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President: Mr. Sajdik (Vice-President) (Austria)

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

Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

African countries emerging from conflict

The President recalled that in its decision 2012/250 the Council had decided to invite the President of the Peacebuilding Commission to keep it informed of the economic and social issues surrounding peacebuilding in African countries on the Commission's agenda.

Mr. Momen (Vice-President of the Peacebuilding Commission) said that nearly 1.5 billion people live in countries emerging from conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission helps these countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in collaboration with United Nations agencies, building their capacity and supporting them in developing their own programmes. It is currently active in six countries: Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Burundi, the Commission is working closely with those responsible for the implementation of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and in October 2012 organized a stakeholder conference in Geneva during which pledges of US\$ 2.5 billion were made. In Central African Republic, the peacebuilding process has been at a standstill since the March 2013 overthrow of the sitting Government. Thanks to the intervention of the Economic Community of Central African States, however, it has been possible to embark on a transition process leading to elections. The Commission will continue to support all stakeholders. In Guinea, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Commission are working together to make good on mutual commitments made by the Government and the United Nations country team. The Commission is also lending support to the preparation of the upcoming parliamentary elections. In Guinea-Bissau, the overthrow of the Government in April 2012 has hindered the work of the Commission but subregional organizations are cooperating with the *de facto* authorities to carry the transition process through. In Liberia, since August 2012 the Commission has been actively working on the establishment of a national reconciliation strategy, which led to the development in June 2013 of a roadmap for national reconciliation. Peacebuilding activities are continuing. In Sierra Leone, the Commission focused on the proper conduct of elections in November 2012 and has continued its activities aimed at promoting the establishment of the rule of law and good governance, with a view to phasing out its presence in the country.

Of the six countries in which the Commission works, two — Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau — are again in a conflict situation, which goes to show that the Commission should redouble its efforts to mediate between all parties in order to prevent the situation from escalating. Emphasis should also be placed on the economic revitalization of post-conflict countries, as well as on education for peace.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan), in presenting by videoconference the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system" (E/2013/73), said that the main task of United Nations agencies in South Sudan is to support the new Government in setting up institutions and basic services to help maintain security and pacify regions plagued by conflict, especially Jonglei State. The country must also manage the conflict with Sudan regarding rights to develop oil-bearing border areas, a conflict that has led to the shutdown of oil production — whereas oil sales accounted for 98 per cent of South Sudan's budgetary resources. The country had to be helped to find

other sources of income. These efforts were successful: Government revenue increased from \$3 million to \$23 million. Indeed, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) action plans were completely redesigned to meet that end. Thus, in two years, South Sudan has made great progress, especially in terms of road infrastructure, education and health, mainly through the implementation of flexible development programmes tailored to the country's needs, in consultation with national authorities.

Round table on the theme "Integrated, coherent and coordinated support for countries emerging from conflict: what lessons?"

The President said that this round table was an opportunity to take stock of progress in peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, Central African Republic and South Sudan. He asked Ms. Stevens what, in her view, the peacebuilding issues were in Sierra Leone.

Ms. Stevens (Observer for Sierra Leone) said that the success of the transition in Sierra Leone was attributable to several factors: first, the key role played by the Government and the strong support of the international community; second, the establishment of democratic institutions, in particular the Anti-corruption Commission, which was able to fulfil its functions effectively and to find senior officials guilty of corruption. Its success also reflects credit on the National Commission on Human Rights, whose work has improved transparency and respect for human rights. In addition, the Government has developed PRSPs focusing on energy development, agriculture, access to water and education, and has introduced free health care. It has also tried to use donor assistance in a more coordinated manner. The Government has launched a new phase of its prosperity programme, which aims to make Sierra Leone a middle-income country by 2035.

The President asked Ms. Immonen her opinion on the reasons for renewed conflict in Central African Republic.

Ms. Immonen (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator for the Central African Republic) said that there were a number of reasons for that. The first reason is the distrust and lack of dialogue between political leaders. Second, the renewed tensions are also due to the non-performance of the Libreville agreements of January 2013. Third, the State can barely provide basic services outside the capital or assert its authority in the regions; the army and the police do not have sufficient resources to enforce public order. Fourth, the people's extreme poverty drives them to resort to violence to meet their needs, which is exacerbated by the conflict situation in countries of the subregion, which promotes arms trafficking. Finally, the renewed conflict is due to the slow implementation of reforms, widespread impunity and lack of justice, but also the delay in payment of wages, including those of civil servants, which has triggered the popular uprising.

The President asked Mr. Zahabi whether he saw any similarities between the situation of the above-mentioned countries and that of South Sudan.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General in South Sudan) said that the United Nations and other partners had opted for an innovative strategy which, depending on the country's changing needs and resources, has been refocused on agriculture, market access, and education. The second element to note is the considerable financial support from the international community in a country whose budget depends on oil revenues. Both approaches, which have been proven in South Sudan, can be very useful for other countries emerging from crisis.

