



# General Assembly Security Council

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## Peacebuilding Commission

Sixth session

Guinea configuration

### Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 6 June 2012, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Lucas ..... (Luxembourg)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

#### **Adoption of the agenda (PBC/6/GUI/1)**

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

#### **Adoption of the draft conclusions and recommendations of the first review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments between the Government of Guinea and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC/6/GUI/L.1)**

2. **The Chair** said that the main purpose of the meeting was to adopt the conclusions and recommendations of the first review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments.

3. Before the review, she had written to the Government of Guinea and the members of the Configuration, outlining her ideas for the process to produce the report, based on their contributions. Later, she had led a delegation to Guinea to continue and follow up on previous exchanges with the Government and other stakeholders, and to discuss priority peacebuilding issues. A first draft had been prepared and comments thereon had been received. The Configuration had fully supported the process.

4. After suggested changes were received, the conclusions and recommendations contained in the text had been translated, ready for their adoption. On his arrival in New York, the Minister for Economic and Financial Control and Focal Point for the Guinea Configuration had transmitted additional comments and suggestions from his Government, requiring the following proposed changes: paragraph 5 should be divided into two paragraphs at the words “also takes note” and “those fields” should be replaced by “the fields of the fight against drug-trafficking and cross-border crime”; paragraph 8 should be deleted. In paragraph 12, the word “quickly” should be deleted and replaced with the words “before the end of the year 2012”.

5. In paragraph 17, after the words “against impunity”, the words “take all appropriate measures to conclude, as soon as possible” should be added; the words “place on administrative leave, throughout the entire duration of the” should be deleted; and the word “against” should be inserted before the word “those”. At the end of paragraph 19, the words “pursue, in this context, advocacy for a reinforced inter-Guinean dialogue” should be added. The first word of paragraph 40 should be changed from “encourage” to “sensitize”.

6. A new paragraph 45 should be inserted, reading “Support the Government in the definition and implementation of a global youth employment programme with a component of vocational training which promotes the employability of Guinean youths in the agricultural and mining sectors”.

7. **Mr. Koulibaly** (Guinea), Minister of Economic and Financial Control, said that his Government was grateful for the work that had allowed Guinea to emerge from turbulence. However, the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law in Guinea were long-awaited goals that would need the continued support of the United Nations.

8. Regarding the process of producing the report, the Government of Guinea had expressed reservations on two issues related to new Government commitments; the internal consultations they required would take time. After a session of the Joint Steering Committee of the Peacebuilding Fund chaired by the Prime Minister, the text of the commitments had been improved and clarified.

9. Given the history of Guinea, much progress had been made in the field of human rights, as could be seen from the indictment of high-ranking military officers, something unimaginable only two years earlier. The Government had responded to violent acts with mercy, and it was clear that the country had an independent and fair judiciary. As a result, paragraph 17 must be modified to reflect the need for a successful conclusion to the legal proceedings against those indicted for the September 2009 violence in Conakry.

10. The support of the Peacebuilding Fund for security sector reform in the areas of legal frameworks, awareness-raising and training for the armed forces had put Guinea on the right path; its ongoing efforts must therefore be assisted. In the larger context of a troubled region, with problems in Mali and, indeed, the Sahel as a whole, and with few resources to meet its pressing internal social demands for democracy and governance, the United Nations must maintain its support for Guinea and for peacebuilding, especially in the three priority areas of national reconciliation, security sector reform and the promotion of employment opportunities for youth and women, where the Government had undertaken ambitious programmes.

11. The Government had renewed ties with the Bretton Woods institutions, through the signing of an extended credit facility, which would broaden

prospects for poverty reduction and free resources to meet social demands, enabling the creation of the infrastructure that was lacking. Currently, 35 per cent of the country's domestic income was used to pay its debt. Therefore, though it was beyond its mandate to act, the Configuration must support the Government in reaching its HIPC completion point and lowering its debt burden.

