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**General Assembly**  
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**Integrated and coordinated implementation of  
and follow-up to the outcomes of the major  
United Nations conferences and summits in the  
economic, social and related fields**

**Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit**

## **Identical letters dated 24 October 2014 from the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council**

Nearly five years ago, the General Assembly and the Security Council conducted a comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture that was established in 2005 (see General Assembly resolution 60/80 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005)).

The 2010 review ([A/64/868-S/2010/393](#), annex) found that “the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2005 was seen as a groundbreaking step, holding new promise for the populations of countries emerging from conflict. Five years later, despite committed and dedicated efforts, the hopes that accompanied the founding resolutions have yet to be realized”.

In advancing a number of recommendations, the facilitators of the review expressed the hope that the exercise would help strengthen the collective resolve to deal with peacebuilding in a more comprehensive and determined way.

The General Assembly and the Security Council welcomed the review, requested all relevant United Nations actors to take forward the recommendations of the report, and called for a further review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture five years later (see General Assembly resolution 65/7 and Security Council resolution 1947 (2010)).

As the General Assembly and the Security Council prepare to conduct this review, I have set out my own views on behalf of the United Nations system and its entities.



The original motivation for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office, as laid out in 2005 in the report of my predecessor entitled “In larger freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all” (A/59/2005), remains equally valid today.

A comprehensive review in 2015 must introduce the changes that will better enable these entities to play a more effective role in support of countries emerging from conflict and in reducing the incidence of violent conflict, including by promoting women’s participation in peacebuilding.

In order to support your discussions, I convened my Policy Committee in February 2014 to examine ways to get the most out of the Peacebuilding Commission, the centrepiece of the structures created in 2005. We concluded that an effective and relevant Peacebuilding Commission is one that can capture and bring to bear the collective weight of Member States in support of United Nations mandates, leadership and objectives in the field. Following this discussion, I asked all relevant United Nations entities to take advantage of the Commission and identify areas, strategic opportunities and gaps where the Commission can be most useful. The 2015 peacebuilding review offers an opportunity to clarify the areas of strength and potential utility of the Commission; identify more flexible and dynamic modes of its engagement; and identify the situations and settings that are most appropriate for such engagement.

The review could also consider adaptations of the Peacebuilding Support Office and its role in support of the Peacebuilding Commission, its management of the Peacebuilding Fund, and its interactions with other United Nations system entities engaged in peacebuilding activities.

In the annex to the present letter, I present more detailed considerations, based on the experience of the United Nations system, that could help shape a more dynamic Peacebuilding Commission, as well as a more strategically oriented Peacebuilding Support Office.

I understand that Member State consultations in preparation for the 2015 review have generated a shared understanding of the terms of reference. I am convinced that a comprehensive review, informed by country-specific experiences, can help create the foundation for constructive changes in the peacebuilding architecture and our support for countries emerging from conflict.

In the light of changes in the nature of conflict and the increasing complex global operating environment, I have also decided to initiate a review of the United Nations peace operations, which will be concluded in 2015. While distinct in nature and scope, we should ensure positive synergy between the two reviews. Their outcomes should be mutually reinforcing.

I stand ready to support Member States in their efforts around these matters.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 and 115, and of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* **BAN** Ki-moon

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**Annex to the identical letters dated 24 October 2014 from the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council**

**United Nations system inputs to the 2015 review of the “peacebuilding architecture”**

**Vision and aspirations for the “peacebuilding architecture”<sup>a</sup>**

1. It was 10 years ago that the “peacebuilding architecture” was established. The Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change had written in its report “A more secure world: our shared responsibility” (A/59/565) that “serious attention to the longer-term process of peacebuilding in all its multiple dimensions is critical; failure to invest adequately in peacebuilding increases the odds that a country will relapse into conflict”. The report, “In larger freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all” (A/59/2005), noted that “there is a gaping hole in the United Nations institutional machinery: no part of the United Nations system effectively addresses the challenge of helping countries with the transition from war to lasting peace”.

2. This was the rationale that underpinned the creation of the peacebuilding architecture. It was accompanied by high expectations of what the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and a small Peacebuilding Support Office would be able to achieve.

3. The vision that these foundational documents and the 2010 review sketched is yet to be realized. Many of the recommendations put forward by the review conducted in 2010 have remained unimplemented or have not achieved their objective of reinvigorating the peacebuilding architecture, which can play an effective role to complement and enhance the efforts of the United Nations system in peacebuilding.