Ms. Garrasi (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)) said that in 2010 official development assistance (ODA) accounted for about a third of gross domestic product (GDP) in all three countries. That assistance should be used to achieve the five objectives set at the fourth High Level Forum on aid effectiveness, taking into account the priorities of each State. She emphasized the importance of providing assistance on the basis of the established strategy, with leadership by the country concerned, and on a single agreement applied by all partners in a coordinated, integrated and coherent manner.

The President asked about the situation in Sierra Leone in the area of job creation, especially for young people. Was the problem being dealt with in Central African Republic, and would it be amenable to the Sierra Leone model? Finally, with regard to South Sudan, he asked about the status of the plan to address the rural labour shortage by offering young unemployed city dwellers jobs in rural areas.

Ms. Stevens (Observer for Sierra Leone) said that youth employment remains a major problem. It is explicitly part of the mandate of the Ministry of Youth and the Government is taking specific measures, such as the obligation for investors to participate in training for young people.

Ms. Immonen (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator for the Central African Republic) said that Central African Republic had adopted a youth policy and established a fund for youth, both of which, unfortunately, had largely failed. The goal was to foster young people's employability and to reintegrate former members of armed groups; but as the jobs were unpaid, many participants have joined or rejoined those same groups. Given that situation, the United Nations and development partners have implemented programmes to make young people and other groups aware of the risks involved. It would be useful if, as in Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic youth ministry specifically addressed employment. However, even people with jobs are struggling to receive their salary.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan) said that the war was keeping many young people out of school and unqualified for work. Constantly taking a pragmatic approach, the Government is employing young people to execute plans developed to meet the country's needs (road infrastructure, for example). Their wages are ploughed back into the local economy. That approach, which gives good results, is being taken by development partners in many areas.

The President asked what measures these countries' partners have taken to facilitate job creation, one of the five objectives of peacebuilding and statebuilding.

Ms. Garrasi (OECD) said it was still too early to tell. However, it appears from a study of the business climate in G-7+ member countries that major reforms have been undertaken and have had positive effects on the economic and business environment. As regards employment, international partners can help countries emerging from conflict in two ways: by creating an environment conducive to economic growth and job creation, and by carrying out job creation programmes targeted to specific population groups (youth, women). Specifically, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has launched the Conflict Affected States in Africa (CASA) initiative, which helps eight conflict-affected countries, including the three in question, to rebuild their private sectors and put people back to work. Thanks to that assistance, many unemployed will find jobs once more. In Sierra Leone, the World Bank is supporting an initiative to improve the employability of

young people affected by conflict. Although these (usually short-term) projects will not solve the employment problem, they are essential to peacebuilding. The question is how to find the right balance between long-term investment in major substantive reforms and short-term actions, which need to be stepped up.

The President asked the three speakers whether, in their view, there is a viable model for natural resource management that will help spur economic recovery and sustainably improve people's living conditions. He wondered whether benefit-sharing systems could be implemented and how they might help correct inequalities and redress environmental degradation.

Ms. Immonen (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator for the Central African Republic) said that in Central African Republic natural resources — diamonds in particular — were hardly likely to help resolve the problems, which they were worsening, indeed. That being said, the large-scale infrastructure investments necessary to capitalize on natural resources could be a source of income for the population, but much remains to be done. As regards environmental degradation, no information is available on the issue, so collecting it would be the first step.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan) said that countries where natural resources are most abundant are also those where conflict and poverty wreak the greatest havoc. In his view, the solution lies, at the national level, in good governance and its corollaries, transparency, accountability and concern for citizens, and at the international level, in cooperation with Sudan.

Ms. Stevens (Observer for Sierra Leone) said that natural resources, renewable and non-renewable, were among the pillars of the new Programme for Prosperity. The management system and regulatory bodies are in place, including the national minerals agency, one of whose mandates is environmental protection. Community development agreements have been concluded to protect the interests of communities near mining projects.

The President asked about the issue of land tenure, which is fundamental in all three countries.

Ms. Stevens (Observer for Sierra Leone) said that land was privately owned in western Sierra Leone and collective in other regions. Formerly, companies wishing to use collective land approached the community leader, who was free to negotiate terms of the contract. Because of complaints from communities who felt aggrieved by decisions of their leaders, the Government has now decided that counsel will be appointed to assist in discussions with companies. The Government also emphasizes companies' social responsibility, to ensure that they contribute to improving communities' living conditions.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan) said it was difficult to speak of development in a country emerging from conflict whose land tenure system constitutes a deterrent to residents and investors.

Ms. Immonen (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator for the Central African Republic), recognizing that land ownership is a major issue, said that the plight of Central African Republic was such that humanitarian action takes precedence over all other considerations. Indeed, when seeds and agricultural tools are distributed, beneficiaries prefer to eat the

seeds rather than cultivate a plot that is highly likely to be occupied by others and whose harvest will be stolen from them. Moreover, with some 100,000 displaced persons hiding in the bush and the forest, many of them traumatized by violence and abuses, the land is left fallow. Hence, land tenure is not a top priority.

