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Provisional summary record of the 43rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 24 July 2012, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Khalil (Egypt)

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In the absence of Mr. Koterec (Slovakia), Mr. Khalil (Egypt), Vice-President, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Coordination, programme and other questions (continued)

(f) African countries emerging from conflict (E/2012/76)

1. **Mr. Momen** (Bangladesh), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, said that the theme of the fourth Joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, held in New York on 4 June 2012, had been “Partnerships for job creation for young people in countries emerging from conflict”. The discussions at that event had stressed that a common approach to the problem was needed. Many countries on the Commission’s agenda had identified the role of youth and jobs creation as key priorities for achieving sustainable peace, economic growth and development. He therefore hoped that the partnership between the Commission and the Council on those issues would be further solidified.

2. Since the conclusion of the 2010 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture and through the adoption of roadmaps for actions in 2011 and 2012, the Commission had focused on improving its relations with the principal organs of the United Nations, enhancing coordination and improving its working methods with a view to increasing its impact in the field. To that end, it was endeavouring to improve its role in resource mobilization, build partnerships and support national ownership and capacity-building. Its potential role in the preparation and implementation of the 2012 report of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict was under consideration. The Commission’s success would continue to be measured by its contribution to national peacebuilding processes in the six countries on its agenda: Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

3. The outcome document of the fifth review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi (PBC/5/BDI//2) had been adopted by the Burundi configuration of the Commission on 21 April 2011 and by the Commission on 18 July 2012. The country’s second poverty reduction strategy paper had been prepared by the Government in cooperation with its partners. In the

future, the Commission would focus on helping the Government mobilize resources in order to address the peacebuilding priorities established in that document; a donor event would be held in Geneva in the autumn of 2012.

4. In November 2011, the Central African Republic configuration had finalized the second review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic and had adopted related conclusions and recommendations (PBC/5/CAF/L.1). It was now focusing on building support for the country’s disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which was resuming momentum. The configuration was also continuing its deliberations on the nature and scope of the new instrument of engagement that would succeed the now-expired Strategic Framework. The Commission would continue to support efforts to mobilize resources for the peacebuilding priorities established in the country’s second poverty reduction strategy paper.

5. The Guinea configuration had adopted the statement of mutual commitments between the Commission and the Government of Guinea (PBC/5/GUI/2) on 23 September 2011. The statement reflected the three peacebuilding priorities identified by the Government as the basis for its engagement with the Commission: (i) promotion of national reconciliation and unity; (ii) security and defence sector reform; and (iii) youth and women’s employment policy. On 6 June 2012, the configuration had completed the first periodic review of the statement and, with the support of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, was mapping resource flows and actors in Guinea. That exercise represented a practical approach to resource mobilization that should also enhance the Government’s capacity to develop an effective national aid coordination and management system.

6. In Guinea-Bissau, the death of President Malam Bacai Sanhá on 9 January 2012 had made it necessary to organize a presidential election earlier than anticipated. The Commission had provided immediate financial support for the electoral process, which had, however, been interrupted by the coup d’état of 12 April 2012. It was now focusing on facilitating dialogue and coordination among the country’s main international partners with a view to the restoration of constitutional order.

7. The Liberia configuration had adopted a document entitled “Review of the statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia: First progress report” (PBC/6/LBR/1) on 9 May 2012. The configuration’s plans for resource mobilization were well aligned with Government priorities in the agreed-upon peacebuilding sectors of security sector reform, the rule of law, and national reconciliation. A draft resource mobilization strategy and a work plan for the configuration were being finalized. United Nations departments, funds and programmes had helped to finalize the statement of mutual commitments, shaping both the commitments and the deliverable targets for measuring progress, and alignment of the statement with the activities of the United Nations system had facilitated a coherent approach.

8. The Sierra Leone configuration was continuing its engagement with that country on the basis of the peacebuilding elements of the Government’s Agenda for Change, namely, good governance and the rule of law, youth employment and combating drug trafficking, with gender and regional perspectives as cross-cutting issues. The Commission was now focusing on preparations for the 2012 elections by providing briefings, highlighting challenges and conveying the expectations of the international community to the Government and the political parties. It was also focusing on drug trafficking and organized crime in the region, particularly by strengthening its working relationship with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and supporting implementation of the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI).

