

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission: origins and initial practice

Richard PONZIO

In September 2005, the United Nations (UN) World Summit in New York brought together representatives from more than 170 states to discuss global challenges, including security, poverty and UN reform. Among the more significant reforms introduced at this unprecedented gathering of world leaders was the commitment to establish at the United Nations, no later than 31 December 2005, a Peacebuilding Commission.¹

This article provides a brief overview of the conceptual and institutional context in which the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was created. This is followed by an examination of the PBC's mandate, structure and the "state of play" toward the end of its inaugural year. Finally, some strategic and operational priorities are outlined, which could overcome shortcomings in the design and initial efforts of the Commission. Upon the arrival of the new Secretary-General, this article aims to further the debate on what can be done to ensure the progressive development of this potentially powerful new instrument for building sustainable peace.

The origins of the Peacebuilding Commission

THE CONCEPT OF PEACEBUILDING

Coined in the 1970s by Johan Galtung,² peacebuilding gained significant currency in the 1990s, when UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined post-conflict peacebuilding as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict".³ The United Nations continues to situate peacebuilding squarely in the realm of post-conflict recovery, contrary to the view of many scholars and practitioners, who assert that peacebuilding has as much to do with prevention as recovery.⁴

Peacebuilding should be distinguished from the narrower concept of peacekeeping (although the two are often undertaken simultaneously). Peacekeeping is defined by Marrack Goulding as an operation to prevent fighting from re-starting, which includes military (and often police) personnel and "...is deployed with the consent of the [feuding] parties ... and is required to be neutral and impartial between them".⁵

Richard Ponzio is a DPhil Candidate in International Relations at the University of Oxford. He has served in peacebuilding operations with the UN system in Africa, Asia, the Balkans and the Pacific. For comments on earlier versions of this article, the author is grateful to Patty Chang, Christine Cheng, Kerstin Vignard and two anonymous reviewers.

THE UNITED NATIONS' PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

A central aim of any peacebuilding activity is to leverage political, financial and technical resources to bring warring factions together in support of the aims of a peace process. The United Nations' peacebuilding activities include drafting or amending constitutions; implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; channelling urgent humanitarian assistance to communities; facilitating transitional justice systems; strengthening state institutions and the delivery of public services; fostering independent civil society and media organizations; placing the security sector under democratic, civilian control; and organizing elections.

The end of the Cold War and the reduction in ideological tensions created the political space for traditional peacekeeping operations to extend their mandates to a wide range of peacebuilding activities. The United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia (1989–90) was the first such operation; its mandate included the supervision of elections, policing and demilitarization. It was the first time that the United Nations actively assisted the creation of a democratic sovereign state through a peace operation. According to V.P. Fortna, UNTAG successfully monitored and reinforced a climate of security and “most important, it was to build confidence in and to legitimize the peace process, the elections, and the result of the transition: the new state of Namibia”.⁶ The Namibia operation was soon followed by far larger and even more complex operations in El Salvador (ONUSAL, 1991–95), Angola (UNAVEM II, 1991–95), Cambodia (UNTAC, 1991–93)⁷ and Mozambique (ONUMOZ, 1992–94). These extended mandates included, among other things, human rights monitoring and education, temporary jurisdiction of state ministries, the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants into civilian life, police strengthening, instituting permanent electoral bodies, and even the promotion of economic liberalization.

By 1999, interventions in Kosovo (UNMIK), Timor-Leste (UNTAET), and Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) represented the most sophisticated, costly and intrusive peacebuilding operations to date. Kosovo and Timor-Leste, in particular, were unique—full-fledged international transitional administrations. These operations were soon followed by large missions in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Burundi (ONUB), Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Haiti (MINUSTAH), Liberia (UNMIL) and Sudan (UNMIS). Together, these constitute the largest number of concurrent, sizeable peacebuilding operations ever: by 2006, the United Nations had deployed over 90,000 military and civilian personnel in the field.⁸

The United Nations is represented in the field by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (which currently directs and supports 18 peace operations of various types), the United Nations Development Programme (the world's largest grant-making agency, which has a Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and field operations in most developing countries), the Department of Political

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Affairs (currently administering ten regional and country-level missions) and some 31 other agencies, funds and programmes. In addition, a wide range of actors participates in today's international peacebuilding operations as members or representatives of the “international community”. These actors include international financial institutions, regional organizations, individual UN Member States and coalitions, national development agencies, intergovernmental organizations outside the UN structure and international non-governmental organizations.