4. The 2015 review thus represents an important opportunity to introduce the changes required to achieve this goal and meet the motivations and objectives underlying the creation of the peacebuilding architecture. The United Nations hopes that Member States will not shy away from a thorough discussion of those necessary changes and modifications, and that they will be bold in their decisions to adopt and implement recommendations to bring about tangible change. The United Nations system and its entities are keen to contribute to this intergovernmental process. Member States should be assured of our unwavering commitment to work with the peacebuilding architecture to respond effectively to the needs and aspirations of countries emerging from conflict.

**Developments and trends over the past decade**

5. A decade has passed since the peacebuilding architecture was first created. While in recent years the United Nations has recorded notable successes, such as

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<sup>a</sup> This term was used in the 2010 review to describe the three entities established pursuant to the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1) and General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

enabling the withdrawal of long-standing peace operations in Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone, countries continue to experience tragic relapses into violent conflict. The most prominent examples in the recent period are South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

6. The peacebuilding architecture was created to improve the efforts to help countries in the arduous transition from war to peace; from conflict and chaos to the rule of law, good governance and legitimate and effective institutions; and from war economies to sustainable development. The tragic relapse into conflict in South Sudan, the Central African Republic and elsewhere underscores that the original motivation for creating the peacebuilding architecture remains as relevant today as it was in 2005.

7. At the same time, the United Nations system and its structural organization and operational engagement in the field have changed considerably over the course of the past 10 years.

8. More than ever before, peacebuilding lies at the very heart of what the United Nations does in countries emerging from conflict, encompassing a wide range of political, security and developmental interventions by our peacekeeping operations, special political missions, country teams and other actors. As established in the 2010 report of the Secretary-General on women's participation in peacebuilding ([S/2010/466](#)) and Security Council resolutions 1889 (2009) and 2122 (2013), the full and meaningful participation of women in all stages of peacebuilding is a linchpin for sustainability and effectiveness.

9. The Security Council has recognized both the importance of peacebuilding and the complexity of the tasks. Mission mandates have evolved over the past decade and have become more specific and detailed, reflecting the areas we have collectively identified as critical for successful peacebuilding.

10. Building on the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the "Brahimi report", [A/55/305-S/2000/809](#)), United Nations peacekeeping operations have become more multidimensional. Peacekeeping operations lead early peacebuilding efforts working in an integrated manner with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Among other things, we have added considerable civilian capacity and technical expertise on the rule of law, governance and institution-building.

11. United Nations special political missions have also grown in number and scope, providing not only Good Offices functions, but also contributing directly to the advancement of inclusive politics, building institutions and laying the foundation for sustained peace.

12. In the same manner, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have become more sensitive to the political nature of their work and to the relevance of conflict and fragility. Even in contexts without a United Nations mission, United Nations country teams work more closely together in pursuit of the objectives of sustainable peace, stability and prosperity. As the successive reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict have illustrated, there has been significant progress in the United Nations ability to implement programmatic activities in support of peacebuilding strategies.

13. The Peacebuilding Fund has become an important mechanism enabling the Good Offices, facilitation and peacebuilding strategies of the United Nations to be complemented by programmes supporting institutional strengthening, dialogue and inclusive economic development. The agenda of the Secretary-General to advance integration and the endeavour to work, and deliver, “as one” has also yielded some important successes.

14. We remain conscious that much remains to be achieved, and the United Nations can and should do better in many areas. The challenges occurring in countries emerging from conflict, and the relapses into violent conflict we continue to see, underline the need for continuous learning and adjustment.

15. But the “gaping hole” identified in the report “In larger freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all” has changed considerably. Actors beyond the United Nations system have recognized the centrality of conflict and the need to build lasting peace in order to achieve sustained development and prosperity. The World Bank highlighted this in its *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, and has begun to adapt its operational engagement in countries emerging from conflict. Self-declared “fragile” States and their development partners have agreed on the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States as a new partnership paradigm to work towards lasting peace, security and development. In addition, Member States are in the process of negotiating a new development framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

16. As a result, the United Nations believes the time is right for the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture to consider these developments and trends and to adjust the peacebuilding architecture accordingly. These adjustments should look to ensure that the political and diplomatic weight of the Peacebuilding Commission, derived from its unique membership structure, can be deployed in ways that are more complementary to the efforts of the United Nations system. The Peacebuilding Fund has been successful in enhancing peacebuilding strategies. We should look for ways to further expand its scope and more effectively utilize its potential.

### **Peacebuilding Commission**

17. The Peacebuilding Commission is the centrepiece of the peacebuilding architecture, capturing and bringing to bear the collective weight of Member States in support of United Nations mandates, leadership and objectives in the field.

