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Statement by H.E. Mr. Motohide Yoshikawa
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At the General Assembly Plenary Meeting

On agenda item 29: Report of the Peacebuilding Commission and
agenda item 109: Report of the Secretary-General on the
Peacebuilding Fund

16 April 2015
Mr. President,

It is my great pleasure to address the General Assembly at the joint debate on two Reports—one by the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its eighth session and one by the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

Mr. President,

I would first like to congratulate Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, for assuming the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2015.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, former chair of the PBC, for his excellent leadership over the past year.

As described in the PBC’s Report, the commission successfully held its first annual session in June and engaged in productive discussions on the scope, terms of reference and modalities for the Peacebuilding Architecture (PBA) review, which is being conducted this year.

In the Working Group on Lessons Learned that I had the honour to chair last year, PBC members held extensive discussions on challenges associated with the transition of U.N. missions. In these discussions, we identified two major challenges in the transition process, namely, 1) funding and technical capacity gaps for peacebuilding priorities and 2) sustaining inclusive political processes. We found that the PBC can contribute to creating an environment conducive to a successful and smooth transition in its agenda countries, including through its advisory function to the Governments concerned, to the Security Council and other relevant stakeholders.

With support from PBC members, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the wider U.N. system, we compiled a report summarizing these discussions and submitted it to the Chair of the PBC in December. We hope the findings of the report will be fully made use of in the ongoing reviews of the PBA and of U.N. peace operations.
Mr. President,

In 2015, under my chairmanship, the Working Group will focus on the theme of “institution-building” with special attention on state authority extensions and political institution rebuilding in post-conflict countries. We believe that the rebuilding of judicial and security institutions and the normalization of political processes via elections and reconciliation are critical parts of peacebuilding efforts. As we did last year, we will summarize our discussion in a Working Group report and submit it to the PBC chair by the end of the year. We hope that this year’s Working Group activities will benefit the two review processes of the PBA and peace operations.

Mr. President,

These thematic discussions can advance global policy development relevant to countries emerging from conflict. We believe that the Working Group on Lessons Learned should and can play this important normative role as a broad-based membership forum for policy discussion. However, the Working Group on Lessons Learned has continued to exist merely as an informal group within the PBC’s Organizational Committee. In this regard, we suggest that Member States initiate a discussion on the status of the Working Group with a view to formally institutionalizing it as a result of the PBA Review.

Mr. President,

The PBF has proven itself to be an important financing tool to support critical elements of peacebuilding processes in many countries.

Japan appreciates the Fund’s active performance based on a new business plan for 2014-2016. This includes expanding the use of the Immediate Response Facility, piloting new cross-border programmes and launching the second Gender Promotion Initiative. In order to implement these programmes more effectively, the PBF will need to ensure national ownership and strengthen partnership with other donors.

We expect that the PBF will continue to play an important role as a global fund not only in Africa, but also in other parts of the world, in
particular Asia. As a major donor to the PBF, Japan will continue to support
the Fund.

Mr. President,

In closing, I would like to reiterate Japan’s continued commitment
to further progress of the U.N. Peacebuilding Architecture as a member of
the PBC Organizational Committee, as Chair of the Working Group on
Lessons Learned and as a major donor to the PBF.