The involvement of so many players in peacebuilding means that the coordination and integration of peacebuilding activities have emerged as significant concerns. As Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis write:

The need for better strategy coordination when several international agencies intervene in the same conflict is a lesson that is frequently heard in policy circles, but seldom addressed by the responsible agencies. The United Nations currently has a Department of Political Affairs staffed predominantly with diplomats whose major responsibility is “peacemaking,” political analysis, and support for mediated peace processes. It has a Department of Peacekeeping Operations that manages the deployment of military forces for peacekeeping. Peacebuilding is assigned to the Department of Political Affairs, but expertise that focuses on the nexus between institution building and economic development is scattered across the UN system in the United Nations Development Program [sic], the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the World Bank, and (most significantly) among the officials who manage peacebuilding efforts in the field.⁹

Some progress was made in the area of coordination following the recommendations of the Brahimi Report on UN peace operations.¹⁰ For instance, in October 2001 the first full-time Integrated Mission Task Force was established in New York to encourage joint planning among UN bodies for the new mission in Afghanistan. But the task force was prematurely disbanded in February 2002, well before the new mission was fully deployed. Efforts to foster greater coherence and support for UN system-wide peacebuilding missions continue to fall short of needs and expectations.¹¹

The United Nations has contributed to the reduction in civil conflict of recent years;¹² however, despite the best of intentions, the organization itself recognizes that it has regularly failed to prevent the recurrence of war and establish functioning and inclusive political institutions in war-torn societies.¹³ According to Charles Call and Susan Cook, of 18 conflict-affected countries where the United Nations sought to facilitate political transformations between 1998 and 2002, 13 were still classified as authoritarian regimes in 2002.¹⁴ Of 11 peacebuilding operations launched between 1989 and 1998, Roland Paris concludes that only two were successes (Croatia and Namibia), two were obvious failures (Angola and Rwanda) and the seven remaining operations fell somewhere between these two extremes.¹⁵

It was in this context that in September 2003 the UN Secretary-General tasked a High-level Panel to propose major reforms to the UN institutions that seek to promote peace and security. Evidently, the Secretary-General and influential UN Member States were unsatisfied with the Security Council and General Assembly’s ability to mobilize sustained support for countries in conflict, especially over the medium to long term;¹⁶ concern was also raised about the performance of operational units in coordinating, sharing limited resources and steering their respective peacebuilding activities toward common ends. According to Jehangir Khan, former Deputy Director of Policy Planning in the UN Department of Political Affairs and former coordinator of the Iraq Team:

We desperately needed a high-level political body to support political processes and help countries implement peace accords. Historically, the Department of Political Affairs had been the lead UN body for peacebuilding, but it is not set up to be operational, even though past attempts were made to establish a Peacebuilding Unit in support of field operations. The Commission can help to create better coordination and leadership on peacebuilding across the UN system.¹⁷

The High-level Panel recommended the creation of two new bodies: a Peacebuilding Commission and a Peacebuilding Support Office.¹⁸ The Secretary-General endorsed this proposal in his March 2005 report *In Larger Freedom*, setting the stage for its consideration at the 2005 World Summit.¹⁹ As proposed by the High-level Panel, the new organs would have two core objectives: to help states avoid collapse and the slide to war and to assist states in their transition from war to peace. The PBC was expected to build bridges and facilitate joint planning across the UN system as well as with partners in

New York and on the front lines of peacebuilding interventions. It would provide high-level political leadership, additional funds and expert advice. Although some developing countries voiced concern about increasing external political intrusion in what have traditionally been considered the domestic affairs of sovereign states, the initiative quickly gathered momentum.

