



Peacebuilding Commission

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Chairperson: Mr. Majoor (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

High-level stakeholders consultation (*continued*)

(d) Plenary session on justice-sector and security-sector reform

1. **Ms. Pierce** (United Kingdom), speaking as Facilitator, said that, since the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, a number of initiatives had been developed to rebuild and reform the justice and security institutions. The Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of her own Government and other partners, had developed a five-year Justice Sector Development Programme. Recently, the President of Sierra Leone had launched the Justice Sector Reform Investment Plan 2008-2010, which had four goals: safe communities, access to justice, strengthening the rule of law and improving service delivery in the justice sector.

2. Those impressive developments were in line with the commitments made in the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, but additional efforts were needed to implement fully the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, provide adequate support to the National Human Rights Commission and support the constitutional review process. It was her hope that the discussion taking place would result in concrete ideas for partnerships to meet the commitments contained in the Framework.

3. **Mr. White** (United Kingdom) noted that the security sector in particular, along with the justice sector, deserved significant credit for the relatively swift and smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The Sierra Leonean police had been able to assume primacy for internal security within three years of the end of the conflict; the withdrawal of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) had passed without incident; and both sectors had played a role in facilitating the free and fair elections in 2007. While the situation was not perfect, the security and justice institutions had created a safe and enabling environment in which poverty reduction and economic and social development could successfully occur.

4. In many ways, the relative success of the security and justice sectors meant that both the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community supporting its efforts were facing the very dilemmas that the Peacebuilding Commission had been designed

to address. They were torn between consolidating progress made in those sectors, thus maintaining the enabling environment, or reducing support in order to implement broader policy objectives and deliver a peace dividend.

5. He believed, however, that there was a third way that did not require a choice between consolidation and integration. In post-conflict environments, there was clear interdependence between security and development and greater effort was required to integrate them. The Peacebuilding Commission had a significant role to play in debating and understanding the challenges and trade-offs necessary to build peace. The policy framework had already been established, given that Sierra Leone had explicitly recognized the relationship between security and justice sector reform and poverty reduction in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

6. Next, the security sector must consider ways in which it could contribute to the delivery of Government policy priorities. Such an approach would lead to the integration of security sector components into other sectoral interventions. The role of the security sector in facilitating economic growth, increasing revenue generation or supporting anti-corruption initiatives would be considered, rather than approaching the challenges from an institutional or sectoral perspective. Both the security and justice sectors had established frameworks for support developed by national institutions; given the critical importance of national ownership, funding for related activities should be embedded within those existing frameworks.

7. The Security Sector Review conducted in 2005 had identified the Intelligence Services, which had played a crucial role during the 2007 elections, as a democratically accountable service working in the interests of the State and the citizens, which could support the Anti-Corruption Commission and regional efforts to combat drug trafficking, for example. The Joint Maritime Authority could also support the Ministry of Marine Resources in preventing the pillaging of the coastline through a fisheries protection and management programme. The security sector as a whole could play a significant role in border management and security, reducing the significant loss of revenue through diamond and gold smuggling. Those activities should be led by another Government department, with the security sector playing a

supporting role, in order to prevent the “securitisation of development”. Ironically, those were the types of activities that would be necessary for the next stage of right-sizing the security sector. It would be unwise for any Government to reduce significantly the size of its armed and security forces unless there was a thriving economy to absorb them: security needed development just as much as development needed security. Parliamentary oversight of the security sector and civil society engagement in community security would be important in the next phase.

8. The security sector, in particular the Office of National Security, was the Government’s greatest asset, and had the potential to be an extremely effective policy tool within the broader public service delivery agenda. Security and development activity must be integrated if the country was to continue to progress.

9. **Ms. Cravero** (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that dysfunctional institutions were an obstacle to the development of Sierra Leone: in fact, the weakness and eventual collapse of public institutions had led to the ten years of war in that country. Although there had been many interventions in the security sector, the judiciary had not received the same attention.

10. Since 2007, the Government and its partners had been working on a long-term plan for judicial reform through the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), designed to strengthen operational capacity. UNDP and the country team had received catalytic funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. The plan had established 10 temporary courts, 5 magistrates’ courts and 5 high courts to hear the backlog of cases, along with training for justices of the peace, bailiffs and clerks. Office equipment and other logistical support had been provided, enabling typewritten rather than handwritten copies of judgements to be issued. The plan had a significant legal aid component, especially for those accused of serious crimes.