9. The Commission’s unique membership structure suggested that a comprehensive approach to sustainable peace in countries emerging from conflict would be generated through the engagement and commitment of a broad range of relevant global actors, including Commission members drawn from the membership of the three principal organs of the United Nations and from other categories of membership. The Commission relied on the members of the Council who were also members of the Commission for guidance in deepening the partnership between the two bodies, including with respect to the Council’s role in improving the coherence and integration of efforts by all United Nations operational and development actors on the ground and the involvement of non-traditional actors, including philanthropic organizations,

foundations and the private sector. The potential for growth and development of low-income, fragile post-conflict countries, none of which had achieved even one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), could be very high if violence was averted and peace was stabilized.

10. **Ms. Akhtar** (Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system (E/2012/76), requested in Council resolution E/2011/43. The report provided background data on the current economic, social and political situations, highlighted progress in those areas since independence and identified the core challenges facing the country. Decades of conflict had complicated the process of transition and left South Sudan facing formidable human and physical capacity challenges.

11. Despite its oil wealth, South Sudan was among the least developed countries in the world and had made the least progress towards the MDGs of any country. One third of the population lacked secure access to food and only 40 per cent had access to basic health care. Fewer than 6 per cent of its children were fully immunized and the school enrolment rate was only 50 per cent. The country’s illiteracy rate was 85 per cent overall and 92 per cent for women, and its maternal mortality rate was the highest in the world. There was no all-weather road system — close to 60 per cent of the country was inaccessible during the rainy season — and the absence of a nationwide energy system and of an electricity grid made prospects for viable economic activity challenging.

12. The failure of the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to agree on oil revenue-sharing arrangements had led South Sudan to shut down oil production on 20 January 2012. The report described the impact of that decision, which had complicated fiscal management and growth prospects, on the country’s fragile economy.

13. The transition from relief to development was the highest priority for the United Nations system in South Sudan; it had worked with the country’s partners to develop an approach that envisioned a graduated shift from directly providing life-saving services to working under the leadership of and in partnership with national authorities as they developed systems and capacities.

The report highlighted the alignment of the Organization's plans with national development priorities through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the South Sudan development plan and the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) Peacebuilding Support Plan and its support for the country's 100-day campaign to achieve concrete deliverables in the areas of education, health care, infrastructure development, the rule of law, security sector reform, transparency and accountability.

14. The report noted that the security and economic situations had necessitated reassessment of the timelines for implementation of the Peacebuilding Support Plan and a consequent reprioritization of objectives and needs. There was also a critical need for support for capacity development, including through South-South cooperation.

15. Collaboration between the United Nations country team and the Office of the Resident Coordinator was imperative. The operations management team within the country team was endeavouring to establish common operational systems in key areas in order to streamline coordination of programme delivery, improve efficiency and reduce transaction costs. The report called for increased support for Government capacity-building; a focus on interventions that minimized fragility and strengthened institutions; and coordinated and coherent sequencing and prioritizing of the development of new strategies and programmes of relevance to "delivering as one". It also noted that technical and operational support should be complemented by integrated Council and Security Council policy support and guidance at the intergovernmental level and that continued support from the international community was crucial in light of the challenging environment in which the United Nations system was operating.

16. A panel discussion on the topic "Integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan", chaired and moderated by Mr. Khalil (Egypt), Vice-President of the Council, followed. The moderator made a statement and introduced the panellists: Ms. Mary Jervas Yak (Deputy Minister of Finance, South Sudan); and Ms. Amanda Serumaga (Team Leader, Democratic Governance Unit, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in South Sudan). An interactive dialogue, in which the representatives of Egypt, Bangladesh, Zambia, the

United States of America, Cameroon, Mexico, Brazil, Australia and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the observers for Norway, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania participated, ensued. The panellists responded to questions and comments and the moderator made concluding remarks.

Coordination, programme and other questions

(continued)

(c) International cooperation in the field of informatics

Economic and environmental questions

(b) Science and technology for development

(E/2012/31 and Corr.1, E/2012/48-A/67/65 and E/2012/49-A/67/66 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

17. **Mr. Hamdi** (Head, Science, Technology, and Information and Communications Technology Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels (E/2012/49-A/67/66), said that since the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005, information and communications technologies (ICTs) had played a significant role in social and economic development. Africa was the world's fastest-growing market for cellular telephones, with total subscriptions estimated to reach 735 million by the end of 2012, and its largest market after Asia. The number of Internet users worldwide had doubled to 2.5 billion since 2005 and it was expected that by 2020, one in three people would have a computer. Roughly half of all Internet users were under age 25.

