

STATEMENT BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY ISMAEL ABRAÃO GASPAR MARTINS,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the General Assembly,

H.E. Anne Stenhammer State Secretary, Deputy Minister for International Development,  
Norway,

Distinguished Secretary General of the United Nations,

Distinguished Members of the Peace Building Commission,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentleman,

Three months after the inaugural meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission, we have gathered today to launch an important instrument in the discharge of our mandate.

The momentum generated by the 2005 world summit in the area of Peacebuilding led to the swift establishment of this commission, the establishment of the fund and today its launching. This constitutes a rather positive response to the needs and aspirations of the peoples from countries emerging from conflict.

I would particularly like to pay tribute to you , Secretary General, for your vision and personal commitment for the establishment of the Fund as requested by the Head of States and reaffirmed by the member States in the relevant resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission.

Our work in the Peacebuilding Commission will provide the sustained engagement in a given post-conflict situation and it is the Peacebuilding Fund which will serve as a flexible tool to support Peacebuilding challenges identified in the concerned countries.

Coming from a post conflict country myself, it is particularly pleasing to see this fund become a reality, as we know all too well the difference that it can make in the establishment of durable peace. The launch of the Fund is very timely indeed. The Peacebuilding Commission will hold its first country specific meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone tomorrow and on Friday, respectively. In these meetings, I hope, we will declare Burundi and Sierra Leone to be eligible recipients for assistance under the Peacebuilding Fund.

The terms of reference for the fund, contained in the Annex of document A/60/984, specify that it shall be used as a catalyst for the mobilization of more sustained support mechanisms. Its scope and decision making structures provide for national governments participation allowing and reaffirming the coordinating role of the government. This coordination will also assist in preventing wasteful repetition and duplication.

I believe I speak for the entire membership in expressing gratitude to many member states that have made contributions and pledges to the Fund. Special word of thanks to Norway, our largest contributor. I hope that the disbursement mechanisms at country level will now be put into place expeditiously to ensure that the Fund can start delivering tangible peace dividends.

One of the lessons learned from the experience of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Groups of Countries emerging from conflict is the need to have appropriate mechanism to mobilize donors and promote the translation of pledges into disbursements. Avoiding discrepancies between donor pledges and actual disbursements will not only contribute to the credibility of the Peacebuilding Commission, but will also make a difference for the attainment of its objectives.

Let's agree that the PBF is an initial investment that, if used strategically and wisely, will make a meaningful contribution in the establishment of peace in concerned countries. I take this opportunity to call on the Peacebuilding Support Office and the UNDP to ensure that this investment is used strategically and in such a way as to attract further funding from both multilateral and bilateral donors.

Finally, echoing the Secretary-General's appeal, I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to member states and the international community in general to continue to make regular voluntary contributions to the fund, to ensure its long term viability.

I thank you.