

Meeting on “Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Contemporary Challenges and the Way Forward” co-chaired by Egypt and Ireland in Cairo on 18-19 May 2009

The Governments of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Ireland convened a meeting on Peacebuilding entitled **“Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Contemporary Challenges and the Way Forward”** on 18-19 May 2009 in Cairo, Egypt. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Naela Gabr, Assistant Minister for Multilateral Affairs in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and Dr. Eamonn McKee, Director-General, Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland.

The purpose of the Cairo meeting was to engage senior officials, particularly those based in Capitals in a discussion on the contemporary challenges and opportunities for peacebuilding. The meeting also reflected on possible solutions to these challenges, focusing special attention on the recommendations to be reflected in the Secretary-General’s report on “Post-conflict Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict”.

The Cairo meeting took place as the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) finalized the drafting process for the Secretary-General’s report on “Post-conflict Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict”. This was requested by the Security Council in a Presidential Statement on 20 May 2008m at which the Council recognized that in the immediate aftermath of conflict, affected countries face daunting challenges which the United Nations and the international community have not always been able to assist in addressing.

The meeting was broken up into three sessions and also included opening and closing remarks by the Co-chairs. The first two sessions of the meeting included presentations by Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sudan (UNMIS), Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), and Ms. Sally Fegan-Wyles, Senior Project Director from PBSO. The third session consisted of break-out group discussions on: Common Strategy; Technical Capacity and Leadership; and Financing.

Dr. Eamonn McKee said that the purpose of post-conflict peacebuilding is to lay the foundation to enable a society to transition from conflict to sustainable peace and development, and to realize its full potential. He highlighted the importance of early post-conflict focus on humanitarian issues, security, economic regeneration and reconstruction, and building the capacity of local government as the basis for durable peace and prosperity. Dr. McKee stressed that Member States’ long term support and commitment was critical to the ability of the United Nations and its agencies to assist countries achieve sustainable peace in the aftermath of conflict. He said that the challenge will now be effective implementation of the Secretary-General’s report and its recommendations.