First steps

MANDATE AND STRUCTURE

Emphasizing the need for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving sustainable peace, recognizing the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development, and recognizing the vital role of the United Nations in that regard, we decide to establish a Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body.²⁰

It was agreed that the PBC would serve as a subsidiary body of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Given the perennial tension between the Security Council (whose permanent members often view significant matters of international peace and security as falling exclusively within the Security Council's domain)²¹ and the General Assembly (which may discuss matters of international peace and security and derives its legitimacy from near universal membership), it is not surprising that both UN organs claimed authority over the functioning of the Commission. This dual authority, however, raises questions about reporting lines and the follow-through of PBC recommendations.

Following consultations in late 2005, concurrent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on 20 December 2005 detailed the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission:

- (a) To bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery;
- (b) To focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development;
- (c) To provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.²²

It is important to emphasize that the PBC is only a *consensus-based advisory body*. Its influence within the UN framework stems entirely from the quality of its recommendations, the relevance of the information it shares, and its ability to generate additional resources for a conflict-affected state whose perceived importance on the international agenda has receded.

Due to this lack of formal authority, even when consensus is reached, it might be difficult to achieve the level of coordination envisaged in the third point of the resolutions. Furthermore, it is remarkable that after these three points (the first two of which are repetitive), the remainder of the five-page resolution deals with essentially procedural issues, particularly concerning the PBC's relations

with major UN organs and the composition of the Commission's two main bodies: the Organizational Committee and the country-specific meetings. Paradoxically, the Commission—presented as a major UN reform that would help to streamline and rationalize the United Nations' work practices in New York with important dividends in the field—immediately became bogged down in mainly procedural matters during its creation and first year of operation.

The Organizational Committee consists of seven members of the Security Council (including all permanent members), seven members of the Economic and Social Council, five top providers of assessed and voluntary contributions to the United Nations, five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to UN missions and seven additional members, giving due consideration to regional representation. All Organizational Committee members are invited to participate in the country-specific meetings, in addition to the country under consideration, relevant regional organizations and countries engaged in the post-conflict process, senior UN field representatives, and all major contributors of finance, troops and civilian police. At present, the formal relationship between the PBC and non-state actors remains unclear.

Alongside these bodies, the General Assembly and Security Council requested the Secretary-General to establish both a small Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and a multi-year standing Peacebuilding Fund. Currently staffed with 12 professional officers and led by Carolyn McAskie (Canada) at the rank of Assistant Secretary-General, the PBSO was created *within existing resources* to provide secretariat support to the Commission.²³ The PBSO is expected to gather and analyse information relating to the post-conflict countries on the agenda of the PBC: this includes financial resources, development planning, assessing progress toward recovery goals and best practices in peacebuilding. The PBSO's Policy and Analysis Support Section is also developing a web-based knowledge platform to serve as a locus of best practices and lessons learned on peacebuilding across the UN system.

With a target of US\$ 250 million, US\$ 210 million have been pledged to the Peacebuilding Fund as of early March 2007.²⁴ The fund is managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and is intended to enable the quick release of resources for high-impact peacebuilding activities.

