

2024 ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development

***The need for humanitarian, development and peace collaboration in Haiti,
South Sudan, and the Sahel***

The Peacebuilding Commission Chair's remarks

24 June 2024, New York

I thank Ambassador Šimonović and Ambassador Ladeb for convening today's timely discussion.

The core of the debate is how we collectively respond to the multifaceted and interlinked challenges facing these countries and the region, and how to assist them in building resilience with concrete proposals.

As we scan the international landscape, we see increased number of conflicts and violence; millions of displaced people; economic and financial crisis, rising inequality and poverty. We also see that the international aid system is at a breaking point with humanitarian needs outpacing available resources. We also see rising geopolitical tensions and protracted conflicts with no end in sight.

Conflicts and insecurity in Haiti, South Sudan and in the Sahel have reversed a number of development gains and shattered hundreds of thousands of lives. Similarly, development deficits drive grievance, mistrust, hostility and tensions between communities and institutions. When we fail to meet the sustainable development needs of our time, we fail to secure peace for our time, peace for our future.

As highlighted in resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016) development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Advancing peace and sustainable development must therefore go hand-in-hand.

To reach this objective, and while recognizing the mandates of each UN entities, coordination and coherence between humanitarian, sustainable development and peacebuilding actors is critical to create synergy among their efforts. With full respect to national ownership, we should invest in the ability of individuals, societies, and nations to cope with these challenges and to build their resilience to withstand further shocks or reversal of gains already achieved including through better preparedness.

This is the essence of what the Peacebuilding Commission is and does: create conditions for strengthening the capacities of countries to bring about sustainable development with institutional strength, thereby contributing to a favorable environment for preventing conflict and achieving durable peace. The Commission is a unique platform in support of nationally owned peacebuilding efforts aimed at galvanizing the coordination and coherence towards impact and positive change. This is why over the years more countries and regions have engaged with the Peacebuilding Commission. Recently, the Commission engaged with several new contexts for the first time, including Mauritania, Guatemala, Sao Tome and the Principe, to name a few.

Upon their request, the Commission stands ready to work with any country, notably Haiti and countries from the Sahel region, to support sustaining peace and their peacebuilding priorities.

In connection with today's topic, I would like to share the following observations:

First, peacebuilding efforts need to ensure that the root causes and drivers of crises are addressed in a sustainable manner. The Commission's work is grounded in the understanding that development, peace and security and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Just as progress towards one pillar lifts all others, failure in one pillar risks reversing gains across the board. The Commission is very mindful of this approach in its engagement especially when supporting countries' efforts in strengthening their local, national, and regional capacities.

In South Sudan's case, the Commission has supported the country's peacebuilding endeavors since 2022, focusing on viable institutions, local governance, and reconciliation. Given the complex humanitarian and development challenges in South Sudan, including food insecurity and forced displacement, the Commission has mobilized support towards investing in the capacity building of institutions to ensure the effective delivery of and access to basic social and economic services at local and national levels. It further agreed on the importance to accelerate the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement including inclusive implementation of the transitional roadmap. The Commission will continue to support South Sudan's peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities, based on national ownership and leadership.

Second, and while recognizing the mandates of each UN entities and the roles they play in the UN architecture, we need to forge stronger partnerships in addressing peace, development and humanitarian challenges while tackling the root causes and

drivers of conflicts. With joined-up actions, we can best contribute to self-reliant, resilient, and peaceful societies.

The Commission has worked towards enhanced partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including international financial institutions and regional and sub-regional organizations to effectively mobilize development actors in support of national peacebuilding outcomes. I recently visited Washington DC where I had the opportunity to address the Executive Directors of the World Bank on the importance of prevention and addressing root causes of conflict. I also underscored how these institutions can better leverage comparative advantages at field level, notably through shared data, joint diagnostics, and shared capacities. The Commission has also engaged with regional development banks, which are equally instrumental in shifting a country from a protracted humanitarian crisis towards a sustainable recovery and resilience trajectory.

In the Sahel, the Commission has been actively engaged in support of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel and its Support Plan in order to build a stronger partnership with donors in strengthening resilience and addressing the core drivers of insecurity in the region. Such efforts are focused on supporting inclusive institutions, access to health and education, livelihood support and other basic services that contributed to increase trust as well as social cohesion and inclusiveness at national and the community-level.

The Commission held a fruitful engagement with Mauritania in March during which the Mauritanian Government showcased its efforts in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in particular its approach in advancing inclusive and sustainable development by enhancing social protection and basic service delivery and promoting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.

Third, we must promote inclusiveness and unity. Post-conflict countries have an important task to ensure people from all walks of life participate equally in governance. Inclusivity is a central pillar for stable and peaceful societies but also for sustainable development. Since its inception, the Commission has been clear about the importance of the role of women and youth in humanitarian, peacebuilding, recovery, and development efforts. The Commission has developed specific strategies and plan of actions to ensure that youth and women are part of the peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts in their countries.

Fourth, the 2025 Peacebuilding Architecture Review will present an opportunity to reflect on what we can do differently given the change in our landscape to be more

impactful and effective in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. It should also address, where appropriate, the possibilities to contribute to the work of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors, in accordance with their respective mandates but also with due respect of the national ownership of affected States, their national plans and priorities. The Commission will continue to strengthen its engagement in creating the conditions for positive impact and durable solutions on the ground. Therefore, the Commission's advisory role to the ECOSOC remains critical and it would be important to see how we can enhance it. In that respect, I look forward to more joint ECOSOC-PBC meetings, including the upcoming one on durable solutions to forced displacement on 1 July.

Enhancing peace and preventing conflict is not about changing what we do, but how we do it. It is a deliberate intent to contribute to peace and a willingness for all actors to come together in support of affected countries and region to have more responsive and impactful approach to peace and sustainable development. We must endeavor to identify innovative approaches that would assist them, including in achieving their Sustainable Development Goals. Let us leverage the strong partnership between the ECOSOC and the PBC to live up to our shared responsibility in the pursuit of peace and development for all.

Thank you.