Madam Co-Facilitator,

Distinguished Co-Facilitators,

Thank you for convening today’s informal meeting and for the ‘Emerging Issues’ paper which is both comprehensive and focused. This can form a very useful basis for the ongoing review of the Peacebuilding Commission. Let me at the outset, Madam Co-Facilitator align my delegation with the statement delivered by my distinguished colleague from Bangladesh on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since my statement was prepared before you invited delegations to focus on specific individual issues, I request your indulgence as I deliver a comprehensive statement that addresses all relevant issues.

Co-Facilitators,

I wish to begin by echoing the Secretary General’s assertion, in his report last year, on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict. The imperative of national ownership and the anchoring of international peacebuilding efforts at the country level cannot be overemphasized. Even in cases where it is difficult to locate national ownership, international peacebuilding efforts should be geared towards strengthening the capacity of a post-conflict State to govern effectively and to govern well.

Security clearly is the key pillar for peacebuilding. Capacity building also assumes importance especially in instances where countries find it difficult to completely utilize the financial assistance they have been provided.

It is equally important to focus on building economic opportunity, particularly for the youth alongwith political and social stability. In most situations, unemployment amongst youth is a major factor for perpetuation of the underlying causes of conflict. Peace cannot therefore be achieved and consolidated unless and until employment opportunities are available in the economy. The impact of employment-generation
activities would be both positive and immediate. The international community must pay greater attention, facilitate and strengthen the ability of the national authorities concerned in promoting employment generation.

Co-Facilitators,

My delegation is of the view that the international community, acting through the instrumentality of the PBC, must always strive to ensure that there is effective two-way dialogue between countries on the Agenda of the PBC and the Commission itself through all stages. In this regard, it is important that the on-going review result in re-orienting the current peacebuilding architecture in such a manner that would enable the Organizational Committee of the PBC to play a more decisive role in formulating the Commission’s approach towards post-conflict situations. Also, country-specific configurations must not run ahead of the national government concerned in setting targets.

On the question of the type of UN presence most conducive to ensuring a broader, coherent and integrated approach to peacebuilding, my delegation believes that there cannot be any fractured or piece-meal approach to the maintenance of international peace and security. The international community must therefore, in the interests of ensuring continuity and credibility of the transition process, give greater say to the major troop and police contributing countries in the various peacekeeping operations. In particular, the Security Council should heed the advice of these countries both individually and through the instrumentality of the PBC while formulating and revising mandates of UN missions.

Co-Facilitators,

The international community needs to constantly improve the governance structures of the peacebuilding architecture. Such improvements must primarily seek to ensure that all the available resources that are geared towards peacebuilding in post-conflict situations are properly harnessed in the shortest possible time. This we believe is the sine qua non of peacebuilding.

In this regard, the PBF should be truly transformed into an effective mechanism for translating the international community’s resolve into prompt and responsive financing. Such financing would then be able to encourage the rest of the actors in the peacebuilding architecture to make complementary contributions.

Co-Facilitators,

It is not always possible to transplant models of internal political reconciliation specific to one region and one context to a different region and context. And the international community must not show undue eagerness for such arrangements in its hurry to bring peace. The most evident corollary to this approach is to further encourage regional and sub-regional organizations in Africa to play a more important role both in peacekeeping
and peacebuilding issues within Africa. The peacebuilding architecture must institutionalize structures and processes to this end.

Co-Facilitators,

Peacebuilding is a peculiarly UN-centric word. It is very important to connect it to the real world. We need to properly communicate to the international community the nature and content of the Commission’s work. In this context, peacebuilding is essentially an activity based on consolidation. Even when carried out in parallel with peacekeeping, it is distinct from the latter and therefore it is critical that the phrases we use do not obliterate such distinctions.

The efforts of the various strategies of the peacebuilding architecture must be to strengthen a representative and effective Government in the country concerned. Eventually, it is the Government of the country that is answerable if it is unable to deliver on peace consolidation strategies; and that answer must be given to the people it represents. It is also the Government of that country that will need to manage processes beyond the country’s engagement with the PBC.

Co-Facilitators,

I would be remiss if I did not stress on two very important imperatives.

First, while the work of the PBC should draw on the synergies of three principal organs of the United Nations, namely the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council when they are handling post-conflict situations, the experience till date has shown that we are still some distance away from such a harmonized partnership. In particular, the General Assembly and the ECOSOC should step up its dialogue and coordination with the PBC and its various constituents. This would ensure that the Commission is able to successfully play its assigned role of “an intergovernmental advisory body” that handles post-conflict situations.

Second, the PBC should not take on the task of advising States on post-conflict peace consolidation; instead it should help the State concerned identify and utilize genuine international expertise in addressing such sensitive issues.

In conclusion, Co-Facilitators, let me reiterate that India has a unique experience of nation-building in a large, complex and most diverse setting as we have strived to give our people a better way of life. This has allowed us to develop multifaceted capacities relevant to peacebuilding and development. We have shared this experience and expertise in a number of countries transiting from conflict to peace. We are very happy to continue to make available our capabilities in nation building to countries in post-conflict situations and cooperate with the United Nations’ in its peacebuilding activities, including for development, social sector reform and rule of law and security.