

“Business for Peacebuilding”

25 June 2013 (10.00 – 18.00)

United Nations Headquarter, New York City

Co-hosted by the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Global Compact

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Permanent Missions of Canada, Croatia, Japan and Luxemburg in making this conference possible.

Context

The primary responsibility for peace, security and development rests with governments, but the private sector can make a meaningful contribution to stability and security in countries emerging from conflict. Countries with the lowest GDP per capita are often those who have experienced or are plagued by political instability and conflict, even when - and sometimes because - they are richly endowed in natural resources.

Businesses are increasingly looking for venues in which to contribute toward peacebuilding and risk mitigation caused by human insecurity. While low-income populations in developing and post-conflict countries were traditionally of little interest to investors and corporations, there is a growing recognition of the substantial market potential these populations offer. From a business perspective, these “bottom of the pyramid” markets are attractive for their size and abundant human and natural resources. Since these communities basic needs have gone underserved for so long in post-conflict contexts, they can also be attractive to businesses for the significant pent-up demand they represent. In spite of this, their potential has remained largely untapped for want of stable conditions, economic drivers and investment opportunities.

Conference

In order to encourage business engagement in post-conflict environments, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the UN Global Compact (UNGC) will host a one-day conference at the United Nations’ Headquarter in New York. Convening together major global players, African business leaders, local actors from the business communities and governments of PBC countries, Member States, civil society organizations, this conference will facilitate a dialogue between businesses and political leaders to catalyse action in support of the UN peacebuilding mission. The conference will also offer an opportunity to highlight the importance of engaging the private sector in peacebuilding efforts and improve the visibility of this critical dimension on the development agenda.

Objectives

- Bring together business and political leaders to explore venues for enhanced business engagement in post-conflict countries and identify concrete entry points and opportunities for partnerships and collaboration at ground level;
- Mobilize private sector actions in support of the UN peacebuilding mission and offer a platform for commitment by major players;
- Promote market building, responsible investment and strengthened business-to-business cooperation to advance economic development and peacebuilding;
- Based on the outcomes of this conference, the PBC and the UNGC will seek to identify key partners to initiate collaboration that could trigger economic opportunities and stimulate private investments to this purpose. In addition, the PBC and the UNGC will consult with the countries on the Commission's agenda with a view to assess the possibility of initiating investment fora at the country-level to introduce and highlight investment opportunities.

AGENDA

PART I:

Venue: Trusteeship Council Chamber

Format: Open to the public

09.30-10.00 Arrivals

10.00-10.30 Introduction & Opening remarks

- *H.E. Mr. Ranko Viločić, Chairperson, UN Peacebuilding Commission*
- *Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support*
- *Mr. Georg Kell, Executive Director, UN Global Compact*

10.30-11.45 Panel I

The first panel will be dedicated to a discussion among business representatives to identify opportunities for business to make an effective contribution to peacebuilding in the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Burundi and Central African Republic). The speakers will be invited to share their thoughts on how private sector actors can support peacebuilding processes, the role of investors in promoting responsible investment, the areas of focus on which such engagement

can have the greatest positive impacts and the types of collaboration that can help advance the UN peacebuilding mission.

Moderator: Mr. Bennett Freeman, Senior Vice-President, Sustainability Research & Policy, Calvert Investment

- *Mr. Kebour Ghenna, Executive Director, Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry*
- *Mr. Zekrullah Kazemi, Director, Protina*
- *Mr. Christopher Neyor, former President and CEO, National Oil Company of Liberia*
- *Dr. Miro Smriga, Director, Ajinomoto*

11.45-13.00 Panel II

The second panel will bring together stakeholders contributing to corporate activities in peacebuilding contexts, either through project financing or commercial capacity development. In a similar way than the first panel, but from a different perspective, these practitioners and experts will be invited to share their experiences and practices on how private sector actors can support peacebuilding processes, what their expectations are on businesses and ways to help companies meet them.

Moderator: Mr. Hrvoje Sikirić, Chair, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

- *Ms. Louise Kantrow, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, International Chamber of Commerce*
- *Ms. El Iza Mohamedou, Chief Political Analyst, African Development Bank*
- *Ms. Mette Strand Gjerloeff, Senior Specialist, Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations, International Finance Corporation*

PART II:

Venue: Delegates Dining Room and related break-out rooms

Format: By invitation only

13.15-14.30 Lunch

Venue: Delegates Dining Room

14.30-16.00 Break out sessions

Venue: Break-out rooms of the Delegates Dining Room

In order to deepen points raised in the morning and to ensure maximum interaction among the participants, the afternoon session will take place in breakout groups. The main objective is to share ideas on how business, in collaboration with the UN and policy makers, can make an

impactful engagement in countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. Each breakout group will gather in a roundtable format and the discussion will be lead informally by a moderator per group. Participants will also be asked to nominate a rapporteur who will share the outcomes of the roundtable discussion in plenary with the larger audience during the subsequent report-back session.

As kick-off points, participants will be invited to discuss the following main questions but are also free to explore any other issue they may have identified:

- Considering the usual lack of financial attractiveness witnessed in post-conflict or fragile countries, how to increase investment in peacebuilding countries as well as ensuring that they will contribute to stability?
- Many companies join voluntary initiatives and develop individual initiatives. Which range of potential approaches to develop and sustain conflict-sensitive business practices are best suited for peacebuilding countries? What kind of concrete entry points and opportunities for partnerships and collaboration at ground level can be identified?
- Companies are encouraged to adapt policies, strategies and operational guidance specific to the needs of the high-risk context. How to identify which policies and practices should be developed or modified given the specific needs of a post-conflict environment? What kinds of stakeholders should be involved – both internally and externally? What does “best practice” look like and what are the pitfalls that should be avoided if possible?
- The effective establishment of bottom-up, country-led, national mechanisms is crucial to support conflict-sensitive business practices. How can sound investment choices and robust national policies and regulatory systems support these developments?

16.00-16.30 **Transfer to the Trusteeship Council Chamber**

16.30-17.00 **Report back**
Venue: Trusteeship Council Chamber

17.00-18.00 **Closing session**
Venue: Trusteeship Council Chamber

Remarks by:

- *H. E. Sir Mark Lyall Grant, President, UN Security Council*
- *H. E. Mr. Nestor Osorio, President, United Nations Economic and Social Council*

Closing remarks

- *H.E. Mr. Ranko Vilić, Chairperson, UN Peacebuilding Commission*