STATE OF PLAY

The PBC Organizational Committee met for the first time on 23 June 2005. In April 2007 its seemingly unwieldy 31 members include the five permanent members (China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States) plus Panama and South Africa from the Security Council; Angola, Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia and Sri Lanka from the Economic and Social Council (two seats are currently vacant); Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands and Norway as major UN financial contributors; Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Nigeria and Pakistan as major providers of military and police officers to UN missions; and Burundi, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji and Jamaica as the seven additional members elected by the General Assembly. The Commission elected Angola as its first Chair and El Salvador and Norway as its first Vice-Chairs. This membership is reported to have been negotiated in a climate of suspicion, and its first six months were preoccupied with procedural issues.²⁵

Many observers argue that the PBC's real added value will come from the work of the country-specific meetings, and following a letter from the Security Council's President, Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark, to the head of the PBSO, the Organizational Committee agreed that Burundi and Sierra Leone would be the first two cases on the PBC's agenda.²⁶ The first two rounds of country-specific meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone were held in New York in October and December 2006. Immediately, the PBC's

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work was perceived as equating to a pledging conference: in November the PBSO sent missions to Burundi and Sierra Leone to take stock of the situation on the ground, clarify the focus of the Commission and dispel this misperception.

The first country-specific meeting on Burundi agreed on three broad priority categories: good governance, rule of law and security sector reform, and community recovery; within these categories several further priorities were identified, including strengthening national dialogue, the role of women and regional states in peace consolidation and the delivery of basic public services.²⁷ At Sierra Leone's first meeting, it was agreed that four critical areas would be addressed: youth empowerment and employment; consolidating democracy and good governance; justice and security reform; and capacity-building.²⁸ It was also agreed that detailed peacebuilding work plans would be prepared for both countries prior to the next round of meetings (expected to be held in mid-2007).

The Peacebuilding Commission has already succeeded in allocating US\$ 35 million to both Burundi and Sierra Leone, as announced by the Secretary-General to the African Union Summit in January 2007.²⁹ But the PBC's "shaky beginning"—the acrimony generated in deciding on its composition, and the fact that "even at the initial stage, the Commission has very little to show", as noted by the Brazilian Representative at the PBC, Ambassador Piragibe dos Santos Tarragô—is undeniable.³⁰

Greater than concern about it doing little, however, is concern about the Commission duplicating, confusing and diverting scarce resources by developing the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies (IPBSs) that many UN Member States have insisted upon in an effort to "find its niche". Ambassador Thomas Matussek, on behalf of the European Union, commented that "promoting the development of a viable peacebuilding strategy which has broad ownership is where the Commission can really add value"; Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, has argued that a "holistic, coherent and inclusive approach" must follow from the recommendations of the PBC.³¹ The PBC is currently devising an IPBS in partnership with each of the countries on its agenda.

On one hand, such strategies are a logical and often useful component of any post-war reconstruction effort, especially when the governments receiving foreign assistance lead the preparations and learn from the experience. On the other, how could yet another strategic peacebuilding framework benefit a country such as Sierra Leone, which, with the support of the international community, already maintains a Poverty Reduction Strategy, a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and a Peace Consolidation Strategy? It would be difficult to name a candidate country for the PBC that does not already have similar home-grown, carefully developed plans in place. Local strategic planning exercises are a far better means of empowering local counterparts than efforts in New York, and such local exercises are likely to better analyse and reflect the core peacebuilding priorities of the country.

Moreover, Member States determining at UN Headquarters specifically how UN bodies should work with one another and on which activities in a particular country context is a highly bureaucratic exercise. Rather than adding a layer of confusion at the international level, the PBC would be better suited to coordinate and align donor resources behind locally designed and agreed integrated peacebuilding strategies—the real gap within the UN system remains the need to augment significantly the resources to support the civilian components of UN peace operations, such as establishing permanent electoral management bodies, training parliamentarians and devising anti-corruption strategies.

