

**Fourth Meeting of the Peacebuilding Board
14 December 2016
15.30-17.00, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Participants

Board Members

1. Mr. Mano Tittawella, Secretary General, Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (Co-Chair)
2. Ms. Una McCauley, Resident Coordinator (Co-Chair)
3. His Excellency Mr. Tung-Lai Margue, Head of Delegation, EU
4. Mr. M.S.Jayasinghe, Director General, Office of National Unity and Reconciliation
5. Mr.W.M.V.Narampanawa, Secretary, Ministry of National Coexistence.
6. Ms H.M.S. Jayatunge, Additional Secretary, Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation
7. Mr. A. Pathinathan, Chief Secretary Northern Provincial Council
8. Mr.V. Mahendraraja, Deputy Chief Secretary Planning, Eastern Provincial Council
9. Ms G.C.Welikala. Assistant Secretary (Legal), Ministry of Justice
10. Ms. Mirak Raheem, Civil Society Representative
11. Mr. Brito Fernando, Civil Society Representative
12. Mr. Juan Fernandez, Senior Human Rights Advisor, UN Resident Coordinator's Office

Other Participants

1. Ms. Selyna Peiris, Deputy Director, Office of National Unity and Reconciliation
2. Ms. Dulmini Dahanayake, Assistant Director, UN Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3. Ms. Libuse Soukupova, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation
4. Ms. Gita Sabharwal, Reconciliation and Development Advisor, UN Resident Coordinator's Office
5. Ms. Zoë Keeler, Coordination and Transition Specialist, UN Resident Coordinator's Office
6. Ms. Niroshini Fernando, UN Resident Coordinator's Office

Background

The fourth meeting of the Board was planned to review and endorse the initial concepts for projects that are being proposed for funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. The EU was also invited to provide an overview of their planned support to the Peacebuilding Priority Plan.

Opening Remarks – Mr. Mano Tittawella

The Secretary General of the Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM), Mr. Mano Tittawella, opened the meeting. He explained that the objective of the meeting was to review the proposals for different areas of work in line with the PBF priority areas of the PPP and later develop into project proposals. He also noted that it was hoped that in addition to PBF funding, other development partners would also consider extending support.

Mr. Tittawella provided an overview of what has taken place concerning Transitional Justice (TJ) since the Board last convened. The Consultation Task Force's report has been completed and printed in English,

with Sinhala and Tamil translations expected in the next few weeks. The executive summary and key recommendations have been printed in all three languages. The Task Force members are waiting for a date for when they can present the report to the President, and it is hoped this can be done before the end of the year. The intention is that the report is made public and can be widely discussed by all stakeholders. Mr. Tittawella expressed his thanks to the Task Force members for their commitment, while noting that the report's findings and recommendations will serve as an important backdrop to the Government's finalizing of the TJ mechanisms.

Mr. Tittawella explained that since the Technical Working Groups are waiting for the report prior to making their recommendations, the process of designing the mechanisms is a little behind schedule. However, it is hoped that by the end of the first quarter of next year the legislative frameworks for the reparations, truth commission and accountability mechanisms will be in place.

There has also been a slight delay in gazetting the OMP and it is hoped that it will take place shortly. The structure of the OMP has been designed in consultation with various stakeholders, as well as the consultants provided by the UN. There have also been extensive consultations with the ICRC. The budget for the OMP and reparations has been approved under the miscellaneous section of the budget. Once the gazetting is done, the Constitutional Council will call for suitable candidates to serve as Commissioners, and Mr. Tittawella asked the Board members to encourage suitable people to apply.

Mr. Tittawella also informed the Board that there has been a slight delay in obtaining approval for the Reconciliation Policy document, however it is hoped that this will be resolved in January. As a final note, Mr. Tittawella noted the capacity building assistance provided to SCRM by the UN, and reinforced the need to continue strengthening local capacity, especially in the TJ and reconciliation programme areas, and at the provincial levels. He also noted that SCRM is talking to stakeholders about a comprehensive multi-pronged communications programme.

Una McCauley, UN Resident Coordinator

The UN Resident Coordinator informed the board that the UN has been developing the first drafts of the concept papers that would address how the USD 7million of the PBF would be allocated, and in addition has been working with the EU to develop the projects for their support to the PPP.