Interactive discussion

Ms. Robl (United States of America) said that her country remained deeply concerned by the situation in Jonglei State, where more than 100,000 people remained vulnerable. The United States welcomes the steps taken by Sudan and South Sudan to implement the agreements signed by both parties in September 2012. However, by threatening to block oil exports from South Sudan, Sudan has violated the spirit and letter of the agreements, which call on both countries to pursue negotiations on oil and trade relations independently of other questions. The United States understands that the Presidents of both countries have accepted the measures suggested to them to help them fulfil their mutual commitments. Each agreement must be applied unconditionally and independently, so that any delay on one issue does not block progress on another.

Ms. Goldberg (Canada) noted that Geneva was the ideal place to address issues of economic growth and employment, given the presence of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Economic Forum and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Initiatives have been taken to ensure that exchanges take place between peacebuilding specialists and experts on trade and economic issues. That dialogue is necessary if to help countries emerging from conflict meet the challenges they face. Indeed, progress has been made in the areas of basic services, security and reform, but job creation and economic growth remain stumbling blocks. Regarding the post-2015 development programme, she asked what priorities were envisaged for these countries, as the needs of fragile States are not necessarily fully reflected in the Millennium Development Goals. She also asked whether the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and those implemented under the New Deal for international solidarity with fragile States have strengthened coordination among donors.

Ms. Moleko (South Africa), addressing Mr. Zahabi on Sudan, said that the international community, including the African Union and the United Nations, had done much to preserve peace in the region. However, she wondered how support could be strengthened to avoid a relapse into conflict, given that South Sudan is a young State. There are still many security concerns, especially with neighbouring countries, but also in the Jonglei region. She also wondered what the new sources of income mentioned by Mr. Zahabi might be, which would replace oil revenues, and how obstacles to the provision of services and access to people living in remote areas could be overcome.

Mr. Opiyo (Observer for Kenya) said that his country had endeavoured to provide assistance to South Sudan in the areas of capacity-building and trade. As regards capacity-building, Kenya has trained Sudanese at the Kenya School of Administration and has sent Kenyan officials to advise their counterparts in South Sudan. There are also exchanges between senior officials of South Sudan and Kenya. In terms of trade, several regional initiatives are under way, including a rail link to the coastal port of Lamu in Kenya and an oil pipeline. He would like to know what is being done to diversify South Sudan's economic activities, to reduce its high dependence on oil, and what measures are being taken to increase the effectiveness of the support provided to South Sudan.

Mr. Kwassau (Nigeria) emphasized the need to consider women's needs in the area of land tenure. This is an important issue in Africa, where there are often cultural barriers to women's access to land.

Mr. Nghifitikeko (Observer for Namibia), addressing the representative of Sierra Leone, asked what contribution Sierra Leone's neighbouring countries had made to the peace process there, and how the United Nations had contributed to enhancing those neighbouring countries' ability to help Sierra Leone.

Mr. Imanishi (Japan) said he thought the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission should strive to strengthen their practical cooperation, to support the peacebuilding process in the countries on the Commission's agenda. Development and capacity-building efforts should be conducted in a consistent manner, based on an assessment of the labour market. As regards revenue collection at the national level, there is a need to establish a system to revitalize the economy and build peace. It should also be remembered that once the crisis is past, the countries in question suffer from a lack of international attention, which means that the assistance they receive needs to be kept up.

Ms. Garrasi (OECD) Said that under the New Deal for international solidarity with fragile States, the goal is to strengthen and improve relations between the State and society. Regarding the post-2015 development programme, the G-7+ countries have made great efforts to achieve peace and sustainability, but more countries need to focus on these universal values, which also need to be taken into account in poverty reduction and peace support programmes. To prevent a country from falling back into conflict, it is important to support the core activities of the peace process.

Ms. Immonen (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator for the Central African Republic) said that to avoid the recurrence or escalation of a conflict, emergency relief and support transition activities needed to be combined with the goal of restoring State authority in the various regions. Support is needed, too, for the security sector, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the fight against impunity, and establishment of a transitional justice system.

Mr. Zahabi (Acting Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan) said that the international community had tended to focus on the problems of the region of Jonglei, while much progress had been made between Sudan and South Sudan and a dialogue was ongoing between the two States. Regarding oil, efforts are being made to increase the number of export routes and to diversify economic activities, in particular by developing agriculture and providing training. It is important, too, for the Government to be brought closer to local people, and United Nations country support bases are helping with that in all 10 States concerned.

Ms. Stevens (Observer for Sierra Leone) said that, in Sierra Leone, the gains made in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals must be consolidated. Sierra Leone has in the past been a model of coordination, to the extent that there has been a "shared vision" of the United Nations in Sierra Leone, setting an example of unity in action across the United Nations system. A multidonor trust fund was also established. As regards neighbouring countries' contribution to the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone, there is cooperation within the Mano River Union that is gaining in vitality thanks to the assistance received.

Action on draft decision E/2013/L.34

The President called on the Council to take action on draft decision E/2013/L.34, entitled “African countries emerging from conflict”. He noted that this project has no programme budget implications and invited delegations to submit their comments.

Mr. Nghifitikeko (Observer for Namibia) asked whether the draft decision pertained to South Sudan or to African countries as a whole.

The President replied that the draft decision pertains to South Sudan.

Draft decision E/2013/L.34 was adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.