Strategic and operational priorities

Many innovative ideas have already been put forward to focus the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission—several are presented in this issue. Here three substantive and three operational priorities are outlined.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Peacebuilding means different things to many people. The PBC's country-specific meetings to date have underscored a long list of priority areas, including good governance, employment, youth empowerment, the role of women and regional states in peace consolidation, justice and security sector reform, community recovery, strengthening national dialogue and capacity-building. But the PBC cannot be successful if it tries to take everything on. A sharpening of the Commission's focus would clarify and distinguish its role *and* add significant value to the UN system as a whole. Naturally, an in-depth debate among UN Member States and other relevant actors would be necessary to decide which strategic priorities the Commission should concentrate on, which at this stage Member States still have the opportunity to do. Here are three initial proposals for the Commission's attention:

Preventing violent conflict

The High-level Panel's proposed emphasis on conflict prevention as one of two key pillars of the Peacebuilding Commission was removed during negotiations in the lead-up to the 2005 World Summit. Despite the United Nations' advances with the concepts and practice of preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention,³² this area was omitted from further discussion. Ostensibly, powerful UN Member States shared a concern for any challenge to the pre-eminence of the Security Council in this area. Their reluctance might have also stemmed from a fear of equipping the United Nations with intelligence-gathering capabilities that could potentially be used against them.

This decision to focus solely on the "post-conflict" dimensions of peacebuilding runs counter to the advice of countless international conferences, scholarly studies and UN-sponsored reports, which all place conflict prevention at the heart of the United Nations' mandate. At a time when warfare technologies can kill and maim an unprecedented number of civilians, current UN capacity to avert violent conflict is woefully inadequate, particularly in gathering and analysing early warning data. From moral, political and economic perspectives, prevention makes sense (as shown, for example, through the United Nations' experience in preparing for and reducing the effects of natural disasters). The General Assembly's and the Security Council's resolutions regarding the PBC should expand its mandate: conflict prevention should be central to the work of the PBC.

Sequencing the expansion of effective democratic governance

Since the end of the Cold War, the United Nations has managed or initiated 30 country-level peace operations with a significant political institution-building component.³³ The most successful missions have succeeded in helping a country to build stable and democratic governing institutions—including an independent judiciary—to mediate competing domestic interests and to address the root causes of a conflict peacefully. However, the literature suggests that most peacebuilding initiatives focus "on the immediate or underlying causes of conflict—to the relative neglect of state institutions".³⁴ Skilfully sequencing the expansion of democratic authority in a war-affected society is rarely simple or inexpensive. The Peacebuilding Commission, as it is starting to illustrate in the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone, can facilitate this delicate and resource-intensive process by helping local and international actors work together to strike a proper balance between local democratic governance capacity-building and near-term political-security imperatives. Learning from the initial experience of Afghanistan, donor-recipient

government “compact mechanisms” could serve as a major instrument for tracking progress toward concrete democratization benchmarks and ensuring domestic and international accountability.³⁵

Combating corruption

Few problems can erode local and international confidence in new democratic authorities and their ability to deliver vital public services more than perceived endemic corruption. Corruption can undermine the peace process and facilitate a slide back to violent conflict.³⁶ The PBC is in a position to champion a culture of “zero tolerance for corruption”; it can influence honest behaviour in a country in exchange for sustained international engagement. Strategies advocated by the Commission should include regular assessments (for example, on perceptions and estimated costs of corruption) and stressing a multi-prong approach—specific steps to foster prevention and enforcement, raise awareness and address the root causes of corruption.

OPERATIONAL REFORMS

The current peacebuilding architecture of the UN system—in terms of staffing, financial resources and partnerships—provides insufficient assistance considering the complexity, costs, geographic distances and long duration associated with modern international peacebuilding interventions. Several operational changes could be envisaged to improve this state of affairs.

Expand the size and purpose of the Peacebuilding Fund

Increased expectations of UN political and technical leadership in post-conflict situations should be matched by increased financial resources. Given the billions spent annually on peacebuilding, capping the Peacebuilding Fund at the paltry sum of US\$ 250 million is short-sighted. The 2004 and 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan alone cost US\$ 318 million.³⁷ In addition to proposed annual assessed budgetary contributions for UN peacebuilding operations, which could be recommended by the PBC and authorized by the General Assembly, a Peacebuilding Fund of at least US\$ 2 billion should be made readily available for a range of projects intended to jump-start government activity and improve its performance at key, time-sensitive junctures (e.g. following an election). Perhaps the UN Trust Fund for Human Security could ultimately be merged with the Peacebuilding Fund.

