

General Assembly

Informal Consultations of the Plenary  
on the  
Peacebuilding Commission

UK Statement on Behalf of the European Union

H.E. Mr Adam Thomson, Deputy Permanent Representative  
United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations

21 October, 2005





**EU STATEMENT FOR THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE  
PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION  
21 OCTOBER 2005**

Co-Chairs,

I should like to preface the EU Presidency statement by noting, as Presidency, that our over-riding objective is to support the GA President and yourselves in completing work to establish the PBC. There are complex and detailed issues which remain to be settled, although they are few in number. The EU will continue to reflect on all the issues, as necessary, with the aim of continuing to support your efforts to gain the maximum possible consensus.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Accessing Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this Statement.

Co-Chairs, I want to thank you for convening this debate and for your excellent options paper. The EU remains committed to finding a solution to the outstanding issues of the Peacebuilding Commission as soon as possible. We believe it should be one of the earliest gains of the Summit implementation process. It is vital to meet the 31 December deadline, both because there are countries that need the support of the Peacebuilding Commission now and because its early establishment will help reaffirm the credibility of the UN and lend momentum to wider Summit implementation. And to this end, we fully support President Eliasson's target of completing negotiations by early November.

Co-Chairs, the EU believes that it is important to keep our negotiations in the context of how the Peacebuilding Commission will work in practice. The institutional issues are important, but we should not tie ourselves in knots arguing about them. First and foremost, we need a Peacebuilding Commission that is effective and able to:

- Assess the situation of the country in question, identifying key factors for building a lasting peace and for meeting the needs of the people;
- Rally national and international capacity that already exists on the ground to meet those needs; and
- Mobilise and facilitate coordination on the required resources.

I want to re-emphasise the level of agreement that we have already reached. As President Eliasson said two weeks ago, we have already agreed the purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission, how it should make advice available, and the categories of its membership. Our leaders have signed up to these points and we should not seek to unravel them. Our attention should be on the five issues in your paper.

Turning now to these five outstanding issues:

### **Establishment**

On **establishment**, in the interests of securing as much consensus as possible for early establishment of the PBC, the EU is prepared to support the proposal for joint establishment by the GA and the Security Council, on the basis that the other outstanding issues are satisfactorily resolved.

### **Involvement of the host country**

On the **involvement of the host country**, the EU believes that it is crucial from a practical perspective as far as possible to ensure national ownership of the peacebuilding process in every country situation. Without this peacebuilding will not be sustainable. The Peacebuilding Commission should reinforce national ownership, through participation of the national authorities in its meetings and by ensuring that the wider international community gives a high priority to national ownership. The EU underlines that part of the PBC's efforts should be to help build and restore the capacity of national or transitional authorities.

The EU recognises, however, that in some immediate post-conflict situations, there may be no national or transitional authority to participate in early planning for peacebuilding. For the Peacebuilding Commission to start work, consent from established national authorities is always desirable, but might not always be possible. Therefore, the EU supports the language reflected in point a) with the inclusion of the bracketed language "as possible".

The EU also recognises that in all cases the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence must be respected for the provision of humanitarian assistance. This might be reflected in preambular language in the final text.

### **Agenda setting**

On **agenda setting**, the EU believes that the countries most in need of the support of the Peacebuilding Commission, are in reality, those countries that are emerging from conflict and therefore on the agenda of the Security Council. Therefore the EU supports your point b) as the basis on which to build language. That is to say, the Peacebuilding Commission should consider items on the Security Council agenda brought to it by that body. In addition, any member state of the UN in an exceptionally difficult circumstance, emerging from or on the verge of conflict, should be able to request the advice of the Commission. The Organisational Committee should consider the relevance of such requests. The EU also believes that in urgent situations, the Secretary-General should be able to ask the advice of the Commission.

### **Mechanisms for interaction with other bodies**

The EU welcomes the way you have framed section VI of your paper as **mechanisms for interaction with other bodies**. Peacebuilding is a multifaceted task requiring the involvement of many different actors. There is a consequent need, as described in paragraph 99 of the Outcome Document, for the outcome of PBC discussions to be made widely available. The Outcome Document has already provided for the PBC to report annually to the General Assembly.

The Peacebuilding Commission's remit will be to advise on the full range of peacebuilding issues. The members of the Commission - from the Security Council, ECOSOC, the BWIs, regional and other organisations - will be able to take from PBC discussions proposals for action for all those bodies as appropriate.

How the Peacebuilding Commission relates to UN bodies, and how they follow-up on the Commission's deliberations will need, of course, to be consistent with those bodies' Charter responsibilities and other relevant Charter provisions, their respective mandates and responsibilities and their role in the different phases of peacebuilding.

The EU believes that the language in your final text should reflect the reality of the wide range of peacebuilding activity across the UN and the international system, necessary to contribute to sustainable solutions and to make long-term development possible. The EU sees the PBC as a catalyst for this.

### **Membership of the organisational committee**

The EU strongly supports the four categories of membership for the organisational committee, as set out in para 101 of the Outcome Document. The EU considers that:

- The organisational committee of the Peacebuilding Commission should not be so large as to be unwieldy, but large enough to allow for appropriate representation in the four categories;
- As necessary, it should be for the different bodies and categories of members to determine arrangements for their participation;
- Rotation should apply as far as possible;
- The desirability of gender balance should be borne in mind.

In conclusion, Co-Chairs, I want to thank you once again for your hard work on the options paper, and assure you of the EU's support over the coming weeks in order to reach early agreement on this important new body.

\* *Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

