

**Report of the Peacebuilding Commission
Assessment Mission
to Sierra Leone**

18-22 November 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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f. These factors suggest that the PBC should begin scaling down its role. The PBC should adjust its own engagement to reflect both the steady progress made to date and the expected level of international assistance ahead. At the same time, there is merit in the PBC remaining engaged, albeit in a modified manner, as emphasized by national, international and UN interlocutors.

g. As was the case with the Agenda for Change, the PBC should continue to explicitly align its work with national priorities as expressed in the Agenda for Prosperity. The UNCT in Sierra Leone has been supporting these priorities since early 2013 through the Transitional Joint Vision, which bridges UN programming in support of the Government of Sierra Leone until the regular United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) begins in 2015. PBC's focused role in Sierra Leone will require it to be more reactive to developments in the field and more flexible in its approach. As such, the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that the PBC's work should be guided by a set of key strategic principles, namely that future engagement be: Field-Focused; Responsive; Adaptable; and Needs-Based. The PBC should (i) continue to explicitly align its work with national

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Purpose of the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission

1. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) decided to “review the scope of its engagement with Sierra Leone following the successful completion of the electoral process in November 2012 (PBC/6/SLE/2). In March 2013, the Security Council also noted “its request in Resolution 2065 (2012) for the Commission to review its engagement with Sierra Leone following the successful completion of the elections and in line with the drawdown of UNIPSIL” and further requested “that the Commission review its engagement with a view to scaling down its role.”² Guided by the Security Council and its own commitments, this request marks the first time the Peacebuilding Commission has sought to gradually scale down its role in recognition of the peacebuilding progress achieved by a country on its agenda.

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II. PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

7. Sierra Leone has made significant progress in consolidating peace and stability since the end of the civil war in 2002 and is now increasingly focusing on sustained economic development. The international community has responded to these strides forward by reconfiguring its support, including by initiating the transition from a United Nations political mission to a normal UN Country Team setting. Nonetheless, some root causes of conflict will require attention in the longer-term in order to mitigate the risks of any potential relapse.

2.1 Overview

8. The country is now on a positive trajectory towards transforming into a resilient, stable state. Sierra Leone successfully conducted its third post-war election in November 2012 and is making notable progress strengthening democratic governance. Although ethno-regional and inter/intra-party tensions persist, the overall political atmosphere is dominated by the ongoing constitutional review process, which strives to be as inclusive as possible and represents an opportunity to address some of the root causes of the past conflict. Progress is being made in terms of security, justice and rule of law, while reform of the security sector and security services is ongoing. The Government of Sierra Leone also continues to exert efforts in strengthening national human rights and rule of law institutions, promoting gender and social equality, and strengthening human rights protection more generally. Socio-economic indicators have improved significantly, while rapid economic growth promises to further enhance public services. Consolidation of the peacebuilding process is fostering political stability, with the assistance of the UN, international and donor community and regional partners.

2.2 Agenda for Prosperity and UN Development Assistance Frameworks

9. The Government is implementing reforms focusing mainly on socio-economic development. It aims to address the root causes of fragility and outstanding risks for sustainable development. These are well captured in the Government's third development plan, "The Agenda for Prosperity, 2013-2018 (AfP)" to achieve middle-income country status by 2035.

10. The AfP is structured around eight pillars⁴. The overall strategy to implement the AfP is to exploit natural resources (minerals, iron ore and petroleum), generate private sector-led growth, and diversify Sierra Leone's economy. The AfP also addresses outstanding peace consolidation issues that will continue to demand attention, including

widely viewed as a significant milestone and were generally recognized as free and fair by international observers. Related disputes by opposition political parties have been channeled and resolved through appropriate legal mechanisms.

16. However, a wide range of interlocutors stressed tha

level are having insufficient impact at the community level, due to the lack of adequate systems to ensure that revenue generated through resource exploitation is invested in sustainable local development activities.

28. Despite the progress made, the country lags behind most sub-Saharan Africa and its MRU neighbours, ranking below most African countries for many social well-being indicators, including having access to basic social services such as water and sanitation for the rural population. Current investments in the extractive industries are not generating sufficient job opportunities, especially to address the high rate of youth unemployment. While this phenomenon is contributing to the rise of youth-related crimes and youth gangs in the country, the overall existing human capital was deemed weak by the interlocutors, who underscored the need for increased skills and capacity building, especially in national institutions. Progress in gender equity is still low as Parliament

III. THE FUTURE OF THE PBC IN SIERRA LEONE

3.1 A Scaled-Down Role

30. As seen in the above analysis and findings, several factors suggest that a scaling down of the Peacebuilding Commission's role would be warranted. First, Sierra Leone has taken significant steps towards consolidating peace and is increasingly focusing on longer-term development challenges. Second, the Security Council's decision to withdraw UNIPSIL is an important signal of stability. Third, the transition to a Resident

- **Field-Focused:** Focus on the developments, progress and strategic direction on the ground of all relevant stakeholders, including national and international partners, donor community and UN.
- **Responsive:** Respond to the needs of the country through political accompaniment, if required and as deemed appropriate.
- **Adaptable:** Modify and adjust the level and scope of PBC's engagement, if and when required in a flexible manner.
- **Needs-Based:** Keep abreast of the latest developments with an eye on peacebuilding perspectives and consider the needs, requirements and challenges in the country.

3.3 Thematic Scope

38. As was the case with the Agenda for Change, the PBC should continue to explicitly align its work with national priorities as expressed in the Agenda for Prosperity. The thematic scope of the Commission's engagement would thus include Governance and Public Sector Reform (Pillar 7), Gender and Women's Empowerment (Pillar 8), Managing Natural Resources (Pillar 2), and youth employment and empowerment, which is treated as a cross-cutting priority. The PBC's engagement should also take into account Sierra Leone's intentions to implement the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States.

3.4 A More Responsive Approach

39. Within these parameters, the Peacebuilding Assessment Mission recommends that the PBC adopt a lighter and more responsive accompaniment role. Rather than proactively seeking to address a wide range of peacebuilding issues, the Commission would instead continue to follow developments on the ground and respond to requests for support from the Government of Sierra Leone, United Nations, and international partners, if and as needed.

40. This lighter and narrower scope of engagement would be accomplished through informal cooperation with key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

and liaising with national and international interlocutors in the field and New York. It may also require drawing on resources resident within the configuration membership and

emerging challenges through informal means, whether by inviting Security Council Members to participate in relevant deliberations or by sharing views in writing.

IV. THE WAY FORWARD

48. This report outlines the Peacebuilding Assessment Missions' findings with respect to the parameters of the PBC's role in Sierra Leone beyond March 2014. It will form the basis for further consultations with the membership of the Sierra Leone configuration, including the Government of Sierra Leone and relevant UN entities. This consultation process will begin with an informal expert-level meeting of the Sierra Leone

ANNEXES

1. UN Security Council Resolution 2097(2013)
2. PBC/6/SLE/2
3. A/RES/60/1