

Concept Paper for the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-Building

March 2009

This Concept note has been prepared by the Secretariat based on the initial options paper which was discussed at the first preparatory meeting for the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State Building on 4 December 2008. It was adopted by the participants of the International Dialogue at the 2nd preparatory meeting in Geneva on the 18th of March 2009.

I. Introduction

Peacebuilding and state building are recognised increasingly as important objectives in countries affected by conflict and fragility, alongside more traditional development objectives. However, what this means in practice — and how such work can best be realised — remains a matter of rich debate.

The Accra High Level Forum (HLF), held from 2-4 September 2008, committed developing and donor countries to engage in a dialogue on peacebuilding and state building. In particular, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) included the following commitment:

At the country-level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peacebuilding and state building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women. This process will be informed by an international dialogue between partners and donors on these objectives as prerequisites for development.

This commitment was supported by participants at the Accra Roundtable 7 on Situations of Conflict and Fragility, who requested the OECD DAC and the Peace Building Support Office (PBSO) to serve together as a joint Secretariat for this International Dialogue.

This initiative is rooted in a process of dialogue between developing and donor countries on aid effectiveness in situations of fragility and conflict. In particular, at the preparatory meeting for the Accra HLF Round Table 7, held in Kinshasa from 1-2 July 2008, there was broad support from partner countries to advance an international dialogue on these issues, as reflected in the Kinshasa Statement:

We agree on the need to launch an international dialogue on objectives for peacebuilding and state building. Such objectives can serve as an international reference point to generate support at the country-level to address causes of fragility and conflict, including for example natural resource management. We will use this process to bring together different policy communities in order to strengthen coherent responses beyond aid.

The International Dialogue complements a number of simultaneous policy processes: For example, in April 2007, the OECD High Level Meeting (HLM) committed itself to the development of international goals and objectives in peacebuilding and state building¹; two and one-half years experience for the Peacebuilding Commission; and the ongoing work among practitioners and academics to measure progress on various aspects of peacebuilding and state building. The International Dialogue offers the opportunity to build upon and pull together these various strands and to generate greater consensus among and between participating countries on how best to support peacebuilding and state building.

Building on discussions in Kinshasa and Accra, the first preparatory for the International Dialogue, held on 4 December 2008, in Paris brought together representatives from twelve partner (developing) countries

¹ "We resolve to set realistic, relevant and transparent international goals and objectives for assistance in fragile states and to monitor progress against these goals, starting at the country-level. For example, better indicators of progress against peacebuilding, statebuilding and stabilization objectives in the short-term can help us demonstrate results and lay the basis for long-term progress against the Millennium Development Goals."

(including four Ministers), nineteen bilateral donors (including Brazil, Chile and China), and seven multilateral organisations. Participants discussed and agreed on options for the general purpose, specific objectives, format, participation and management arrangements for the International Dialogue, as is outlined in the following sections. This document includes a detailed roadmap for 2009 and is complemented by a separate work programme. The concept note was adopted by the 2nd preparatory meeting of the International Dialogue on 18 March in Geneva.

II. Context

The only current international framework for the measurement of development assistance results is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Current assessments show that the countries most off-track to reach the MDGs are those affected by fragility and conflict. In these settings, achievement of the MDGs is a long-term goal, and they depend initially on progress towards a number of interim objectives, particularly in national peacebuilding and state building. The restoration of security, peace and stability by managing and addressing the root causes of a conflict, the establishment of functioning institutions and basic administrative capacity, the support for weak economies, and the re-building of trust and confidence of society in the state are pre-conditions for aid and development effectiveness. This was recognized at the Millennium Review Summit in September 2005 at the United Nations, where world leaders agreed that “development, peace and security and human rights are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing” (Millennium Review Summit 2005).

A set of internationally agreed objectives in support of fragile and conflict-affected situations could help different actors and policy communities (development, defence, diplomacy) mobilise more coherent action around common goals. It will enable partner governments, development partners and civil society to improve their collective engagement in a host country and could help to provide reference points for agreement at the country-level about the common objectives that partner governments and development partners seek to achieve together, which in turn will contribute to improving coherence and sequencing of external assistance.