Strengthen partnerships with civil society and regional organizations

Successful peacebuilding cannot be achieved by any one actor or a small group of actors, however politically and financially powerful, working in isolation. It is therefore unfortunate that well into the PBC’s first year the subject of civil society’s formal representation at the Commission is still contested. Similar to the precedents set in other UN bodies, such as the Commission on Sustainable Development (established in 1992), civil society organizations should be given ample opportunity to make substantive contributions as well as monitor the proceedings of the Peacebuilding Commission. With financial and

logistical support from the UN Secretariat, it is especially important that local civil society organizations from countries under consideration by the PBC are systematically given the chance to have their views heard at formal country-specific meetings. Similarly, regional organizations should be allowed to contribute formally to all country-specific meetings and, occasionally, to the work of the Organizational Committee (after issuing a formal request to the Chair of the Commission).

Increased support for field operations

With only 12 professional staff, and drawing on existing UN resources, the Peacebuilding Support Office is barely equipped to fulfil the Commission's secretarial, monitoring and analytical needs, let alone provide the necessary substantive and administrative support to field operations. At present, no one department or agency of the UN Secretariat maintains adequate resources to effectively support peacebuilding interventions. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is thinly staffed with personnel more suited to political reporting and assisting the military aspects of peacekeeping operations, and the Departments of Political Affairs and Economic and Social Affairs are too overstretched to provide dedicated support staff to a peacebuilding operation in the field. One possibility would be to transfer parts of UNDP's headquarters operations into relevant sections of the UN Secretariat.

Alternatively, a more imaginative and arguably more suitable proposal would be to create a new Department for Peacebuilding and Reconstruction. This permanent and well-resourced body would assure dedicated, around-the-clock support to the Peacebuilding Commission and its multiple, concurrent field operations. This would significantly reduce confusion, overlap, ad-hocism, contradicting mandates and the waste of resources among UN actors, and would lead efforts to mainstream conflict prevention approaches across the work of the United Nations. Admittedly, this might be a more radical proposal than UN Member States would be willing to accept at present: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's proposal to restructure DPKO through a new Department of Field Support received support from the General Assembly in March 2007, but the proposals will still be subject to a review process that could extend until June 2007. And even then, these proposals do not provide sufficient UN Headquarters support for the range of civilian field activities that characterize twenty-first-century peacebuilding.

A more imaginative and arguably more suitable proposal would be to create a new Department for Peacebuilding and Reconstruction.

Conclusion

The Peacebuilding Commission has come a long way. Almost overnight, it has elevated post-war peacebuilding concerns on the international political agenda. It performs a valuable service in shining a spotlight on forgotten countries that are no longer deemed "high priorities" but have yet to consolidate a durable peace. To further advance the UN system's performance to a level commensurate with current peacebuilding challenges, it is not too late to refocus the energies of the PBC along the lines outlined above, particularly in the sensitive realm of conflict prevention. Moreover, in the spirit of building a twenty-first-century international organization that can respond resolutely to its fiercest critics (and to preclude "coalitions of the willing" from supplanting it), far greater technical and financial resources are needed to ensure that the United Nations can support and monitor the performance of its ever-growing and increasingly complex peacebuilding operations.