In terms of programming the USD 7 million, it was explained that some of the PPP priorities were clustered so that they could be implemented through a small number of large projects, rather than many smaller projects. This would help in reducing overheads. Some of these projects are extensions of the support under the Immediate Response Facility while others have new areas of focus.

The UN Resident Coordinator also presented the mapping database that has been developed to illustrate the different partners with projects in support of PPP priorities. The database will be maintained by the UN and used to facilitate coordination and harmonization in programming.

Review of PBF Project Concepts (Presentation attached)

1. Transitional Justice (TJ)

Mr. Tittawella discussed the first clustering which is TJ. The concept note looks at design and operationalisation of all the mechanisms such as OMP, reparations, truth and accountability. It also has a component for civil society to ensure their critical role in TJ. The counterparts in this area are SCRM and ONUR, alongside line Ministries, and this is important as several areas of TJ needs to be done along with ONUR e.g. issuing the Certificates of Absence required the intervention of ONUR as well as other agencies and Ministries.

Mr. Brito Fernando commented that the Government is still issuing Death Certificates for missing persons and this needs to stop. Victims should be given the opportunity to obtain the certificate of absence, even if they have already been issued Death Certificates. Mr. Tittawella responded by saying that a circular has to be issued concerning the Act or its amendment. Adding to that, Mr. Jayasinghe informed the Board that the circular has been issued to the District Secretaries and the Divisional Secretaries where the public can commence the process of getting certificate of absence in place of Death Certificates. As there is not much awareness on the circular, SCRM will look into the matter and see how to publicise it.

2. Reconciliation

The UN Resident Coordinator then discussed the second concept note which is on Reconciliation. The Infrastructures for Peace and Dialogues component looks at local level institutional arrangements to promote peace and reconciliation, in targeted pilot locations. This will be something that needs to be further developed by looking at the needs of particular areas. This area will also look into how mediation boards and civil society can be supported to hold dialogues and engage communities in sustaining long-term peace. Peace education is also an important component of the project, and will involve looking at how the education system is geared towards peacebuilding and promoting peaceful resolution of conflict. The Psychosocial support component focuses on support at community level, rather than individual access to psychiatrists, but will also take a victim-centric approach.

Mr. Jayasinghe (ONUR) commented that a key issue in psycho-social support is the lack of doctors and qualified personnel in these difficult areas. The first step is to appoint the relevant officials so that the programme can be implemented and this issue needs to be discussed with the Ministry of Health.

Commenting on peace education, Ms. Selyna Peiris (ONUR) stated that a lot of money has gone into reform, however the separation of peacebuilding from education reform is an issue. If the education system is to promote reconciliation, then it should be a pillar on which the entire education system stands. Recognizing this issue as a priority is a challenge, and the Peacebuilding Board should be able to push for this prioritization to happen. Mr. Brito Fernando queried about involving the teachers' unions and other trade unions in the curriculum revision and which Ministries will be involved in this.

The UN Resident Coordinator responded that not including the teachers' unions is an oversight that will be addressed. She also noted that while institutionalization of education reform is happening, it is slow.

Mr. Pathinathan (Chief Secretary, Northern Provincial Council) queried as to why only certain districts were selected for the psychosocial programme and not all districts. The UN Resident Coordinator responded that the programme looks at where this support is most required, and also takes into account

the locations currently being supported through the PBF's IRF Project. Also, the PBF requires impact in order to mobilize more funds, and so there needs to be prioritization for certain interventions. The piloting can then be scaled up by the Government and other partners.

3. Women and Youth

The next concept note was on Women and Youth. On Youth, the focus would be around building their understanding of peacebuilding and what it means for Sri Lanka, and providing opportunities to volunteer in peace related activities. It would also include working with institutions to provide space for youth to engage in policy and programming. Regarding women, the main areas of programming are linked to the empowerment of women for the local elections, and support for full and effective operationalisation of the 25% quota.