III. Purpose and objectives of the International Dialogue

The purpose of the International Dialogue is to examine key bottlenecks and good practices in international support for peacebuilding and state-building and to generate consensus around fundamental objectives and goals that could guide national and international partners when engaging in these spheres. The International Dialogue will facilitate an open and frank exchange of views and to contribute to trust-building between participating countries and organisations. It will provide a forum to discuss issues that are under-addressed or cannot be resolved at the country-level. It encourages the sharing of experiences on South-South cooperation in the area of peacebuilding and state building and will enable participating countries to focus their attention on issues that are of common concern in view of the need to instil behavioural or normative change.

The International Dialogue will seek to provide a platform where participating countries can share (1) **country-level peacebuilding and state-building experiences**, discuss and agree on (2) **fundamental principles and good practices**, and identify a (3) **limited and realistic set of objectives for peacebuilding and state building**, based on an emerging international consensus regarding key concepts and definitions.

The International Dialogue will be based on consultations that take place in participating countries. These consultations will be organised in between six to ten countries before the First International Dialogue Meeting will be organised in late 2009. The country consultations will ensure that the International Dialogue is based upon grounded and realistic information that is pertinent to all and would enable a more targeted discussion about international peacebuilding and state building objectives.

More specifically, the outcomes of the International Dialogue will include:

1) Improved common understanding of peacebuilding and state-building and priority areas for international assistance: The International Dialogue aims to develop greater clarity around the concepts and definitions of peacebuilding and state-building and their linkages to international support to these processes (e.g. what are we seeking to support/achieve when we talk of peacebuilding and state-building?; what types of activities and approaches are useful to support and why, including in the early recovery phase?). In addition, the International Dialogue will discuss the fundamental linkages between peacebuilding, state building and various cross-cutting thematic issues, such as gender, human rights and the environment.

2) Good practices in international support to peacebuilding and state-building: Good practices agreed between participating countries and organisations on specific issues related to peacebuilding and state building. These could focus on addressing key bottlenecks in international support (e.g. management of technical assistance, capacity development support, donor salary policies, aid instruments) and on process issues in setting appropriate peacebuilding and state-building priorities (e.g. consolidating knowledge around how to engage various actors to define peacebuilding and state-building objectives at country level using strategic planning frameworks, trade-offs and dilemmas when setting key priorities, how to determine and measure success, and how to sequence peacebuilding and state-building priorities, etc.).

3) International objectives on peacebuilding and state-building: A set of international objectives for peacebuilding and state building (that constitute an international normative framework), building on country-level experiences and identified priorities. Such objectives could help to:

- Generate consensus on the general areas where immediate progress is important, in order to support linkages between traditional peace and security concerns with sustainable development and humanitarian objectives;
- Generate coherence and better co-ordination and sequencing in international responses (development, diplomatic, and defence) to situations of conflict and fragility;
- Allow participating countries and organisations to demonstrate and track progress and results against other priorities beyond the MDGs; and
- Provide a framework of support for specific country-level objectives, to be agreed upon voluntarily by a host country;

Help to promote acceptable, reciprocal objectives and norms of behaviour between national and international partners and mobilize and sustain international financial, technical, and political support for a post-war country. The final product(s) could be accompanied by a **high-level policy statement and commitment** to use and implement the objectives and translate them into country-specific compacts or integrated peacebuilding strategies (as undertaken in the Peacebuilding Commission), supported by partners in the international community. The policy statement could also highlight good practice for how international actors should support nationally-driven peacebuilding and state-building efforts.

IV. Format of the International Dialogue

The International Dialogue will be organised at the international/global level, but it will draw on inputs from consultations at the country-level. Results from other relevant meetings and documents (e.g., the forthcoming UN Secretary-General's Report on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Recovery) will be fed into the Dialogue. The Co-Chairs with support of the Secretariat will be responsible for advancing agreed work in-between meetings, in close coordination with members of the Steering Committee.

1. Country-Level Consultations: Broad based consultations at the country-level will be held to identify priority peacebuilding and state-building concerns and bottlenecks to effective international assistance. The consultations will be facilitated by a national focal point and will include parliamentarians, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders. Consultations for the International Dialogue should, to the extent possible, build on existing consultation and policy dialogue fora. Synergies with other national processes, for example national stakeholder consultations, donor country-government discussions on monitoring the Principles for Good International Engagement, UN Peacebuilding Commission consultations, national PRSP processes etc., will be pursued. Sector-specific discussions, building on

existing dialogue mechanisms, could culminate in a national multi-stakeholder consultation. Consultations will result in a written submission to be channelled, via the Secretariat, to the first International Dialogue global meeting in 2009. A methodology note for preparing and holding consultations, including key issues to be addressed, has been prepared and is available upon request from the Secretariat.