12. In the political sphere, as soon as it came into power, the Government had begun an audit of the Independent National Electoral Commission, which had revealed serious problems. After a restructuring, its finances would conform to international standards. Its composition had remained unchanged, in order to ensure consistency in the democratic process and complete the transition. The Government had promoted dialogue despite disagreements, and credible, transparent and open legislative elections would be held. There was no confirmation of the date of the elections, due to technical issues which would be resolved shortly. However, with the support of the United Nations, elections should take place before the end of 2012 in an atmosphere of stability and freedom.

13. Despite its renewed commitment to peace and regional stability, the country faced major challenges, even in the area in which the most progress had been made, security sector reform. While improvements were needed in the police forces and training was required for new magistrates, the Government was committed to an independent judiciary.

14. **Ms. Cheng-Hopkins** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that the Peacebuilding Support Office valued its relationship with the Government of Guinea, which had approached its commitments seriously. There had been a smooth alignment between the priorities of the Peacebuilding Commission and the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund and related projects on the ground.

15. Turning to the review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments and the three pillars of the engagement undertaken by the Commission and by the Fund, she said that the rapid results achieved in the area of security sector reform had been impressive. That highly sensitive, political and risky endeavour, given its goal of downsizing the army, had been approached in a commendable fashion by the Government and the Fund. Within three weeks of the Government proposal, the Fund had been able to approve \$10.5 million, and

the related activities, including the biometric census of the army, had been completed within two months. There had also been progress in the area of lump-sum payments being made to kick-start the pension and buyout programme. Four million dollars had been spent on the lump-sum payments, resulting in the separation of approximately 4,000 military personnel. Despite the risks involved, evidence pointed to the fact that the programme was obtaining concrete results, a very critical first step that must be taken before security sector reform would be possible.

16. In the area of national reconciliation and legislative elections, work had begun and elections were scheduled before the end of the year. The Electoral Affairs Division had supported the investment of time and resources. However, the mistrust existing between the Government and the opposition was still of concern in the run-up to the legislative elections. Ethnic manipulation was being used to stoke mistrust and discontent but mitigation activities to be put in place by the Fund should help to ensure that there would be no violence and to combat electoral fraud.

17. Concerning employment opportunities for youth and women, the European Union and the World Bank were involved in that area, starting with public works and a social safety net, and the Peacebuilding Fund had committed to providing \$2 million to help kick-start the process. Collectively, those organizations were to provide approximately \$14.5 million for the programme. The Fund would contribute specifically to mapping job opportunities in the mining and agricultural sectors to overcome the lack of information in various Government ministries. Obtaining a profile of the youth and women who had worked in the first phase of the public works programme would enable them to be matched to job opportunities in the second phase, an approach that had been successful in Burundi.

18. The Joint Steering Committee was successfully overseeing the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund and providing local guidance regarding progress of the Fund's programmes, thereby ensuring national ownership. In the future, it would also consider the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, bringing synergy to the political and programmatic assistance provided to Guinea.

19. The Peacebuilding Fund had a catalytic role to play in kick-starting activities. Once it had been shown that activities were worth undertaking, members of the Configuration were expected to do their part in mobilizing resources in order to expand them, not only in security sector reform but also national reconciliation and youth and women's employment.

20. **The Chair** said that although the Commission did not have an oversight role where the Fund was concerned, as could be seen from the Statement of Mutual Commitments every attempt was made to ensure maximum alignment between the priority areas and the Fund's activities.

21. **Mr. Andrabi** (Pakistan) supported the changes proposed by the Government of Guinea for the review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments. They improved the document and emphasized national ownership in all peacebuilding endeavours. The proposal regarding new paragraph 45 was particularly relevant to the priorities not only of the Configuration but also to the Government of Guinea and it must be noted that the European Union and the World Bank, in addition to the Peacebuilding Fund, were allocating significant funds to the activity.

22. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union) proposed that the reference to mining and agriculture in new paragraph 45 should be slightly modified so that it would not be interpreted as being exhaustive.

23. **Mr. Koulibaly** (Guinea) said that mining and agriculture offered employment opportunities but that the clarification proposed would include such sectors as technology, which also would bring jobs. Indeed, the World Bank was helping Guinea to obtain fibre-optic connectivity that would bring about job opportunities in the sector.

24. *The conclusions and recommendations of the first review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments between the Government of Guinea and the Peacebuilding Commission, as orally revised, were adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.*