11. Chief among the challenges to the Government was the recruitment and retention of magistrates, as salaries and conditions of service were not very attractive. State attorneys were scarce, and police officers were therefore often asked to fill the role of State prosecutor, for which they had no training. Women continued to suffer gender-based violence in a general climate of impunity. Law and order and the

justice system were weak and ineffective and more action in the area of crime prevention was needed. Access for the poor to the judicial system was very limited; only three lawyers practiced outside the capital. Thus, 80 per cent of the population relied on local customary law systems. There was also concern about interference by the executive branch in the work of the judiciary. The capacity of the security forces had not yet been consolidated; thus public perception of and confidence in those forces was still hesitant.

12. Main challenges to the United Nations included a shift in emphasis from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and development, in the light of the strong progress made in the security sector in the past year. The UNDP Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations had identified Sierra Leone as a priority, and efforts were being made to apply the lessons learned in other countries, particularly in the area of capacity development.

13. **Ms. Pipan** (European Community) said that the European Union welcomed the justice sector reform and investment plan in Sierra Leone. She expressed concern at the slow pace of implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Justice and security were crucial sectors in the dissemination of the rule of law to a wider public, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone would play an important role. The European Union welcomed Government efforts to streamline the armed forces so that they would be better prepared to meet regional challenges like increased drug trafficking.

14. **Mr. Hagen** (United States of America), noting that mediation and arbitration had been a useful adjunct to the justice system and improved access to justice, asked what role they could play in justice sector reform in Sierra Leone.

15. **Ms. Cravero** (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that, because the formal justice system reached so few, the United Nations was trying to understand and strengthen the traditional system to make it more consistent while the formal system was being expanded.

16. **Mr. Enssah** (Youth Alliance for Peace and Development) said that young people in rural areas often had no other recourse than the traditional law system. He asked whether the international community was prepared to improve conditions in the legal profession to encourage more young people to enter it.

17. **Mr. White** (United Kingdom) said that conditions of service often included accommodation, transport and infrastructure as well as salaries. Those issues would have to be addressed in the context of the public service reform agenda and the new PRSP would be an appropriate tool to do so.

18. **Ms. Cravero** (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that it was not enough to have reform plans if judicial personnel did not have dignity. Resources must be provided in addition to raising salaries.

19. **Ms. Bangura** (Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Sierra Leone) pointed out that traditional chieftancies and modern democratic institutions operated side by side. The illiteracy rate of over 80 per cent added to the difficulties of operating a modern judiciary. Such a system was very costly to operate, and more investment in the sector was needed. The reform of the courts and police had not been fully funded. For the time being, 70 per cent of the people of Sierra Leone used traditional judicial structures, and there was a huge gap between the full rights she herself enjoyed in the capital, for example, and her rights in her home village.

20. **Mr. Robbin-Coker** (Sierra Leone Business Forum) said that the bill on arbitration recently introduced had been amended to make it more robust, and that additional support in that area would be welcome. Concerns in the financial sector regarding access to justice affected the willingness of banks to lend. Weaknesses in the security sector leading to a lack of enforcement of law and order had definite effects on the business sector. One example, which affected the energy sector in particular, was the theft of electrical cables for the scrap metal market. The security forces had been unable to prevent their theft, nor was it able to secure the borders to prevent the cables being shipped out of the country.

21. **Ms. Cravero** (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that the justice sector must receive immediate attention, and also sustained support, perhaps over as long as a decade.

22. **Ms. Pipan** (European Community) agreed that the need for sustained support to the reform of the justice and security sectors was clear.

23. **Mr. White** (United Kingdom) said that reform of those sectors could be considered an activity that

would span a generation. After a good beginning, there was a need for integrating the strengthened justice sector with the broader community, and stakeholders had a role to play. The most recent PRSP had assessed threats to security, and he suggested that the next one should move to an assessment of threats to prosperity, thereby linking that sector to the broader development agenda.

24. **The Chairperson** commended the work done by the Government of Sierra Leone and its comprehensive and realistic strategy for 2008-2010 that established short- and long-term priorities.

(e) Plenary session on energy-sector development

25. **Mr. Christian** (Ghana), speaking as Facilitator, recalled that Sierra Leone's energy sector was in a state of crisis, as outlined in paragraph 22 of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework (PBC/2/SLE/1). He therefore welcomed the fact that, since the adoption of the Framework, the Government of Sierra Leone had put in place an energy sector emergency plan that had already led to significant increases in the availability of electricity in Freetown, and that it had also secured funding for the completion of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project. However, additional resources were still needed, particularly to fully rehabilitate the transmission and distribution networks.