18. Mobility and broadband connectivity had become the most important indicators of access to, and affordability and use of, ICTs; the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) predicted that mobile networks would cover all inhabited areas of the world by 2015. There were currently 1.7 billion broadband subscriptions worldwide, an increase of 27 per cent in the past year alone. However, network deployment was slower in the least developed countries, broadband connectivity was limited in Africa and there was real concern that new digital divides might emerge both

between and within countries. In Europe, mobile and fixed broadband penetration were 54 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, while the equivalent figures for Africa were 4 per cent and less than 1 per cent. In the Republic of Korea, in contrast, mobile-broadband penetration exceeded 90 per cent. Similarly, as a percentage of per capita gross national income (GNI), the cost of a broadband connection was much higher in the least developed countries than in developed countries. Those disparities must be addressed.

19. Recent developments that had not been anticipated during the World Summit included the rapid development of mobile Internet access, the growth of social networking and innovations such as cloud computing and smartphone technology, which had transformed mobile telephones into multipurpose devices. In some developing countries, almost all Internet subscriptions were on mobile networks, while social networks had made the Internet more interactive and enabled users to publish their own content. Mobile telephones, social networks and microblogging sites had expanded sources of information and people's ability to express opinions and coordinate activities, including political protests; they were widely credited with playing a significant role in the political transformations in a number of Arab countries in 2011.

20. The growing use of ICTs had also raised concerns about privacy and data protection. Governments and businesses were paying greater attention to cybersecurity and to the threat to social and economic order and to the integrity of the Internet posed by spam, malware, hacking, distributed denial of service and other attacks; cybercrime was now one of the top four economic crimes. It was essential to find ways to address cybersecurity issues without undermining the Internet's ability to foster innovation and deliver information and services.

21. The World Summit on the Information Society Forum, organized jointly by ITU, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was a valuable opportunity to exchange information and ideas among Governments, businesses and civil society. Its sixth annual meeting, on the theme of "Internet as a catalyst for change: access, development, freedoms and innovation", had been held in Nairobi from 27 to 30 September 2011 with over 2,000 participants; the

seventh annual meeting would be held in Baku from 6 to 9 November 2012.

22. There had been considerable progress in implementing the WSIS outcomes, including in the areas of broadband connectivity, cybersecurity, the deployment of e-services and capacity-building. Nevertheless, more should be done to narrow the digital divide and create an information society for all. The next steps should be to address the issues of universal ICT access and the availability of content in local languages, thereby enhancing the potential contribution of ICTs to achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. The United Nations Group on the Information Society had developed a draft plan of action for the 10-year review of implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit (WSIS+10); ITU would lead the review process.

23. **Mr. Fowlie** (International Telecommunication Union) said that the Plan of Action for WSIS+10, provided for a series of events, including the WSIS Forum 2013 and a 2014 review conference, hosted by Egypt, to be held in conjunction with the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference. The purpose of the review conference would be to ensure that the benefits of the information society were extended to all and that the potential of ICTs was harnessed in support of efforts to achieve the MDGs and to set the development agenda beyond 2015.

24. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "The future we want", had recognized that ICTs were a catalyst for the three pillars of sustainable development — social inclusion, economic prosperity and environmental sustainability — and had identified broadband networks as an important component in efforts to bridge the digital divide. The Broadband Commission for Digital Development, established in 2010 by ITU and UNESCO, had developed recommendations, targets and strategies to help Member States to use broadband technology for development. In a forthcoming report, the Commission would discuss ways of moving from the development of national broadband policies to the implementation of broadband technologies for the benefit of all.

25. **Mr. de la Peña** (Chair, Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum; Chair, fifteenth session of the Commission on Science

and Technology for Development), introducing the report of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (E/2012/48-A/67/65 and Corr.1), said that, following consultations held in 2011 and 2012, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) had made recommendations in five areas: developing more tangible outputs of the Forum's meetings and improving its visibility; improving the IGF preparatory process and the structure and working methods of the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group and strengthening the IGF secretariat; enhancing funding by increasing voluntary contributions, strengthening accountability and transparency and acknowledging host-country and in-kind contributions; expanding participation and capacity-building by improving online access to IGF and enhancing stakeholders' understanding of IGF Internet governance issues; and linking IGF to other entities involved in Internet governance through better communication, empowerment of the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group and outreach by the IGF secretariat.

