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4. In the report on its seventh session (A/68/729-S/2014/67), the Commission decided to convene an annual session to commemorate "Peacebuilding Day"[1] and to enable closer interaction and engagement among the relevant stakeholders in New York and from the capitals of Member States on key challenges to international peacebuilding

9. In Burundi, the Commission participated actively in the steering group, led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, which oversaw the planning for the transfer of responsibilities from the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) to the Government of Burundi and the United Nations country team. Through its participation, the Commission sought to ensure that the drawdown of BNUB does not have a negative impact on the country's progress towards the achievement of sustainable peace and does not result in gaps in the international community's attention and commitment to peace consolidation in Burundi. The opportunities and con( )1(p)17(i8.)4(o)a15(o)-1w 0.301 0 Td e1 0 T

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medium- to long-term plan to develop a national peacebuilding strategy and a framework of mutual commitments with its regional and international partners.

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forward by the newly elected Government to clarify existing commitments for the exploitation of mineral resources, ensuring that resources are used to maximize public utility. This review should enable the country to improve its capacity to generate domestic resources. A national strategic plan, aimed at developing a vision of comprehensive State-building, is being developed by the new Government and will be presented at the donor conference. The conference will provide an opportunity for the Government to engage its partners in support of its medium- to long-term peace consolidation and development strategy. In response to those dynamic and nationally led planning processes and the Government's strong commitment to enact reforms, the Commission is expected to support the donor conference, including through advocacy with international partners.

19. The Ebola crisis has limited the performance of the Commission of this function in the three most affected countries on its agenda. The urgency and predominance of the emergency medical and public health response fell outside the Commission's purview and competence. The Commission has sought to strengthen its cooperation with the World Bank and other operational actors around the response to the Ebola crisis in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, focusing on the consequences of the crisis on State fragility, social cohesion and political institutions. The Commission invited the World Bank and the United Nations Office for West Africa in November to provide a brief on the economic, social and political impact of the crisis. The briefing was an opportunity to highlight the need for the scaling-up of international efforts to mitigate the deterioration in economic growth, State finances and core State functioning in the three countries.

20. The Commission will continue to fulfil its resource mobilization functions through a combination of advocacy, accompaniment and sustaining attention in a broad range of issues. This approach recognizes the deep interdependence among governance, inclusive politics and resource mobilization. It also builds on the Commission's utility as a diplomatic platform, as opposed to a venue for fundraising. The Commission's work on advocacy and sustaining attention, on resource mobilization and on forging coherence will increasingly become mutually reinforcing and will be pursued strategically to help place the needs and priorities of the countries concerned at the centre of the international community's attention. To this end, and as demonstrated by the discussion that took place at the annual session, there is a need to build more extensive country-specific and thematic partnerships

22. In Burundi, the Commission intensified its efforts to engage key regional partners, in particular during the brief period of political tensions that occurred during the reporting period. The visit undertaken in May by the chair of the Burundi configuration to Rwanda and to the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa, along with frequent meetings of the Commission with Burundi's neighbours, regional States and key international partners, has contributed to greater coherence of support at a time of heightened tensions. In addition, the Commission supported the coherence of peacebuilding-related initiatives in Burundi at the country level. The Commission has worked in close partnership with the Peacebuilding Support Office to enhance international support and build consensus around the programmatic activities in the country backed by the Peacebuilding Fund. This synergy will be particularly crucial in addressing the remaining critical peacebuilding issues, especially in relation to the conduct and acceptance of the upcoming elections and following the drawdown of BNUB.

23. In Guinea-Bissau, regional support and international commitment to a successful transition was evident throughout the preparation for the presidential and legislative elections, which were held in April and May. The Commission contributed to the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to ensure that neighbouring countries and other regional and subregional actors were kept informed and were invested in support of the transition process and the timely conduct of the elections. The Commission has continued to promote the coordination and alignment of support for the post-election priorities of Guinea-Bissau among States in the region, key subregional and international organizations and development partners.

24. With regard to the Central African Republic, the region will continue to play a supportive role in developing and encouraging a political solution to the crisis. The Commission can complement the efforts of the United Nations leadership in the field to ensure that the region and neighbouring States are working in close coordination in support of security and stability in the country. This approach would take into consideration the specific regional dynamics and the need to ensure that the security and political concerns and the interests of relevant regional actors are adequately addressed.

25. In Liberia, the Commission supported efforts by the Government, United Nations actors and bilateral partners to strengthen a coordinated approach to building capacity in the areas of justice and security, including the entire rule of law chain.

Coherence and the regional aspects of peacebuilding

26. During the reporting period, the Commission placed added emphasis on the importance of forging greater regional coherence as a key factor in helping countries to sustain peace and avoid relapse into conflict. Recent developments in countries on the Commission's agenda have highlighted the crucial role that neighbouring countries, the African Union and African subregional organizations can and should play as primary partners in sustaining political processes and in addressing sources of instability. The Commission, therefore, placed greater emphasis during the reporting period on actively engaging its African members, in particular those in the immediate neighbourhood of the countries on the agenda. The Commission also placed emphasis on sharpening the institutional linkages and collaboration with the

African Union and relevant subregional organizations with a view to more effectively addressing country-specific challenges and opportunities.

