

Peacebuilding Commission

Ambassadorial-Level Meeting on the activities of the PBF; report by Country Specific Configuration (CSC) Chairs; follow-up to the PBC Retreat

24 June 2022

Chair's Summary

1. On 24 June, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima, convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF); report by Country Specific Configuration (CSC) Chairs; follow-up to the PBC Retreat. In her opening remarks, the Chair underscored the importance of this meeting, as it provides an opportunity to further strengthen coherence within a unified PBC, including through regular briefings by the CSC Chairs, and to further enhance synergies with the PBF, in line with the PBC's programme of work for 2022. She thanked the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) for organizing the PBC Retreat, which took place on 5-6 May, and stressed the need to continue to discuss ways to improve the PBC's working method and solidify PBC's advisory role vis-a-vis Security Council and General Assembly, and its bridging role to ECOSOC. She reiterated the commitment of PBC to continue to explore all avenues to facilitate greater synergy between PBC and other stakeholders within its mandate and areas of work.

Update on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund

2. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, noted that the General Assembly's High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding demonstrated strong support from the Member States for adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. She stated that although resources for the PBF had not grown as fast as hoped, the PBF continued to expand its engagement. Highlighting the significant and continuous demand for the priority window on women and youth inclusion, she underscored that the PBF had become a leading fund for gender-responsive peacebuilding with a record 47% invested across the portfolio in 2021. The PBF is piloting new approaches for a "Gender Promotion Initiative 2.0" to further enhance participation of national and local actors in programme design. The PBF exceeded the target of investing 35% of total approvals under the priority window on facilitating UN transitions for first time in 2021. Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, and Liberia are among top fund recipients in 2022. ASG Spehar stated that although its programming of the cross-border window remains challenging, the PBF continues to evolve approaches with partners. In line with the Fund's Strategy 2020-24, for 2022 the Fund has built a pipeline for investments totalling \$295 million for over 40 countries, which would be the highest amount yet and a 30% increase over 2021. She stressed that this however would

only be possible if the PBF succeeds in closing the funding gap for 2022 which stands at \$145 million against the \$275 million target. She noted that how consideration of the Secretary-General's proposal for assessed contributions will evolve in the Fifth Committee could be a "game-changer" if the proposal finds approval, while voluntary funding will remain crucial.

3. The ASG announced her intention to further innovate communication and dissemination of peacebuilding impact on the ground. New efforts will include developing an "impact hub" to systematize and disseminate peacebuilding results of the PBF and beyond. She noted that the PBF has been advancing its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practice, including through regular thematic reviews, roll-out of strategic results frameworks (SRFs) in Peacebuilding Recovery Facility (PRF) countries, and an impact evaluation pilot study active in three countries. She recalled that all countries who are granted eligibility are invited to come to the PBC to discuss their peacebuilding plans, challenges and achievements. She also noted that, with a view to further strengthening synergies with the PBC, countries could be invited to discuss their peacebuilding priorities and needs as they develop new requests for PBF eligibility.

Quarterly report by the Chairs of the PBC Country-configurations

4. The Chair of the PBC Guinea-Bissau Configuration (Brazil) recalled that the Commission's Ambassadorial-level meeting in February was joined by State Secretary of Guinea-Bissau, the UN Resident Coordinator and the UNDP representative. He noted that, in view of the political developments in the country, he has been engaging with key stakeholders, including the Resident Coordinator, who informed that there are key gaps to fill in the preparation of the legislative elections, which require support from the international community. He noted that the Resident Coordinator also highlighted the need to foster socioeconomic development and employment opportunities in Guinea-Bissau. The Chair expressed his intention to visit the country in August and conduct a series of activities aiming at discussing the preparation of the legislative elections and ways to ensure continued attention to national peacebuilding priorities, especially the expansion of socioeconomic opportunities and inclusiveness. He also expressed his hope to continue fruitful dialogue with Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and national actors on the best way to fully support the country's political stabilization process and its endeavors to deliver its peacebuilding priorities.
5. The Chair of the PBC Liberia Configuration (Sweden) informed the Commission of the Chair's recent visit to Liberia as well as the African Development Bank's headquarter in Abidjan in June. The visit, joined by ASG for Peacebuilding Support, particularly focused on the Commission's priority themes for Liberia for 2022, including social cohesion and national reconciliation efforts, the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality and

support for the preparation and organization of peaceful, transparent and inclusive elections in 2023. During the visit, the Chair met with the President of Liberia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Gender, Social Affairs and Children, the Minister for Internal Affairs, the Minister of Finance and Ministers of Justice and Defense, the National Elections Commission representative, as well as civil society representatives and young and women peacebuilders. She underscored that she intends to convene an Ambassadorial-level meeting in support of preparations for peaceful, transparent, inclusive, free and fair elections in 2023. She noted that challenges remain for gender equality and women's empowerment in Liberia, including the issues of political representation, economic empowerment and protection against sexual and gender-based violence, and underscored the importance for the Commission to continue to closely monitor the issue of the enforceable 30 % gender quota. She noted that she also wishes to strengthen the Commission's engagement in Youth, Peace and Security agenda moving forward. During the visit, the Chair also met with the African Development Bank, World Bank and IMF representatives to discuss opportunities for strengthened cooperation between the PBC and international and regional financial institutions.