18. Due to its central importance, the Secretary-General convened his Policy Committee in February 2014 to discuss ways to “get the most out of the Peacebuilding Commission”. Through the Secretary-General’s subsequent decision, he asked all relevant United Nations entities to take advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission and identify areas, strategic opportunities and gaps where the Commission can be most useful.

19. The Policy Committee also discussed our collective views on the role that the Peacebuilding Commission can and should play.

### **Potential utility**

20. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Chairs of country-specific configurations is political and New York-based. It is a role that requires political entrepreneurship, with a primary focus on the development of consensus around

common objectives by international and regional political stakeholders, donors and multilateral actors. The Commission deliberations should support and complement United Nations, regional and national efforts to consolidate peace and not seek to coordinate or review United Nations operational activities in the field.

21. The Peacebuilding Commission can be used to bolster existing United Nations and regional efforts to create a favourable environment for specific conflict-affected countries. The Commission could assist efforts to gain greater Member State support for regional initiatives in support of countries emerging from conflict and for policy development relevant to these contexts. The utility and success of such efforts is critically dependent on close coordination between the Commission and United Nations leadership on the ground, as well as on a common understanding of their respective roles.

22. The Peacebuilding Commission can play a role in resource mobilization by highlighting funding and capacity gaps to the international community, helping to broaden the donor base for conflict-affected States and encouraging a coordinated approach within their own governments. In recent years, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission have developed a close working relationship, exploiting synergies in support of the countries on the Commission agenda. The Peacebuilding Fund draws on the political weight of the Commission. It has allocated about 50 per cent of all resources since its inception to countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

23. While there are many examples of the Peacebuilding Commission having fulfilled the roles noted above, its overall performance has been inconsistent. The current working methods of the Commission, including its decision-making by consensus and large country-specific configurations, undermine its ability to respond in accordance with the needs of a particular context. The Peacebuilding Commission has also often suffered from a lack of engagement with and from United Nations departments, agencies and funds.

24. Against this background, the United Nations Senior Peacebuilding Group, a system-wide mechanism at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, explored four specific areas in more detail, namely in order to:

- Identify more flexible and dynamic modes of engagement by the Peacebuilding Commission
- Identify which situations and settings are most appropriate for engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission
- Identify the relevance and implications of global developments and initiatives since 2005 for the Peacebuilding Commission
- Review the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

25. Following its review and discussions, the Group recommended to:

- Use smaller structures and more flexible modes of engagement, including through informal country-specific meetings with members selected on the basis of their relevance to a particular context
- Reinterpret what it means to be “on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission”, adapting it to the specific context or situation at hand, which could imply a lighter form than the “country-specific configuration”

- Use the Good Offices of the Secretary-General more actively to refer countries to the Commission, either directly in the case of non-mission countries or through the Security Council in the case of mission countries, and engage the Chair of the Commission and the Organizational Committee in the referral process
- Use a wider range of outputs, including declarations, statements, recommendations, conclusions and reports, depending on the circumstances, and reconsider the use of the instruments of engagement.

### **More flexible and dynamic modes of engagement**

26. For a more dynamic, lighter, informal and flexible Peacebuilding Commission that is able to draw more effectively upon its diverse membership, the Commission could consider using different modes of engagement. Smaller and more targeted country-specific meetings could be authorized by the Organizational Committee with the Chair, the Vice-Chairs or a Member State designated to Chair. This should not preclude that a dedicated Chair or coordinator oversees country-specific meetings on certain countries or crisis situations.

27. For each situation, a different set of stakeholders could be convened, allowing the country-specific meetings to be designed around the needs of the country under discussion. Depending on the specifics of the context, this might include neighbouring States, regional organizations, critical donors and key Security Council members. The Peacebuilding Commission Chair should play an active role in determining the subgroup of Commission members relevant for a specific country. The Organizational Committee could oversee and review progress on a regular basis and convene formal meetings when necessary, for example, to formalize an outcome (such as a declaration or statement). More systematic involvement of key United Nations entities in meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission should be encouraged in order to inform the Commission of the key opportunities and obstacles to progress in the country and the key gaps in political, technical or financial support.

28. The strength of the Peacebuilding Commission is its diverse and flexible membership. However, the engagement of a broad range of countries in the Commission's country-specific work has been the exception rather than the rule. A wider and deeper engagement by the Commission membership, without necessarily enlarging the meetings, is required to provide the political weight that is often needed. Targeted participation by regional Member States, regional organizations and regional and international financial institutions in particular could be beneficial. Moreover, deeper involvement by lead Departments of the Secretariat (the Departments of Political Affairs and of Peacekeeping Operations) and other members of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), would also be useful because of the link to the field and the support that they provide to peacebuilding efforts at the country level.