26. **Ms. Melnikovich** (Belarus) said that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development played an important role in North-South cooperation on technology transfer and that South-South technological cooperation was also important. She welcomed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels (E/2012/49-A/67/66). Information and communications technologies should be used to facilitate the technology transfer that was crucial for achieving global sustainable development, including in the energy sector. Her delegation would continue to press for the establishment of a mechanism for the transfer of cutting-edge technology that would enable developing countries to tap into new forms of renewable energy.

27. **Mr. Holtz** (United Kingdom) said that the discussion of enhanced cooperation during the Commission's fifteenth session had been timely because of the need to ensure that the global information economy served all stakeholders in all countries. One practical example of enhanced cooperation was the recently launched Commonwealth Cybercrime Initiative, which had led to a formal framework for action comprising Governments,

intergovernmental organizations, ITU, the Council of Europe, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation and the business community. The partners engaged in enhanced cooperation in order to strengthen the capacity of countries, and particularly developing countries, to address the problem of cybercrime. The Initiative, which was the product of dialogue within IGF, demonstrated that the Forum was a catalyst of enhanced cooperation. Another example was the progress of ICANN and its Governmental Advisory Committee, which now comprised over 130 Governments and observers from intergovernmental organizations. The Committee's methodology had become more open through increased consultation with other stakeholder organizations and constituencies.

28. The comprehensive mapping of such regional and international initiatives would give everyone a better understanding of how the global information economy had benefited from the cooperation that they fostered. It would also help identify possible synergies and ways of leveraging activities for greater impact; critical issues that might be addressed by multi-stakeholder mechanisms involving Governments; and guiding principles and best practices for achieving effective cooperation among Governments, intergovernmental organizations and stakeholder communities.

29. He reiterated his Government's support for IGF, which stimulated the development of the global information economy and addressed issues of common concern. He welcomed the recommendations set out in the report of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (E/2012/48-A/67/65), which would ensure that the Forum met the needs of the global Internet community. Lastly, he requested an update on the status of appointments to fill the positions of Special Adviser on Internet Governance to the Secretary-General and IGF Executive Coordinator, which had been vacant for some time.

30. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that she agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom that the IGF vacancy must be filled as soon as possible in order to ensure continuity of leadership.

31. She welcomed the steps taken within and outside the United Nations system in follow-up to the commitments made at WSIS, particularly with respect to the need to make the benefits of new technologies

available to all. Enhanced cooperation would help expand the opportunities for Governments, civil society, industry and individuals from developing countries to contribute to Internet institutions that performed operational tasks, and thus to narrow the digital divide and cooperate in Internet policy-making in areas such as the protection of human rights, privacy and intellectual property rights, cybersecurity and law enforcement. IGF was the most notable example of enhanced cooperation; the Forum, which had the overwhelming support of stakeholders, provided an open venue in which private sector innovators, academics, civil society and Governments could forge partnerships to close the digital divide. Lastly, she reiterated her delegation's support for implementation of the WSIS outcomes, which would lead to enhanced cooperation with equal participation by all stakeholders.

32. **Mr. Elkaraksy** (Egypt) said that the full implementation of the WSIS outcomes was crucial and that his Government welcomed the opportunity to host the 2014 WSIS review conference. Strong partnership among all stakeholders was of the utmost importance in addressing the issue of Internet governance.

33. **Mr. de la Peña** (Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum; Chair, fifteenth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development) said that the priority themes of the Commission's fifteenth session had been innovation, research, technology transfer for mutual advantage, entrepreneurship and collaborative development in the information society; and open access, virtual science libraries, geospatial analysis and other complementary ICT and science, technology, engineering and mathematics assets to address development issues. In addition, the Commission had considered the question of applying a gender lens to science, technology and innovation; implementation of the WSIS outcomes; and the preparations for WSIS+10. It had chosen two priority themes for its sixteenth session: science, technology and innovation for sustainable cities and peri-urban communities; and Internet broadband for an inclusive digital society. The Commission recommended that the Council should adopt the two resolutions set out in its report (E/2012/31 and Corr.1).

Recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (E/2012/31 and Corr.1)

Draft resolution I entitled "Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society"

34. *Draft resolution I was adopted.*

Draft resolution II entitled "Science and technology for development"

35. *Draft resolution II was adopted.*

Draft decision I: "Report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its fifteenth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the sixteenth session of the Commission"

36. *Draft decision I was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.