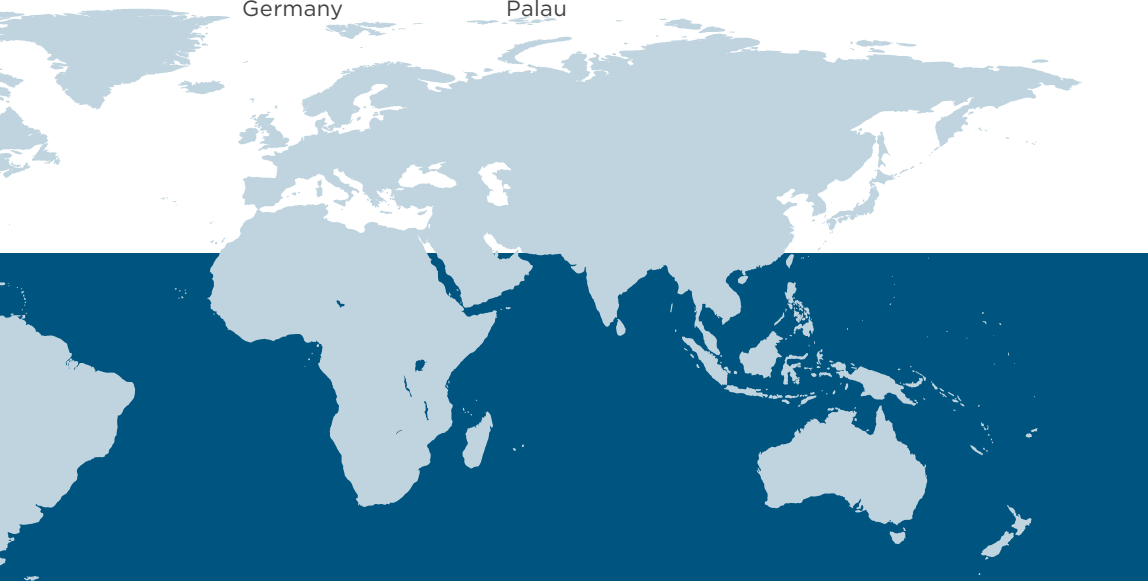
H.E. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa, *Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations*

H.E. Mr. Christian Wenaweser, *Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the United Nations*

## Permanent Missions and Delegations to the United Nations

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African Union	Ghana	Portugal
Algeria	Greece	Qatar
Argentina	India	Republic of Korea
Australia	Indonesia	Romania
Austria	Ireland	Russian Federation
Bangladesh	Israel	Singapore
Brazil	Japan	Slovak Republic
Canada	Liechtenstein	South Africa
Chile	Lithuania	Spain
China	Luxembourg	Sweden
Colombia	Malaysia	Switzerland
Costa Rica	Mexico	Tanzania
Cuba	Morocco	Turkey
Czech Republic	Mozambique	Uganda
Denmark	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Egypt	New Zealand	United States of America
Ethiopia	Niger	Uruguay
European Union	Nigeria	Viet Nam
Finland	Norway	Yemen
France	Pakistan	
Germany	Palau	



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