Notes

1. Indeed, it is interesting to note that as of April 2007, under the heading “Follow-Up” at the very top of the 2005 World Summit web site, the only items mentioned are the UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission (see <www.un.org/summit2005/documents.html>).
2. Johan Galtung, 1975, *Peace, War and Defence - Essays in Peace Research*, vol. 2, Copenhagen, Christian Ejlert, pp. 282–304.
3. *An Agenda for Peace: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN document A/47/277 – S/24111, 17 June 1992, at <www.un.org/docs/SG/agpeace.html>, paragraph 21. For a comprehensive review of how 24 governmental and intergovernmental bodies conceptualize peacebuilding, see Michael Barnett, Hunjoon Kim, Madalene O’Donnell and Laura Sitea, 2007, “Peacebuilding: What is in a Name?”, *Global Governance*, vol. 13, no. 1, January–March, pp. 35–58.
4. Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis view peacebuilding as fostering the “social, economic, and political institutions and attitudes that will prevent ... conflicts from turning violent. In effect, peacebuilding is the front line of preventive action” (Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, 2000, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis”, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 94, no. 4, p. 779). Charles Call and Susan Cook refer to peacebuilding as “efforts to transform potentially violent social relations into sustainable peaceful relations and outcomes” (C.T. Call and S.E. Cook, 2003, “On Democratisation and Peacebuilding”, *Global Governance*, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 240).
5. Murrack Goulding, 2002, *Peacemonger*, London, John Murray, pp. 14–15.
6. V.P. Fortna, 1994, “United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia”, in W.J. Durch (ed.), *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, New York, St Martin’s Press, p. 362.
7. With reference to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia, Michael Doyle writes, “Not since the colonial era and the post-World War II Allied occupations of Germany and Japan had a foreign presence held so much formal administrative jurisdiction over the civilian functions of an independent country”. Michael W. Doyle, 1995, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC’s Civil Mandate*, Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner, p. 13.
8. Center on International Cooperation, 2006, *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations*, Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner, p. ix.
9. Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, 2006, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, p. 344.
10. *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, or the Brahimi Report, reproduced in UN document A/55/305 – S/2000/809, 21 August 2000.
11. Besides the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, efforts are under way to further improve UN system coordination in peace operations through the Integrated Mission Planning Process. See Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Integrated Mission Planning Process*, 2004 Heads of Mission Conference, UN document DPKO/HMC/2004/12, 23 January 2004.
12. See, for example, Human Security Centre, 2005, *Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. According to a RAND study of eight recent UN peacebuilding operations, the decrease in deaths from armed conflicts—from an average of over 200,000 per year during the 1990s to an estimated 27,000 in 2003—can be attributed, in part, to the efficacy of UN peacebuilding. James Dobbins et al, 2005, *The UN’s Role in Nation-Building: From the Congo to Iraq*, Santa Monica, CA, RAND Corporation, p. xxxvi.
13. “Over the last decade, the United Nations has repeatedly failed to meet the challenge [of ending the scourge of war], and it can do no better today”, states the Brahimi Report, op. cit., Executive Summary.
14. Call and Cook, op. cit., pp. 233–234.
15. Roland Paris, 2004, *At War’s End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 151.
16. As David Harland, then head of DPKO’s Best Practices Section, remarked: “The UN Security Council should have carried out its role of convening all relevant peacebuilding actors better. It could have held proper discussions with, for example, the World Bank and IMF among others”. Interview with the author, 28 June 2005.
17. Interview with the author, 28 June 2005.
18. High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, 2004, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, United Nations.
19. *In Larger Freedom* does not mention the two objectives specified by the High-level Panel; as discussed later in this article, the debate was already moving away from a conflict prevention role for the PBC (*In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN document A/59/2005, 21 March 2005).
20. 2005 World Summit Outcome, United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005, UN document A/RES/60/1, 24 October 2005, paragraph 97.

