

## **Written submission**

### **Peacebuilding Commission advice to the Security Council during the Debate on “Cooperation Between the United Nations and Regional and Subregional Organizations -African Union: Commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the African Union, Building a Constructive Multipolar World.”**

**New York, 11 October 2022**

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The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), in close cooperation with the African Union (AU), has sought to mobilize support for African countries, including through the Commission’s respective country and regional engagements and its annual informal consultative meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council as stated in the Programme of Work of the Commission. The partnership between the AU and the PBC is guided by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Peacebuilding, which is a major milestone in the UN-AU Enhanced Partnership Framework on Peace and Security (2017) and the AU-UN Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2018), which lay the foundation for continued cooperation between the two bodies on peace and security on the continent. Similarly, the Common African Position (CAP) to the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, endorsed by the AU PSC on 22 September 2020, has provided an opportunity for fostering more closely aligned strategies for a shared UN-AU peacebuilding, including supporting the AU’s flagship initiative Silencing the Guns in Africa and its Master Roadmap 2020, which has been extended to 2030.

In commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the African Union and drawing on its continuing regional and country engagement in Africa including the last AU PSC- PBC consultative informal meeting held on 11 November 2021, the Commission commends the ongoing efforts of the African Union (AU) leadership to address the complex and evolving peace, security, and development challenges facing the continent, such as accompanying conflict-affected countries in pursuit of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The Commission notes with concern the recent unconstitutional changes of government in some parts of Africa as well the growing threat of terrorism, which, coupled with the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and food insecurity, among other factors, may undermine Africa's long-term stability and sustainable development.

Aware that effective and sustainable peacebuilding initiatives in Africa depend on collective peacebuilding efforts, the Commission underscores the importance of integrated implementation of international continental and regional instruments. It encourages closer cooperation between the UN and the African Union for an enhanced partnership and coordination and the adoption of long-term people-centered security approaches to address the root causes of conflicts, instability, and violence on the continent.

In view of the above, the Commission would like to share the following recommendations:

First: The Commission recognizes the significant progress made by the AU and the UN through the continued implementation of the joint UN-AU frameworks and encourages both organizations to strengthen their strategic and operational partnerships by mobilizing their existing peacebuilding tools to sustain peace in Africa. The Commission reiterates the call made in the last AU PSC - PBC meeting on transitions to strive for an impact-driven collaboration with greater emphasis on coherent planning, operational complementarity, and leveraging on comparative advantages in specific contexts, to ensure mutual understanding of the opportunities and challenges for collaboration in devising remedies. The Partnership between the AU and UN should be encouraged to further support the AU in its efforts to revitalize and operationalize the AU's policy on post-conflict reconstruction for a comprehensive, coordinated, and phased approaches to peacebuilding activities on the continent, taking into account countries' short- and long-term needs in line with the notion of national ownership.

In that regard, the Commission applauds the inauguration of the AU-PCRD Centre inaugurated in Cairo on 21 December 2021 and encourages African Member States to make appropriate use of it. The Commission hopes that the AU's efforts towards facilitating more structured and regular early warning interactions by launching the Inter-Regional Knowledge Exchange on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention (I-RECKE) will help the sharing of lessons learned and experiences on early warning response and conflict prevention.

Second: The Commission emphasizes the importance of the regional triangular partnership between the UN and the AU, as well as with regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, including international and regional financing institutions, in support of peacebuilding efforts. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the progress made with the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery, and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region, including support in articulating its action plan for 2022–2024 with a focus on the critical role of the Territorial Action Plans. The Commission also welcomes the initiation of the joint AU-UN-ECOWAS-G5 Sahel Strategic Assessment on the security and governance situation and response initiatives in the Sahel region and encourages timely follow-up and support for this initiative.

To enhance peacekeeping operations and consolidate the efforts of the peacekeeping missions on the continent, the Commission recognizes the need for closer collaborations through regional and triangular partnerships in the design of peacebuilding policy frameworks and operational practices. Also, initiatives to bridge capacity-building needs and respond to specialized technical and operational needs could improve mandate delivery.

Third: The Commission also wishes to underline the importance of investing in institution building, particularly supporting nationally owned and led efforts to build effective institutions. In this regard, the Commission urges investment into disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reforms (SSR), as critical and integral components for peacebuilding. In doing so, the Commission also urges for closer support to national and local authorities to help identify SSR needs and build the capacity of security forces to ensure stability and protect the

DDR process. Also, it encourages African Member States to allocate adequate resources to DDR and SSR programmes, with the support of development partners.

Fourth: Mindful of the importance of including all relevant stakeholders in peacebuilding processes, the Commission calls for continued efforts to improve the gender and youth sensitivity of peacebuilding initiatives. The Commission recognizes the significant role of women peacebuilders serving as agents of peace in peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery efforts to achieve sustainable peace. The Commission, therefore, notes the AU efforts to strengthen and implement the Women, Peace, and Security agenda under the strong leadership of the African Women Leaders Network. Similarly, the PBC also notes the leadership of the African Union Commission and its African Youth Ambassadors for Peace to advance the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda, including in the context of the High-level Global Conference on Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes. It further encourages the adoption and implementation of national action plans on youth, peace, and security across the region, in line with Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) and expresses readiness to support such efforts.

Fifth: The Commission welcomes the support provided by the Peacebuilding Fund to countries in Africa, complementing the efforts of the AU. With an active portfolio of over USD 251 million across the continent, the Fund supports cross-border cooperation and countries undergoing complex transitions promoting conflict management, mediation capacities, inclusive dialogue, and reconciliation. Through its regular portfolio and annual dedicated Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, the PBF supports national initiatives focusing on women and young people's participation in the decision-making process, as well as ensuring that women and youth voices are heard in all peacebuilding issues.

Recognizing also that peacebuilding financing remains a critical challenge and additional resources are required to address the existing financing gaps and meet increasing requests for peacebuilding and sustaining peace support from Member States, the Commission echoes the calls made by the Common African Position to the Peacebuilding Architecture Review in 2020 to explore ways ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding to preserve peace gains and prevent relapse into conflict in Africa. In that regard, the Commission welcomes the adoption of recent GA resolution on Financing for Peacebuilding in September 2022.

Sixth: The Commission recognized the complexity of the humanitarian, security, political, and development challenges facing the continent associated with the effects of the socio-economic consequences of the covid-19 pandemic, food insecurity, and consequent displacement. Noting the added value of the reform on the UN development system, the Commission further encourages the greater alignment of collective support including joint analysis, programming and action between UN agencies, funds, and programmes through UN Country Teams and AU operational entities to address development and peace challenges on the ground.

Finally: The Commission notes bold actions taken by African countries, regions, and cities to combat climate change and encourages more coordinated efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change on development and peacebuilding in some regions of Africa. In that regard, the

Commission underscores the primary role of UNFCCC to address the issue of climate change comprehensively and notes the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. The Commission also reiterates the calls made within Cop26 for more structural financing investments in response to climate change.

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