29. The instruments of engagement, which the Peacebuilding Commission has used in the past to frame its engagement with a country, should be reconsidered. These instruments have had limited impact and imposed too great a burden on the country concerned and the membership of the Commission. Where a national strategy or a compact developed by the countries exist, the Peacebuilding

Commission should be able to frame its engagements based on these already existing frameworks.

30. The Peacebuilding Commission could consider using a wider range of outputs, including declarations, statements, recommendations, conclusions and reports, depending on the circumstances, much like the Security Council. The process to produce these outputs should be an important vehicle through which to achieve and convey the collective political positioning of Commission members.

31. More flexible modes of engagement require a reinterpretation of what it means to be “on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission”.<sup>b</sup> The United Nations system could take a proactive role in the use of the option of a referral by the Secretary-General, which could contribute to a simpler and faster process. Consultations with the Chair and members of the Peacebuilding Commission would also be useful. With lighter, more flexible and more dynamic modes of engagement, “being on the agenda” could mean that the Commission meets as and when necessary for the purpose of enhancing collective political support of Member States for a country emerging from conflict or political crisis. The time period to be “on the agenda of the Commission” would be determined by the specific context and needs, and it could range from the time period of a single event to a period of a few months or several years. Being on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission should not automatically mean that a country is the subject of a country-specific configuration, with possible reporting requirements, for several years until a formal “graduation” from the agenda. Consideration should also be given to ways to incentivize being “on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission”, including through advocacy and drawing attention to critical funding gaps, as well as through advocacy for technical support for domestic revenue generation and public financial management.

#### **Appropriate situations and settings**

32. The Peacebuilding Commission is most useful advocating for countries that need additional or sustained attention from the international community in terms of political support or resources, including countries that seem to be “forgotten”. The Commission’s longer-term attention span can be particularly valuable in cases of chronic instability and extended post-conflict transitions. These countries may or may not be on the agenda of the Security Council, but there will be certain issues that require sustained and longer term international attention and resources.

33. It is difficult to define the characteristics of a typical country affected by conflict that could benefit from engagement by the Peacebuilding Commission. Yet, there might be some common elements, including the importance of bringing together the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development — the relevance of neighbouring States to the crisis, for example,

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<sup>b</sup> The founding resolutions mentioned four possibilities of referral: requests for advice from (a) the Security Council; (b) the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly; (c) Member States in exceptional circumstances that are on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and are not on the agenda of the Security Council; and (d) from the Secretary-General. So far, only the first option and the third option have been used, five times and once, respectively. The last option — from the Secretary-General — has never been used. It can only be used for countries that are not on the agenda of the Security Council and it requires the consent of the country concerned. If the Council is actively seized with a country, the Secretary-General can send a request to the Council.

to address displacement and its effects, and the need for international support for weak or nascent political institutions. In addition, the Commission could be useful in situations where the Security Council is not able to engage effectively because of a lack of convergence among its members. The advisory nature of the Peacebuilding Commission and its broad-based membership could make it acceptable as a forum in cases where the Security Council is divided as long as the issue is not overly contentious among the Council members.

34. The Peacebuilding Commission could also consider expanding discussions on thematic issues relevant to countries emerging from conflict. The engagement on policy issues could seek to enhance Member State support for existing initiatives or seek to advance new Member State agreements. The annual sessions of the Commission, together with the work of the Organizational Committee and the Working Group on Lessons Learned, can be designed to become the vehicles for such a normative role.

### **Relevance and implications of global developments and initiatives**

35. Many of the developments and trends since 2005 that are highlighted above are worth noting and have direct implications for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. On the whole, the United Nations has become more conscious of the multidimensional nature of the peacebuilding challenge and United Nations operations — whether peacekeeping operations, special political missions or United Nations country teams — have become more attuned to focusing on the many complex aspects of peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict.<sup>c</sup> As a unique intergovernmental platform, the Peacebuilding Commission could catalyse much-needed broad-based political support to United Nations mandates and objectives in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries from traditional and emerging powers, key development partners and regional and subregional organizations. Greater buy-in and long-term commitment from the multitude of security and development actors is critical for the sustainability of peacebuilding-related outcomes.

