

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Considering that the European Union is one of the major contributors to peacebuilding activities, I regret that the Presidency of the European Union has not been allowed to participate in the debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its final session, in accordance with the request previously submitted.

Furthermore, I should be grateful if you could arrange for the present letter and its annex, which contains the position of the European Union on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission, to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) João **Salgueiro**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

EU position regarding the Security Council debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session

The candidate countries Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,* the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union believes that the Peacebuilding Commission is a key achievement of the United Nations reform process. Created to address a gap in the United Nations system to support countries emerging from conflict, this new advisory body, together with its Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, has provided an innovative institutional framework within which the Governments concerned, the international community and civil society have begun to address some key peacebuilding issues. This was made possible thanks to the commitment of the previous Chairmen of the Organizational Committee, the two Vice-Chairpersons and the two Chairmen of the country-specific configurations. We would also like to congratulate Ambassador Yukio Takasu for his recent nomination as Chairman of the Organizational Committee and wish him all success for his mandate.

The European Union considers, as stated in both the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund reports, that efforts to consolidate peace and development must be based on the needs and perspectives of the affected countries themselves. Experience shows that a nationally owned and led process is the veritable key of success of peacebuilding and ultimately of a sustainable peace. Experience equally shows that an inclusive and non-discriminatory peacebuilding process is the only way to ensure nationwide shared priorities setting and nation-building, a truthful correspondence between real needs and external assistance, and a sustained conformity between commitments and implementation. In this sense, it is crucial to engage all stakeholders, including national civil society, the private sector, governments, NGOs, and current and potential donors. Close coordination between the United Nations Headquarters and the national actors is essential in order to identify the most pressing priorities that need to be addressed, such as, for instance, good governance, youth empowerment, job creation, the promotion and protection of human rights, gender, the rule of law and justice, and security sector reform.

In order to ensure that peacebuilding efforts are sustainable, they should be monitored and tracked with quantitative and qualitative indicators at the strategic level to assess progress towards agreed goals, to take appropriate action when threats to peace arise, to enhance coherence of multidimensional efforts and to track fulfilment of mutual commitments by national and international actors.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process.

Another priority that would enable the Commission to consolidate its added value and maximize its impact would be to increase its visibility in the field through improved outreach and communication strategies as well as greater publicity. In addition, we are of the opinion that the Peacebuilding Support Office needs to be equipped with the adequate resources that are necessary to continue to efficiently support the growing work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The European Union welcomes the engagement that the Peacebuilding Commission has shown in Sierra Leone and Burundi in the past year.

We commend the intensive work of all stakeholders that have contributed to the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi and consider it to be a critical instrument providing guidance for the Government of Burundi, the Peacebuilding Commission and all partners for their common work on peacebuilding. We underline the importance of the monitoring and tracking mechanism which is currently being developed between Burundi and the Peacebuilding Commission to allow review of progress of peacebuilding activities and objectives on a regular basis.

With regard to Sierra Leone, we consider that the Peacebuilding Commission has made a valuable contribution in enhancing international attention, financial support and aiding the overall peace consolidation process. The EU stands ready to continue to assist in the finalization of the Sierra Leone Compact, and in developing tools to track progress.

The European Union recognizes the importance of sustained and predictable financing for peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Fund plays a critical role in providing countries with start-up funding for early recovery. The EU member States have been contributing to this Fund and the EU is collectively its largest donor. It is important to ensure that further countries are declared eligible for support from the Peacebuilding Fund and that mobilization of resources is enhanced in order to achieve the US \$259 million funding and to effectively address the “transition gap”.

The European Union sees the Peacebuilding Fund as a catalyst for work on peacebuilding efforts, but long-term funding must still come from multilateral and bilateral donors. The scope of the Fund should not overlap with other existing instruments. The role of the Peacebuilding Fund advisory group can be particularly helpful in providing guidance on the effective use of the funds.

As recognized in both reports, it is crucial that the distinction between the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission is clarified to all the parties involved in peacebuilding from the outset of the process. We should devote further reflection on the interrelationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, in particular what is the sequencing between them, how to link short-term early interventions with the longer-term strategy.

The European Union’s assessment of the first year of the Peacebuilding Commission is positive. In addition, we are aware of the major challenges that still lie ahead. The Peacebuilding Commission must prove its ability to deliver real benefits to the countries under its consideration. And effective working practices for the Peacebuilding Commission’s relationship with other United Nations bodies also need to be established. The Peacebuilding Commission’s relationship with the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions should be enhanced, and these organs, in particular the Security Council, should take better advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission’s

advisory role. In this context, we welcome the debate held today and we thank the opportunity given to the European Union to participate.

The Peacebuilding Commission can consider new countries in its second year. At least one country has already expressed its wish to be included in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Peacebuilding Commission should ensure that it has the capabilities to address these countries in terms of human resources and capacity and that it has learned the lessons from its experience in Burundi and Sierra Leone. The Peacebuilding Commission should also continue its reflections on the appropriate time for scaling down and ending its engagement with a country.

To conclude, the EU will maintain its positive contribution to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We are determined to help the Peacebuilding Commission make a positive and measurable impact in the regions where it is engaged. In this context, we stress the importance of the standing invitation extended to the European Community as an institutional donor to participate in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we look forward to the arrangement finally implemented allowing for an adequate representation, given the major contributions that the European Union, as an international actor, makes in a number of post-conflict countries and regions worldwide, particularly in the areas of diplomacy, military and security.