27. At the same time, the African members of the Commission have established a political caucus aimed at articulating a regional perspective on peacebuilding. The caucus could play a crucial role in catalysing a more proactive engagement of the African members and of the countries on the agenda in shaping and orienting the Commission's advice to the Security Council and in bringing greater alignment of regional and Member States' policies when addressing the needs and concerns of the countries on the agenda.

28. At its annual session on 23 June and at other meetings, the Commission noted the efforts of the African Union, with the support of the Economic Commission for Africa, to address the challenges posed by illicit financial flows from Africa. A regional approach to addressing this challenge would be required, including through technical assistance and experience-sharing among African countries. This is an area where the Commission's partnership with the African Union could contribute to gradual policy development at the global level through relevant intergovernmental forums.

29. In order to further advance the Commission's engagement and coordination with the African Union and African subregional organizations, the Chair led a delegation comprising the chairs of the Burundi and the Central African Republic configurations to Cairo and Addis Ababa from 24 to 26 November. In Cairo, the delegation participated in a workshop on the theme "Regional aspects of peacebuilding"

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Advance preparation for the 2015 review

39. Between May and October, the Organizational Committee embarked on advance preparation for the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture. In their respective resolutions 65/7 and 1947 (2010), the General Assembly and the Security Council called for a comprehensive review to be conducted in 2015. The purpose of the advance preparation was to foster broader ownership of the review among key Member States through inclusive and extensive consultations on the objectives, scope, methodology and modalities for conducting the review. In parallel, the Secretary-General initiated a process, endorsed by his Policy Committee in February, to develop a collective contribution to the review from the United Nations system (see A/69/553-S/2014/763). This process has generated recommendations on the strategic orientation and utility of the Commission. Both preparatory processes were designed to address a key shortcoming of the 2010 review, namely the lack of both ownership of its outcome and of recommendations from both Member States and the United Nations system. A broad understanding on the ambitions of and the

review. Those modalities would observe the intergovernmental character of the review, while ensuring that the process is informed by recommendations submitted through an advisory group of experts for consideration and final decision by the Assembly and the Council.

42. The advance preparations confirmed that Member States remain committed to ensuring that the outcome of the review will contribute to helping countries emerging from conflict to avoid relapse into conflict. Recent cases of relapse in the Central African Republic and in South Sudan highlight the continuing gaps in global, United Nations and regional support for peace consolidation. A key ambition for the 2015 review, therefore, would be to generate ideas that help strengthen the performance and impact of the Commission to realize its full potential and improve its work as a tool of strategic utility to operational actors in the field and its advisory role with regard to the General Assembly and the Security Council. The review could highlight key gaps in current political, developmental and security support for countries emerging from conflict for the benefit of policymakers and operational actors. In going over current practice, the review could highlight the practical links and complementarity between the security, institutional and socioeconomic-related aspects of peace consolidation and broader political frameworks.

43. The support for a broad scope for the 2015 review points to the acknowledgement by Member States that the political and operational components of a broader United Nations and global peacebuilding architecture must work in synergy. The Commission agreed, therefore, that the analysis underpinning the 2015 review should also be undertaken in conjunction and synergy with the upcoming review of peace operations by the Secretary-General.

Strengthening the advisory function with regard to the Security Council

44. The Commission has continued to explore ways to strengthen the advisory function to and improve interaction with the Security Council. The Commission has pursued two tracks in its relations with the Council: (a) a thematic focus on the transitions of United Nations missions coordinated by the Working Group on Lessons Learned under the chairmanship of Japan; and (b) periodic stock-taking, at the expert level, coordinated by Rwanda. The stock-taking exercise has examined the scope of the Commission's advisory function with regard to the Council and the modality of their interaction when countries are on the agenda of both bodies. In addition, the third informal interactive dialogue among members of the Council and the Commission's group of chairs addressed "the recurring relapse into conflict" witnessed in recent years.

Thematic focus: "transition of United Nations missions"

45. The transition of United Nations missions represents a key area in which the Commission can make a valuable contribution by providing advice to the Security Council.[2] During the reporting period, the Commission's advisory role in this area was carried out with a view to supporting the drawdown of UNIPSIL, the initiation of the drawdown of BNUB and the ongoing drawdown of UNMIL. Following initial

[2] Paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

discussions conducted by the Working Group on Lessons Learned in 2012, the Commission decided to focus on "the transition of United Nations missions and the role of the Peacebuilding Commission"[3] in 2014.

