



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

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Statement by

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of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations**

On the occasion of

Kenya's election as Chair of the

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

During Its 10th Session

3rd February, 2016

Check against delivery

Amb. Olof Skoog, Outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

Amb. Oh Joon, incoming PBC Vice-Chair and Chair of the PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned

Distinguished Ambassadors and Delegates of the Organizational Committee

Distinguished Ambassadors and Delegates representing Countries on the Agenda of PBC

Chairs of the PBC Country Configurations

Mr Oscar Fernandez Taranco, the Assistant Secretary General for Peacebuilding Support

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to thank Members of the Organizational Committee for electing Kenya to lead the PBC at a crucial time. It is now 10 years since the PBC was formed so that the UN system could better meet the challenge of helping countries successfully complete the transition from war to peace. Peace is listed as the main purpose of the UN Charter and is an important prerequisite for sustainable development and prosperity. Therefore, building peace ought to be more than a duty for each one of us here today.

I wish to congratulate Amb Skoog, for the important work done by Sweden in 2015. Under his leadership and commitment, the PBC started to adopt more flexible working methods in line with ongoing Peacebuilding Review which has led to constructive discussions such as those on Papua New Guinea, Burkina Faso, Somalia and on West Africa where PBC adopted a regional approach following the Ebola outbreak.

Looking ahead, I believe that 2016 will be an important year for the PBC as the review of the Peacebuilding architecture will be concluded soon. This will afford the Commission an opportunity to consolidate its *raison d'être* in an increasingly interdependent world characterized by unique and evolving challenges such as terrorism, violent extremism, migration and refugees, climate change and pestilences such as ebola and now zika fever that must be tackled collectively.

Excellences and colleagues,

There are some very important issues identified by the PBC in the Forward Agenda of the Annual Report that will form part of the core work of our business this year. There are other priorities for our work in 2016 which I have identified in my *Letter of Intent* that I sent out over a week ago and that I hope you have had a chance to read and that I hope will guide us in the deepening of the work of the Commission.

In that letter I first mentioned that there will be an urgent need to study and take forward the outcomes of the three Reviews on Peace Operations that will be concluded during the course of 2016. We need to operationalize the outcome of the review of Peacebuilding Architecture, including reviewing the PBC working methods and rules of procedure to deepen its impact.

Second, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents important opportunities for the work of the PBC. The links between the 2030 Agenda and PBC will have to be operationalized particularly the targets in Sustainable Goal 16 that speak of peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice and the building of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. We will not however lose sight of the fact that peace is not abstract isolated activity but an integral component of political, social, economic and environmental actions.

As mentioned in the reports and reviews, the need for a better working relationship with the three principal organs of the UN; the General Assembly, the Security Council and Economic and Social Council, requires that the PBC strengthens its bridging role through coordinated and sustained engagement with the three organs in order to enhance collective impact of peacebuilding in the world. We shall remain focused on that also.

Similarly, the PBC should improve on its capability to mobilize resources. This has become something of a tired mantra that we need to find a lasting solution for. We will vigorously seek funding for its work and prioritize relations with International Financial Institutions, in particular the World Bank and the African Development Bank for proactive and preventative interventions. A more predictable and sustainable financing for peacebuilding is required. I call upon member states to step up their contributions to the Peace Building Fund. But in doing so I believe we at the commission must also recognize that it is success in what we do that will

attract more resources and the positive impact of our work that will draw more support.

As you all know, peacebuilding is a comprehensive endeavor which includes prevention of conflict. The PBC will reach out to the Secretary General and the key UN Organizations and Agencies that are working on conflict prevention and governance to help marshal resources and build partnerships for peacebuilding action. It will seek to identify opportunities in existing peacekeeping and Special Political Missions mandates where peacebuilding and related governance and human rights initiatives can be integrated and enhanced to lower the threat of conflict.

To be more effective, the PBC has to strengthen its country-specific work, including going beyond the current configurations. Importantly, this will require that the PBC work closely with regional organizations such as the African Union (and its Peace and Security Council) and the Arab League among other regional organizations in the world to identify, systematize and prioritize areas of peacebuilding work. There are clearly at least another dozen or two situations that are crying out for our engagement. We need to find the political and financial will to respond.

Finally, the PBC has to continue working with civil society organizations and other non-state actors as appropriate particularly in promotion of inclusive societies, governance and securing human rights in the context of promoting peace and resolving conflicts.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen

The PBC will enhance its impact only if it promotes the further understanding of its work not only through performance of its mandate but also through an enhanced communication strategy. As an intergovernmental agency, it needs to effectively communicate its peacebuilding initiatives to its various publics; its donors, its partners within and outside the UN and in countries and local communities on its agenda so as to promote co-ownership and goodwill.

As you know, the Commission convened an important meeting on 18 January, 2016 where in adopting a regional approach, it discussed the trends and challenges to peacebuilding in West Africa. The meeting identified a number of challenges the Commission should address in the course of the

first half of 2016. With the support of Member States, I intend to convene three discussions to elaborate policy recommendations in response to; 1. the sub-regional dimension of peacebuilding; 2. the economic recovery from the Ebola outbreak; and 3. Youth, peace and security.

In order to build on the outcome of those three meetings, I intend to visit the region and take those policy discussions to the country level. I intend to bring together relevant stakeholders from the region and help mobilize political support and resources.

At a broader level, I intend to convene similar discussions on other topics relevant to peacebuilding, such as the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, gender and institution building. Further to the discussions on West Africa I envisage those discussions to be replicated into the work we do in other regions, both at regional and at country level. This is an ambitious objective and to achieve it we need to be able to count on the collective work of the PBC's membership.

I also wish to reiterate the Commission's gratitude for the support and advice provided by ASG Taranco and the PBSO in PBC's work and activities in fulfilment of its ~~mandate~~.

Let me conclude by stating the following: the thought leadership on peace and peace action has to come from this Commission, by which I mean the member states of the commission. There is simply no other organ and/or entity in the United Nations system where this can happen and be concretized. In this commission we have to think and act beyond the mechanics and administrative challenges of managing our commissions, important as that is, to thinking through the huge political and societal challenges and urgency of peace and peaceful societies that is the true reason for why this commission was created in the first place.

There are literally 10 of millions of people, mostly women and children, who are willing us to succeed because they desperately need us to succeed. For there's and all of our sakes we must not fail.

I therefore encourage all delegations to actively engage in order to move forward the peacebuilding agenda.

Thank you