21. UN Charter Article 12(1) states: “While the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests.”
22. United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/180 of 20 December 2005, UN document A/RES/60/180, 30 December 2005; Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), UN document S/RES/1645(2005), 20 December 2005.
23. “A small support office was chosen ... to avoid replication and to promote coordination, standard setting, and quality control”, explains former UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette (interview with the author, 26 July 2006).
24. “UN Grants Sierra Leone \$35 million to Help It Build up Institutions for Peace”, *UN News Service*, 1 March 2007.
25. See, for example, Security Council Report, *Special Research Report: Peacebuilding Commission*, 23 June 2006; Security Council Report, *Update Report No. 5: Peacebuilding Commission*, 25 January 2007, available at <www.securitycouncilreport.org>.
26. It is estimated that the Commission will take up to four to five cases each year. New countries for possible consideration by the PBC include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia and Timor-Leste.
27. *Chairman’s Summary, Burundi Country-Specific Meeting, Peacebuilding Commission*, 13 October 2006, at <www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/pdf/burundi-chair-13oct2006.pdf>.
28. *Chairman’s Summary, Sierra Leone Country-Specific Meeting, Peacebuilding Commission*, 12 October 2006, at <www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/pdf/sierraleone-chair-12oct2006.pdf>.
29. Secretary-General’s address to the summit of the African Union, Addis Ababa, 29 January 2007. Although these funds are now available for Burundi, the allocation for Sierra Leone will only be released once the review process for its priority plan is completed.
30. United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, 87th plenary meeting, UN document A/61/PV.87, 6 February 2007, p. 9.
31. United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, 86th plenary meeting, UN document A/61/PV.86, 6 February 2007, p. 8 and p. 6.
32. Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined preventive diplomacy as “action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur” (*An Agenda for Peace: Report of the Secretary-General*, op. cit., paragraph 20). Building on this definition, Kofi Annan argues persuasively that the UN Charter “provides the foundation for a comprehensive and long-term approach to conflict prevention based on an expanded concept of peace and security” (*Prevention of Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN document A/55/985 – S/2001/574, 7 June 2001, paragraph 20).
33. The UN country-level missions are Afghanistan (UNAMA 2002–), Angola (UNAVEM II, III and MONUA 1991–1999), Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH 1995–2002), Burundi (ONUB 2004–), Cambodia (UNTAC 1992–1993), Central African Republic (MINURCA, BONUCA 1998–), Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI 2004–), Croatia (UNTAES, 1995–1998), Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC 1999–), El Salvador (ONUSAL 1991–1995), Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS 1999–), Guatemala (MINUGUA 1997), Haiti (UNMIH, UNSMIH, UNTMIH 1993–1997, MINUSTAH 2004–), Iraq (UNAMI 2003–), Kosovo (UNMIK 1999–), Liberia (UNOMIL 1993–1997, UNMIL 2003–), Middle East (UNSCO 1999–), Mozambique (ONUMOZ 1992–1994), Namibia (UNTAG 1989–1990), Nepal (UNMIN 2007–), Nicaragua (ONUCA and ONUVEN 1989–1992), Papua New Guinea (UNOMB 1998–2004), Rwanda (UNAMIR, 1993–1996), Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL 1999–2005), Somalia (UNOSOM II and then UNPOS 1993–), Sudan (UNMIS 2005–), Tajikistan (UNTOP 2000–) and Timor-Leste (UNTAET, UNMISSET, UNMIT 1999–). Only peace operations with a political institution-building component are included in this classification. Immediately successive UN missions are recorded as one continuous mission.
34. Michael Barnett et al, op. cit., p. 36.
35. Now used in Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Sudan and Timor-Leste, compact mechanisms detail concrete, time-bound benchmarks agreed by donors and the host country on a range of peacebuilding and recovery issues.
36. See, for example, Alix J. Boucher, William J. Durch, Margaret Midyette, Sarah Rose and Jason Terry, 2007, *Mapping and Fighting Corruption in War-Torn States*, report no. 61, Washington, DC, Henry L. Stimson Center, at <www.stimson.org/fopo/pdf/Mapping_and_Fighting_Corruption_in_War-Torn_States.pdf>; Daniel Large (ed.), 2003, *Corruption in Post-War Reconstruction: Confronting the Vicious Circle*, Baabda, The Lebanese Transparency Association, TIRI and UNDP.
37. “Q&A: Afghan Election Guide”, *BBC News*, 3 October 2005, at <news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4251580.stm> and calculations based on financial data collected from the Afghanistan Joint Electoral Management Body, at <www.jemb.org>.