Ms. Selyna Peiris commented that a gap analysis commissioned by ONUR found there is lack of definition concerning Female Heads of Households (FHH). The analysis showed that no interventions can be targeted directly for FHH due to this lack of definition. Therefore, addressing some of the immediate needs of FHH should be flagged in promoting peace and reconciliation. The UN Resident Coordinator agreed to raise this issue at a government meeting the next day on FHH. Ms. Selyna Pieris commented that it is important for the Government to prioritize within the reconciliation plan and deliver on those priorities. This will help with confidence building towards the government.

4. Independent Commissions

The UN Resident Coordinator discussed the support to independent commissions – the National Police Commission, the Human Rights Commission and RTI. There will also be complementary support to some of the same commissions through the EU project.

5. SCRM and the PBF Secretariat

Discussing the final concept note on SCRM and the PBF Secretariat, Mr. Tittawella reiterated that this encompasses support to TJ mechanisms, policy design, communications and capacity development as well as support to the UN's Secretariat which assists with coordinating the work under the PPP. The Flexible Fund is important to continue the dialogues (an example is the recent military dialogues that are ongoing) as well as the development and implementation of new legislation.

EU Support to the PPP (Presentation attached)

EU Head of Delegation, Ambassador Tung-Lai Margue commenced the session by thanking the UN for the partner mapping that was presented as it provided clarity about the development partners and their contributions and is very useful for coordination. He agreed with the UN Resident Coordinator that there are sometimes difficulties in linking these interventions to peace and reconciliation, but it is important to look at it from the lens of durable solutions, durable development and capacity building.

The Ambassador stated that the EU's focus is on governance and reconciliation, as most of the challenges are in these areas. The mapping is therefore useful to see who is doing what in terms of the timing and sequencing of interventions.

The EU is implementing early measures, and for this there are two packages of commitments – the first is EUR 12 million for the non-recurrence pillar of reconciliation. The second commitment is for EUR 8.1 million Euros for TJ, technical support to SCRM and support to governance and resettlement. There will also be an inter-service mission in January bringing together all the services of the commission, to identify steps for the medium term which will help to mobilize more funds.

Ms. Libuse Soukupova then discussed the EU support to the PPP titled catalytic support to peacebuilding in Sri Lanka. The first project is for 18 months with a funding envelope of EUR 8.1 million, the main implementing partner being UNDP as well as other agencies. The project addresses all core areas of the PPP – TJ, reconciliation, governance and resettlement. It was unveiled as a joint programme that would support; the implementation of the Government's commitments in relation to transitional justice; the implementation of a communications strategy to build greater awareness and willingness amongst the public to engage constructively in the peacebuilding process; the strengthening of essential capacities of Parliament, Provincial Council National Police Commission and Human Rights Commission; as well as build upon wider policy engagement in terms of durable solutions.

The second project is longer term and will start early 2017 and continue until about 2021 with a funding envelope of EUR 12 million, while the implementing partners are GIZ and British Council who will also contribute additional funding. The project design has been done in consultation with the Ministry of Reconciliation, Ministry of National Integration and Reconciliation, Ministry of Dialogue, Coexistence and National Languages. The project will cover the areas of strengthening of institutions and support for the non-recurrence pillar.

The UN Resident Coordinator added that the PPP has enabled other partners with resources to come forward with projects, or with an interest to support. The PPP is proving a helpful framework for coordinating support, and determining priorities in consultation with Government.

Mr. Mirak Raheem discussed that it is important to consider the Government's contribution. As an example, UNHCR used to assist the refugee returns from South India. However, UNHCR is no longer able to continue with this service and the Ministry then continued with the assistance. However, this has now been suspended. It is important for the Government to show its commitment to such measures. Land issues are also complicated and it becomes important for the Government to look at how these issues are solved, whilst also considering TJ mechanisms. While the support from development partners is much needed and appreciated, it is important for the country to not become completely dependent, but for the government to also consider its own contribution.

Mr. Tittawella responded that the support of the EU, UN and other partners is a catalyst, while the primary responsibility is with the government. While there are some challenges in implementing the discussed areas, the government is looking to solve these issues as quickly as possible.

Closing remarks

Mr. Tittawella informed the Board that Ms. Subajini Kisho Anton is being nominated as the third Civil Society representative on the Board replacing Ms. Navaranjini Nadarajah. Mr. Tittawella closed the session saying that the first quarter of 2017 will be crucial with much to be done, but it is also a time of opportunity to make progress.