2. International Dialogue meetings: These meetings will provide the forum for sharing findings and results from national consultations, discuss priority issues to be addressed by the International Dialogue, agree on how to deliver common outputs and outcomes, and discuss and approve key knowledge products. In line with the stated outcomes of the International Dialogue, such products could include discussion papers, principles/code of conducts or good practice notes and international objectives for peacebuilding and state building. International Dialogue meetings will also discuss and decide on the need for further national or regional multi-stakeholder consultations to validate draft outcome documents, as well as the appropriate transmission or dissemination of possible outcome documents, e.g. to the Peacebuilding Commission, Security Council, General Assembly, ECOSOC, the MDG-stocktaking in 2010, the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (tentatively scheduled for 2011) etc.

3. Analytical work/technical meetings: In preparation for the first meeting of the International Dialogue and in the interim between these international meetings, the Co-chairs and the Secretariat will advance analytical work and research and organise specific technical events together with a core group of interested states and other international partners, based on an agreed work programme. Draft knowledge products will be presented to the International Dialogue for discussion and/or approval. If necessary, technical expert-level discussions will be convened to explore specific sector issues related to peacebuilding and state-building. Where possible, such meetings will be linked to other related events under preparation. Major analytical work should be overseen by a small reference group of interested participating countries and organisations.

4. Validation of findings: Given the strong emphasis on a bottom-up process to ensure that the final output is based on country-specific experiences, a series of validation events will be organised in different locations and via different forums. These events will seek to present and get feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on the initial draft set of findings, which in turn would inform the finalisation of the international peacebuilding and state building objectives before these are submitted to the HLF4. The exact extent of the validations, including its audience, will be decided based on the finalisation of the national consultations

V. Participation in the International Dialogue

The International Dialogue is open to all developing and donor country governments, countries providing South-South cooperation in the area of peacebuilding and state building as well as to regional and international organisations that wish to participate; they must demonstrate interest in the twin, inter-related issues of peacebuilding and state-building. Participation of international NGOs or CSOs at international meetings will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Civil society perspectives will also be channelled into the dialogue through their participation in national consultations and in the high-level expert panel (see below), recognising in particular the importance of trust between state and society as a critical condition for sustainable development in situations of conflict and fragility,

Given the scope of the themes addressed in the International Dialogue, a “whole-of-government” or “whole-of-system” level of cross-cutting participation from participating countries and organisations in the dialogue is essential. It will be the task of the lead participating agency(ies) to coordinate government participation in their country. Participating countries/organisations will need to ensure the participation of a senior official mandated to speak on behalf of their government/institution.

VI. Management of the International Dialogue:

1. Chairing arrangements: In line with agreements in Accra and at the first Preparatory Meeting in Paris, the International Dialogue will maintain rotating Co-Chairs from participating countries. Co-chairs will be formally agreed at international meetings and will serve for a minimum period of one year, or until the next

international meeting. Expressions of a country's or organisation's interest in co-chairing the international dialogue should be sent to the Secretariat. On the basis of announced candidacies, should there be more candidates than required, the Secretariat would fulfil its facilitating role and sound out participating countries and organisations to see whether a consensus emerges. Part of this could be an electronic 'straw poll' if need be.

The role of the Co-Chairs includes convening regular meetings of the International Dialogue, facilitating information sharing between meetings, and providing continuous advice to the Secretariat to ensure that the work is moving forward on a day-to-day basis. In addition, the Co-Chairs could play an important role in ensuring (i) that important international forums for peacebuilding and state building are kept informed about the work of the dialogue, and (ii) that the process of preparing agreed outputs ties to other important processes and receives significant political buy-in, acceptance, and financial resources.

2. Steering group: A rotating steering group of two to four key country members and/or organisations will support the Co-Chairs and the Secretariat in preparing technical outputs and international meetings. A regional balance and a balance between partner and donor countries (including countries providing South-South co-operation) is desirable.

3. High-level Expert Panel: The International Dialogue will draw on the best available academic research and practical thinking on peacebuilding and state building. A high-level expert panel consisting of leading academics and practitioners in various fields of peacebuilding and state building will be established. The panel will provide general advice to the International Dialogue and guidance in the preparation of key outcome documents. The expert panel will meet physically, as and when required, and it will be called upon to provide written inputs and comments on documents on a regular basis.