26. **Mr. Carew** (Sierra Leone) said that the energy sector was a priority area for his Government since, among its other benefits, the provision of cheap power in Sierra Leone would help reduce business costs, facilitate employment and improve the delivery of health and education services. However, Sierra Leone's existing power network capacity of only 25 MW was clearly inadequate to meet development requirements. It would therefore be necessary, *inter alia*: to upgrade the power network, particularly for Freetown and the provinces; to mobilize support for the second phase of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project, which was scheduled for completion by the end of 2009; and, over the medium- to long-term, to harness the full potential of hydropower. The Government also planned to transform the National Power Authority into an efficient regulatory body responsible for purchasing electricity from independent producers rather than focusing on electricity generation.

27. **Mr. Gudmundsson** (World Bank) said that the lack of access to electricity in Sierra Leone was recognized as one of the main reasons for its high level of unemployment, which in turn posed a major risk to peace and stability in the country. The World Bank had therefore taken swift action to implement the energy sector emergency plan of Sierra Leone and to strengthen its relevant national institutions. For its part, the Government of Sierra Leone had recently taken a major step in that regard by convening a group of experts to discuss the energy plan and its implementation.

28. Individual countries had also provided valuable assistance for the development of the energy sector in Sierra Leone. For example, the Government of China had supported the rehabilitation of a small hydropower station supplying energy to a number of small towns and the Government of Italy had made a particularly large financial contribution to the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project.

29. In the form of key recommendations, he drew attention to the importance of including the rural communities of Sierra Leone within the national power grid and to the need for the Government of Sierra Leone to continue its regional integration and international cooperation efforts, particularly through the West Africa Power Pool Project.

30. **Mr. López Blanco** (European Community) said that the provision of energy was an urgent requirement for the further development of Sierra Leone. In that context, short-term actions needed to be accompanied by medium-term and long-term strategies in order to ensure the sustainability of the energy supply. The comprehensive energy plan of the Government of Sierra Leone would play a welcome role in that regard since the principles of good governance would be required for a successful outcome.

31. The European Community stood ready to support the energy sector development of Sierra Leone. To that end, it intended to provide a total of 16.7 million euros in order to improve access to affordable electricity in Freetown and in some northern provinces; to offer essential assistance to the Ministry of Energy and the National Power Authority in their capacity-building efforts; and to support the West Africa Power Pool Project through the regional programmes of the European Community.

32. Lastly, he welcomed the Government's recent establishment of an energy forum in Freetown aimed at reinforcing policy dialogue between the Government and its relevant partners. The forum should be instrumental in improving the coordination and coherence of all of Sierra Leone's energy-related activities.

33. **Mr. El Shinawy** (Egypt) agreed that it was important to promote capacity-building efforts in the energy sector of Sierra Leone and recalled that the Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation for Africa had been particularly focused on that area. In that connection, he wondered whether it might be expedient to request the Government of Sierra Leone, in cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission, to prepare a list of its main peacebuilding priorities. The purpose of such a list would be to enable States to provide the relevant technical support required by Sierra Leone.

34. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) welcomed the dynamic role played by the Commission in drawing attention to the situation in Sierra Leone. At the same time, he noted that the President of Sierra Leone had been the real driving force behind the emergency plan that had been so effective in mobilizing the international community. He therefore suggested that a similar approach should be adopted in the future where other countries emerging from conflict were concerned.

35. **Mr. Brusco** (Italy) said that relatively few countries and bodies were working on energy sector development, especially given the enormous challenges facing Sierra Leone in that area. Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project was perhaps the greatest income- and employment-generating opportunity for the country, with electricity being the most significant peace dividend for the Sierra Leonean people. He urged other partners to support energy-sector development in order to meet the more long-term challenges underlined by the Minister of Sierra Leone. He asked whether the time frame for completion of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project, originally planned for the end of 2008, remained the same. Finally, geographical balance was an important aspect of reform; the Government of Sierra Leone should take into account the importance of rural communities, and make them a priority for the future.

36. **The Chairperson** said that, while the group working on energy sector development in Sierra Leone

was indeed relatively small, it should be commended for its effective joint efforts to develop an emergency plan. The group was now able to focus its energies on longer-term issues and a number of additional countries were gradually becoming involved. He expressed the hope that Sierra Leone would benefit from renewed emphasis being placed on basic infrastructure in development. Finally, the involvement of financial institutions was of great importance.

37. **Mr. López Blanco** (European Community) said that technical assistance appeared to be the main problem facing all sectors in Sierra Leone. In that connection, the European Community stood willing to contribute to the mapping of resources for any new projects. In the future, it would be advisable to promote capacity-building systemically, i.e. not just in the energy sector, but all across the board.