46. The drawdown and withdrawal of missions mandated by the Security Council in post-conflict settings reflects a country's transformation from conflict to sustainable peace and development. While a decrease in attention from the Council could be seen as a sign of positive developments in a post-conflict country, the development of sustainable national capacities and resources is a long-term process that requires clear commitment from national stakeholders, strong national leadership and sustained support from the international community. Through interactive discussions at its annual session and a series of consultations under the auspices of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, the Commission has identified two critical challenges resulting from the transition processes of United Nations missions: (a) sustaining support for funding and technical capacity gaps; and (b) sustaining support for inclusive political processes. The Commission's experience in accompanying the process of the drawdown and withdrawal of UNIPSIL has confirmed the importance of providing sustained international attention and engagement with those countries in transition, in close collaboration with the United Nations and other relevant actors. It has also shown that the Commission could play a useful role in sensitizing and engaging key partners in New York on the challenges the

49. The Commission discussed how, as part of its advisory function, it could play a more practical role in supporting a smoother and more seamless transition from a sizeable United Nations mission to a development-oriented presence of the United Nations. The Commission noted that its broad-based membership could help sustain political, financial and technical engagement on the part of the international community, including regional actors and the international financial institutions, following the drawdown of a United Nations mission and decreased attention from the Security Council. A more dynamic interaction and collaboration with the Council would contribute to a productive engagement of the Commission with countries in transition.

Thematic focus: "recurring relapse into conflict"

50. The third informal interactive dialogue between members of the Security Council and the Commission's group of chairs was convened on 15 July. The Presidency of the Council and the Chair of the Commission identified "recurring relapse into conflict" as a thematic focus for this year's dialogue. The dialogue focused on (a) the factors that help sustain peace and those that contribute to relapse; and (b) the critical systemic gaps that undermine the effectiveness of the United Nations and the international system's response to and engagement in post-

Periodic stock-taking of the scope of the advisory role of the Commission and the modality of interaction

53. The reporting period witnessed the continuation of the periodic expert-level stock-taking that was initiated in 2013 by the Organizational Committee under the coordination of Rwanda. The stock-taking discussions brought together representatives of the Council's presidencies, "pen holders", members of both bodies, chairs of country configurations and the countries on the agenda. The discussions confirmed that the Commission's advice to the Council needs to remain flexible and pragmatic and should be guided by country-specific contexts.

54. At the same time, some participants in those discussions called for a strategic approach to the Commission's advisory function that would help clarify how the diverse membership structure and flexible outreach to regional and international partners can complement and help reinforce the political strategy of the Security Council and the United Nations in each specific context. A more dynamic and strategically oriented use of the Commission's convening role, for example, could potentially contribute to improving regional and international coherence of positions and engagement in post-conflict situations.

55. The stock-taking discussions have pointed to three main principles that should underpin the modality of interaction between the Council and the Commission, namely (a) flexibility and informality; (b) engaging ambassadors, as well as country experts, on the Council; and (c) active follow-up by the Commission on the outcome of the Council's deliberations. In this regard, it was noted that certain Council presidencies have played a crucial role in creating an informal space for the chairs of country configurations and the countries on the agenda to discuss expectations and objectives of the Commission's engagement ahead of the Council's consideration of the situations in question. The Commission has recognized that "pen holders" can play an equally helpful role. Where they were activated, informal interactions led to formal briefings to the Council and reporting on field visits undertaken by the chairs that were better targeted and more responsive to the Council's needs. Council members have noted in particular that the Commission's interaction was particularly relevant and helpful when the timing of the chairs' field visits and subsequent reporting was aligned with the calendar of the Council's consideration of the situations in the countries concerned. In this respect, Council members noted that a combination of written communications and informal interactions would be particularly helpful. At the same time, some chairs suggested that the informal interactive dialogue format for country-specific discussions needed to be explored prior to an action envisaged by the Council, including during mandate revisions.

F. Working methods

56. The recommendations of the first ever Commission-led Peacebuilding Assessment Mission to Sierra Leone, conducted in November 2013, charted the future of the Commission's engagement with the country. Those recommendations emerged from broad-based consultations conducted by the chair of the configuration with the Government, the United Nations and key partners on the scope and form of the Commission's engagement with Sierra Leone during and after the drawdown of UNIPSIL. Those consultations were conducted during a visit to Freetown in

February 2014 and in subsequent discussions with members of the configuration, the

G. Emerging cross-cutting issues

Response to the outbreak of Ebola

59. The outbreak of Ebola has significantly affected three of the six countries on the Commission's agenda. The outbreak started in Guinea in early December 2013 and spread to neighbouring Liberia in March 2014 and Sierra Leone in May 2014. As a result, the Commission shifted its focus to raising awareness in New York of the posf 5.0E43n MaE43ep2(necg)-3(19-5(n)1o4( )1(s)22(posf 5.0E43)-5c43)-in7 Tc 15(n7 Tc 15 8(o)-8(

(see PBC/7/OC/3). The Commission consistently sought to mainstream a gender perspective throughout its policy and advocacy-related activities in collaboration with UN-Women during the reporting period.

64. On 3 September, the Commission held a special event dedicated to the theme "Women, everyday peacebuilders". The objective of the special event was to shed light on local peacebuilding initiatives led by women in diverse contexts. While high-level peace negotiations receive extensive attention, local peacebuilding initiatives generally garner far less recognition and support. The session was addressed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Leymah Gbowee of Liberia and brought

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Improve the advisory function with regard to and the modality of interaction with the General Assembly and the Security Council

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