6. The Chair of the PBC Central African Republic Configuration (Morocco) updated that the Commission held an Ambassadorial-level meeting in April on the rule of law, with the participation of the Minister of Justice of Human Rights Promotion and Good Governance, the Special Prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court, the President of the Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission, the Vice-President of the Association of Women Lawyers, and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of MINUSCA. The Chair recalled that the meeting reviewed the progress in the rule of law, and the critical importance of the transitional justice mechanisms, which are integral to peacebuilding and sustainable peace in the country. In this context, the Chair called on Member States to consider reinforced support, both financial and logistical, to address the funding gaps and consolidate the significant investments in justice and reconciliation. A letter and briefing note on the fiscal status were circulated as an addendum. He touched on the other peacebuilding areas, including support the country's socio-economic development, and the importance of the holding of local elections in 2023. Furthermore, the Chair expressed his wish to enhance the PBC's support to the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA).
7. The Chair of the PBC Burundi Configuration (Switzerland) recalled the PBC's support for peacebuilding in Burundi since 2006. She noted that Burundi had moved beyond the crisis of 2015 and, following the 2020 elections, has been able to register improvements in the areas of public freedoms and political rights, enlarge the democratic space and improve bilateral and regional relations. She noted that the Commission has served as a framework for presenting to Burundi's stakeholders the progress and future plans of the Burundian government for peacebuilding. She recalled that the Commission has recently presented the progress of the

internal and external policy, as well as the commitment on the socio-economic level, in particular the peace capitalization plan, or the youth empowerment policy. As Burundi's engagement with this Commission has reached a certain maturity, she stated that the Commission will continue to make support available. She suggested three potential avenues for Burundi's future engagement with the PBC as follows: (i) Consultations between the government and its bilateral and multilateral partners, in collaboration with the Resident Coordinator and PBSO, could help identify needs in socioeconomic development and peacebuilding. The Commission should remain available to support the government to consolidate gains in women's empowerment and support for youth. (ii) The Commission could consider supporting the government in the strengthening of the justice sector. (iii) The Commission could support the government's commitment to welcome returnees and to promote sustainable and effective solutions for Burundians affected by displacement.

Follow up to the PBC Retreat

8. ASG Spehar recalled that the Retreat of the PBC focused on three interconnected priorities in the Commission's 2022 programme of work: (i) ensuring results on the ground; (ii) communicating these more widely; and (iii) enhancing the Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles. Touching upon concrete requests from countries under consideration, she suggested that the Commission could consider how much it can promise and deliver in response to these requests, what could be directed to other entities for their support, and whether any requests could be responded to through other means, including south-south and triangular cooperation. She also underscored the importance of expanding the geographic scope of the Commission, considering that a large percentage of the UN's peacebuilding work is conducted in operational settings that are not yet considered by the PBC. She also stressed the importance of promoting inclusive approaches to peacebuilding, including by increasingly considering diverse perspectives from local actors, particularly women and youth. Highlighting the initiatives PBSO has already undertaken, including increased social medial presences, regular posts on weekly DPPA newsletter, interviews with different stakeholders, establishment of a PBC communications focal points group, and deepened collaboration with UN public information officers in the field, she expressed her readiness to support Member States' follow-up actions to enhance visibility of the work of the PBC, including by making a request to the Department of Global Communications (DGC) for their support. She highlighted the progress made in strengthening the Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles, demonstrated by the record number of advice and submissions to UN bodies and external fora in 2021. The Commission's expanding, flexible agenda offers opportunities to build consensus around key peacebuilding priorities and to deliver results where they are needed the most, she stressed. She recalled concrete action points raised by Member States during the retreat to improve the Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles, including regular meetings with the PBC's informal

coordinators with the General Assembly, Security Council and ECOSOC and improvement of working methods, and reiterated her commitment to supporting these initiatives.

9. Member States welcomed the briefings by ASG Spehar and the CSC Chairs and raised the following points:
 - Member States acknowledged the PBF's critical role, as a flexible, adaptive and catalytic instrument, in supporting peacebuilding initiatives. They stressed the need to continue to strengthen the linkages between the PBC and the PBF. They underscored the importance of partnerships with international and regional financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations and private sector in support of the work of the PBF.
 - Member States expressed concern regarding financial gaps, the PBF continues to face, and called for greater support, including through multi-year contributions. They welcomed the appointment of the co-facilitators for the follow-up process of the High-Level Meeting of Financing for Peacebuilding, and many speakers reiterated their support for allocating assessed contributions for the PBF. They also underscored the importance for the PBF to continue to ensure accountability without undermining its flexibility and agility.
 - Member States commended the work of the CSC Chairs. They underscored the importance to continue to engage with local actors, especially women and young peacebuilders on the ground, including through field visits. They noted that further engagement with regional and subregional organizations is key.
 - Member States thanked the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and PBSO for organizing the Retreat of the PBC and preparing an outcome summary. They echoed the need to translate commitment into actions. They stressed the need to ensure greater impact of the PBC engagement on the ground and reiterated their support for expanding the role of the PBC to more geographical and substantive settings. They underscored the importance to continue to engage with local actors, especially women and young peacebuilders.
 - They stressed the need to improve communications and address misconceptions regarding the functions of the PBC, which often lead to hesitation of countries to seek support from the PBC. They suggested ideas to address these challenges, including enhancing collaborations with DGC and possibly with media, organizing workshops and seminars regarding the work of the PBC, and encouraging the countries engaged with the PBC to share their experiences and benefits of engagement with the PBC.
 - They called for stronger coordination between the PBC and other UN bodies, especially the General Assembly, Security Council and ECOSOC, including through informal

coordinators of relations between the PBC and these bodies. They also called for extending PBC's bridging role to those engaged in operational activities in the field.