The selection of panel members will be based on recommendations by participating countries and organisations. The composition of the panel should reflect a geographical and gender balance, as well as between partner and donor countries. The panel should also include a limited number of members representing southern and northern civil society networks and organisations. An accompanying Terms of Reference for the expert panel is available from the Secretariat upon request.

4. Secretariat: Following the decision made during the first Preparatory Meeting on 4 December, and pending the availability of sufficient resources, the OECD DAC will provide the Secretariat to support the International Dialogue and the Co-Chairs in moving work forward. In particular, the Secretariat will, under the overall guidance of the Co-Chairs, be responsible for initiating and guiding the technical work needed (including the commissioning of relevant studies), preparing key documents for discussion during meetings, supporting the organisation of meetings, and providing logistical and technical support to the Co-Chairs and steering group in terms of information sharing and other correspondence. The expert panel will advise and support the Secretariat on substantial issues related to the Dialogue. Together with the Co-Chairs, the Secretariat will also liaise closely with other international organisations engaged in peacebuilding and state building, including the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

5. Venue for future meetings: International meetings will be organised in participating countries. Expressions of interest in hosting a meeting of the International Dialogue should be sent to the Secretariat. Interested candidates will be requested to prove their ability to galvanise in-country support to organise the meeting.

Annex 1 Timeline

The following timeline is tentative and dependant on the availability of sufficient resources to launch the International Dialogue and country leadership to carry out national consultations in the proposed timeframe.

2009		
Country-level consultations	Participating partner countries convene national consultations on 1) peacebuilding and state building priorities and experiences, 2) critical bottlenecks in international assistance and 3) good practices and success stories and 4) strategic planning processes.	April – October
Submission of consultation report	The national focal point submits written reports on the outcomes of the national consultations to the Secretariat.	By 31 October
Analysis of findings	The Co-chairs and the steering committee, supported by the Secretariat, analyse reports from the national consultations and prepare a synthesis of findings for discussion at the first International Dialogue Meeting. This synthesis report is circulated to members of the International Dialogue for comment prior to the first International Dialogue meeting.	November
Circulation of documents for discussion	The Secretariat circulates further key documents to members of the International Dialogue for discussion at the first meeting of the international dialogue.	December 2009
First Meeting of the International Dialogue	The first full meeting of the International Dialogue discusses the outcomes of national consultations, provides an opportunity to share country-level experiences, and agrees on a prioritised list for key bottlenecks and objectives to be addressed by the International Dialogue in connection with peacebuilding and state building. The Meeting agrees a prioritised work plan for 2010 identifying products and the process for agreeing these.	December 2009
2010		
Revisions of documents	In line with discussions at the international meeting, the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee, supported by the Secretariat, revise the discussion paper on peacebuilding and state building and the work plans for 2010 and circulate these to members.	January 2010
Preparation of good practice notes/principles in key areas	Based on the agreed work plans the Secretariat and interested members, with support from the Co-chairs and the Steering Committee and with input from the expert panel, prepare relevant products for discussion at technical meetings.	January 2010 – April 2010
Drafting of peacebuilding and state-building objectives	Building on discussions at the international meeting and under the guidance of the expert panel, a lead author starts the drafting of an international framework for peacebuilding and state-building objectives.	January 2010 – April 2010
Technical Meetings	A series of technical meetings with a core group of interested Member States takes place to discuss key products. Consideration will be given to the possibility of an additional International Dialogue Meeting to discuss draft products before they are subjected to a round of regional and country levels	May - July 2010

	meetings for further refinement and development.	
Regional/national meetings and consultations on international objectives	Draft international objectives/knowledge products are discussed at country-level and/or in regional dialogue meetings and through extensive consultations. Results are fed back to the Secretariat.	August – November 2010
Second Meeting of the International Dialogue	Second/third Meeting of the International Dialogue discusses key knowledge products and international objectives on peacebuilding and state building; it also decides on the further work required to finalise the international framework.	December 2010
2011		
Third Meeting of the International dialogue	Third/fourth Meeting of the International Dialogue agrees on final knowledge products and international objectives on peacebuilding and state-building framework, as well as their appropriate transmission, dissemination and/or further discussion at the fourth High Level forum on Aid Effectiveness / other international fora.	July 2011