

United Nations Security Council Open Debate
**Threats to International Peace and Security: Sea-Level Rise – Implications for
International Peace and Security**

Written Advice by the Peacebuilding Commission

14 February 2023

The Peacebuilding Commission thanks the President of the Security Council for convening this open debate on “Threats to International Peace and Security: Sea-Level Rise – Implications for International Peace and Security” and inviting the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (Commission) to provide advice on this important topic.

Building on good practices emerging from relevant activities of the Commission, including its engagement in the Pacific Islands, the Commission would like to address the following:

Climate change is a complex phenomenon that impacts all spheres of human life. Different countries are affected in different ways, based on their geographic and climate conditions. Therefore, responses to address the impact must respond to requests of those states affected by climate-change driven sea level rise, who regard this as a fundamental, in some cases existential question.

The Commission acknowledges the central role of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the broader United Nations system in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its broader efforts to achieve sustainable peace and development as there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

The General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizes that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. Increases in global temperature, sea-level rise, ocean acidification and other climate change impacts are seriously affecting coastal areas and low-lying coastal countries, including many least developed countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The survival of many societies, and of the biological support systems of the planet, is at risk.

The negative consequences of sea-level rise may affect multiple States and regions around the globe, albeit the major burden is carried by the island nations and coastal regions. Therefore, we must act jointly with a sense of urgency and a commitment to place people, especially those in vulnerable situations, at the center of our efforts, to tackle the negative implications of sea-level rise to peacebuilding.

These risks underscore the need for the mobilization of finance and the Commission recognizes that the enhanced access to international climate finance is important to support mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and also recognizes the ongoing efforts in this regard.

In May 2022, the Commission convened a meeting on the impact of climate change on peacebuilding in the Pacific Islands. Some Member States echoed the concerns raised by the Pacific Islands States that climate change presents the greatest threat to the wellbeing, exacerbating insecurity, and livelihoods of the people in the Pacific Islands, highlighting them being affected by increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events and sea-level rise.

The Commission, therefore, recommends addressing climate-related risks, based on the priorities and needs of the countries concerned, in a holistic manner through measures that contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation.

In this regard, investing in peacebuilding programs and scalable durable solutions based on nationally owned and determined priorities as well as taking into account contextual integrated risk analysis on climate change will be critical to reducing vulnerabilities of the affected countries.

The Commission underlines the need for effective local, national, and regional institutions with strengthened institutional capacities in order to manage possible adverse effects of sea-level rise. The Commission also acknowledges the existing good practices, tools, mechanisms, innovative solutions and technological opportunities may strengthen the ability to prevent and cope with the negative consequences of sea-level rise. Importantly, the Commission calls for urgent need to scale up all efforts including enhancing access to financial resources for peacebuilding projects and will continue to strengthen the delivery of its advisory, bridging and convening mandate in

support of resource mobilization for nationally owned peacebuilding priorities in the countries and regions under its consideration,.

In this regard, the Commission notes the importance of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) investments focused on integrated programming approaches in support of building and sustaining peace.. PBC calls for increased engagement between the PBC and PBF to forge a stronger link between two agendas.

The Commission underscores the importance of reinforcing collaboration and partnerships as key to successfully advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Today's challenges require coherent responses. To this end, the Commission reaffirms that effective peacebuilding and sustaining peace must involve the entire United Nations system, and in this regard, emphasizes the importance of joint analysis and programs and effective strategic planning.

The Commission stresses the importance of partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including regional and subregional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and local peacebuilding stakeholders, as crucial to advance effective, overall peacebuilding response.

For peacebuilding efforts to be effective, the Commission recommends the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in decision-making, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding and sustaining peace processes. The Commission stresses the importance of enhancing the engagement of local youth in peacebuilding and sustaining peace processes.

The Commission reiterates its full commitment and engagement in support of addressing the issues of building and sustaining peace and will continue its support as per its mandate, to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.