38. **Mr. Gudmundsson** (World Bank) said he hoped that the current coalition on electricity, particularly Italy, would continue its work with the Government of Sierra Leone. He endorsed the Chairperson's comments on the need for development workers to focus more broadly on infrastructure. At the same time, improvements in rural electrification remained important in terms of equity and stability.

39. Referring to the comments made by the representative of Egypt, he said that it was indeed important to supply technical assistance and capacity-building to the energy sector in a coordinated manner. In that regard, Sierra Leone should draw on the experience of other countries that had overcome challenges similar to those facing Sierra Leone. Referring to Mr. Carew's statement, he said that the whole sector approach was currently under review. Major decisions needed to be made as to whether investment in hydroelectric power should come from the public sector, the private sector, or both.

40. **Mr. Carew** (Sierra Leone) thanked the representative of Egypt for his country's technical support and said that the list of priorities provided for under the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework had been submitted and a portion of the catalytic fund had been earmarked for those priorities. In reply to the Italian representative's question, he said that the deadline for completion of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project, including the distribution of electricity to consumers, had not changed. There were challenges facing the project, such as the creation of a credible

urban network that could handle and distribute power efficiently and the rehabilitation of the transmission line, but the Government of Sierra Leone was working to resolve those issues in a timely manner. Under the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, the Government of Sierra Leone felt obliged to provide electricity to all the villages situated along the transmission line. It was important to meet the deadline agreed for the Project, as any back-up would result in significant expenses for the Government.

41. Energy-sector development and its potential contribution to the growth of Sierra Leone's economy would be covered in depth in the country's PRSP. Because rural electrification played a role in stemming the tide of rural to urban migration, it had been incorporated into Sierra Leone's sector policy for equitable distribution of electricity. Electricity also stimulated growth and commerce, and would encourage youth employment and entrepreneurship. He agreed with the Chairperson that there was an overall need to develop infrastructure, including electricity. Sierra Leone was seeking to mobilize major investment in the energy sector; public-private or fully private sector participation was optimal.

42. **Mr. Christian** (Ghana), speaking as Facilitator, said that, while much progress had been made in the energy sector, the continued support of international partners was needed to ensure that the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project became operational by the agreed deadline and that the distribution and transmission lines were restored. Enhanced coordination of action in the energy sector, under the leadership of the Government of Sierra Leone, was also crucial.

(f) Closing Session

43. **Ms. McAskie** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that the Government of Sierra Leone had demonstrated its political will to move forward; the international community must match the country's commitment and lead its peacebuilding and consolidation efforts. A critical juncture had been reached in efforts to enhance the environment for peacebuilding and wealth creation in Sierra Leone, and thus enable the population to enjoy the fruits of the country's transformation. The next step would be the Commission's first progress monitoring exercise. Sierra Leone had already been proclaimed a peacekeeping success story; it was now necessary to ensure a lasting peacebuilding process.

44. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone) thanked the participants for their contributions and the Peacebuilding Support Office for its support. She urged international partners to scale up efforts and expressed hope for a broader donor base for the future peacebuilding efforts of Sierra Leone. The Government of Sierra Leone remained fully committed to implementing the compact and looked forward to the Commission's sustained engagement in the country.

45. **The Chairperson** said that the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was a critical tool for peacebuilding in Sierra Leone and required full and timely implementation by all stakeholders. In order to ensure greater ownership of the peacebuilding and development process, international support should be provided through direct budget support or via sector-wide multi-donor funding mechanisms. Existing mechanisms must be strengthened and well publicized to enable greater participation by non-resident donors. An aid coordination policy must be developed without delay to ensure greater coherence and coordination of international assistance to Sierra Leone, and every effort should be made to coordinate the peacebuilding process with the next PRSP.

46. As youth employment and empowerment were considered central to peace consolidation in Sierra Leone, a prioritized, costed and coherent national strategy on such issues should be developed under the leadership of the Government. Moreover, youth employment and empowerment must be considered in the context of the economic recovery of Sierra Leone, specifically the development of the agricultural sector. International players, particularly the United Nations, should provide technical support and advice to the Government of Sierra Leone and ensure timely implementation of programmes funded by the Youth Basket Fund. The United Nations system must have adequate capacity to support the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, particularly in the context of the finalization of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the setting up of a United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone.

47. He welcomed the formation of the energy partners' forum and reaffirmed the need to develop a medium-term costed strategy for energy-sector development.

48. The international community must support efforts to broaden public-private partnerships and foster business sector development, domestic revenue generation and wealth creation in Sierra Leone. Finally, in the lead-up to the local council elections, it was crucial to promote greater national reconciliation and to support the efforts of the Political Parties Registration Commission and other dispute resolution mechanisms.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.