36. Globally, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (comprised of the development partners and the Group of Seven Plus fragile States) emerged as an important forum to coordinate and influence global peacebuilding policy. The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States has remained controversial politically, but includes all six countries currently on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. Where a national strategy or a compact developed by the countries exist, the Commission should be able to frame its engagements based on these existing frameworks in order to avoid duplication of efforts. Compacts or

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<sup>c</sup> There are a number of policies and institutional and operational changes in the United Nations that have reflected greater understanding of and determination to effectively respond to peacebuilding needs and challenges. As part of the growing operational focus of the United Nations system on peacebuilding, United Nations support of rule of law and civilian capacities has evolved in recent years. In 2012, the United Nations created the Global Focal Point on Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-conflict and other Crisis Situations. Other developments within the United Nations include the Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, which calls for the development of integrated strategic frameworks through an inclusive analytical and planning process, the Policy on United Nations Transitions in the Context of Mission Drawdown or Withdrawal, and Security Council resolution 2086 (2013), of 21 January 2013, which emphasizes the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

national strategies should be viewed as a valuable resource mobilization tool for the advocacy role of the Peacebuilding Commission, as they highlight funding and capacity needs along with critical areas for improved governance. The Commission could also serve as a forum for promoting mutual accountability for the compacts in countries where such compacts are developed and that request the support of the Peacebuilding Commission.

37. Finally, discussions within the United Nations on the post-2015 development agenda include the consideration of areas that are very relevant to post-conflict countries. The questions are how can the Peacebuilding Commission position itself through ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and what will its eventual agreement imply for the Commission. Possible roles for the Peacebuilding Commission could include discussing the links between peace consolidation and the three pillars of sustainable development and enabling sustainable development in general; offering a platform for discussions to shape a consensus on the post-2015 framework; influencing the shape and focus of the post-2015 development agenda; and monitoring and promoting the implementation of certain goals and targets.

38. Another global development is the increasing importance of regional and subregional actors and organizations in peacebuilding efforts. This includes the growing significance of key Member States in country-specific or regional peacebuilding activities. It is important that the Peacebuilding Commission use its broad and flexible membership to engage a broader set of global and regional powers and regional and subregional organizations in order to reinforce each other's activities towards common goals.

39. Both the internal United Nations developments and global developments underscore strongly the potential of and the need for the Peacebuilding Commission to focus and to leverage its comparative advantage as a non-operational, political intergovernmental body based in New York.

#### **Role of the Peacebuilding Support Office**

40. The Peacebuilding Support Office has been mandated to support the Peacebuilding Commission, manage the Peacebuilding Fund, extract and disseminate good practices and lessons learned on peacebuilding, foster a coherent approach to peacebuilding throughout the United Nations system and assist the Secretary-General in developing peacebuilding policies. The Office has worked closely with the United Nations system in fulfilling this role. In addition to UNDP and other United Nations entities, it has collaborated with the Departments of Political Affairs and of Peacekeeping Operations on countries where there is a mission mandated by the Security Council and in non-mission settings, in order to ensure coherence and support activities on the ground.

41. The Peacebuilding Support Office will continue to work closely with United Nations entities and identify areas where the Peacebuilding Commission can provide support; for example, in collaboration with regional organizations. In the future, the Office will seek closer collaboration with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Departments of Political Affairs and of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDP on identifying possible new referrals for the Peacebuilding Commission to fully exploit the possibility that the Secretary-General can also refer countries to the Commission.

42. In addition, the Peacebuilding Support Office will consult the United Nations system on thematic discussions and advancing policies through the Peacebuilding Commission, including its annual session.

**Role of lead and relevant United Nations entities**

43. Recognizing that lead and relevant United Nations entities should take advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission primarily in order to mobilize Member State advocacy and influence to ensure the coherence of international efforts in support of peace consolidation, the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture offers an opportunity to reinvigorate the engagement of these entities with the Peacebuilding Commission. To this end, the Secretary-General asked United Nations Secretariat departments, funds, programmes and specialized agencies, Executive Representatives of the Secretary-General, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and resident coordinators, in coordination with the Peacebuilding Support Office, to identify:

- Areas where Peacebuilding Commission engagement can help overcome domestic and regional obstacles to peaceful transitions and advance peacebuilding processes
- Strategic opportunities for joint action and collective Member State responsibility for critical peacebuilding priorities
- Gaps in international and regional financial, technical and political support to countries emerging from conflict, in order to identify, collectively, where the Peacebuilding Commission could help mobilize additional resources and support.

44. The Secretary-General is convinced that the United Nations family should seek to take the initiative and proactively engage with the Peacebuilding Commission so that it can play the most useful role possible in support of United Nations leadership and mandates on the ground by mobilizing political support for the consolidation of peace. The Peacebuilding Support Office will endeavour to ensure that the Commission receives appropriate advice from the United Nations system and the information and context analysis necessary to support its engagement, while avoiding the creation of an additional burden for United Nations missions, departments and agencies.

45. The extent of the changes that Member States may decide to adopt as a result of the review will help maximize the potentially dynamic and proactive engagement of the United Nations system entities with the Peacebuilding Commission along the lines stated above.