

Peacebuilding Commission

Ambassadorial-level meeting on the 2025 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture: The Gambia's experience in peacebuilding and sustaining peace

21 June 2024

Chair's Summary

On 21 June 2024, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting on the 2025 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (PBAR): The Gambia's experience in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Taking stock of the work done by the Peacebuilding Architecture in support of The Gambia since 2017, the meeting was an opportunity to showcase the innovative ways adopted to support The Gambia in its political transition to democracy. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and Gambians Abroad and former Permanent Representative of The Gambia to the UN, H.E. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and former Chair of the PBC, H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, shared their respective experiences and views, which helped start informing the Commission's reflection on the 2025 PBAR process.

1. On 21 June, **H.E. Mr. Sérgio França Danese (Brazil), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)**, convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting to take stock of the work done by the Peacebuilding Architecture in support of The Gambia's political transition since 2017. The meeting was convened in the context of the informal phase of the 2025 PBAR. In his opening remarks, the PBC Chair expressed gratitude for the Ministers' willingness to share their views on the 2025 PBAR based on The Gambia's experience and engagement with the Commission. He announced that the meeting marked the formal beginning of the collective reflection on the 2025 PBAR in the context of the PBC, as laid out in the Terms of Reference approved in April 2024. Referring to The Gambia's fruitful engagement with the Commission, he commended The Gambia's significant progress in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, as well as the Republic of Korea's consistent role in peacebuilding, including the leadership demonstrated as Chair of the PBC in 2017 when The Gambia started its engagement with the Commission. The Chair also commended the Minister for hosting the Asia-Pacific Regional consultation on the 2025 PBAR, in May 2024.

During the ensuing interactive session moderated by the Chair, the two Ministers emphasized the following:

2. **On The Gambia's experience in engaging with the PBC and his reflections regarding the 2025 PBAR, H.E. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and Gambians Abroad of The Gambia**, recalled his country's long-term engagement with the Commission and expressed gratitude for the support throughout the country's post-electoral crisis and political transition process, including on the security sector and transitional justice reforms. He highlighted the Commission's integral role in gleaning international attention and support, including by identifying strategies for the transition plan, supporting innovative resource mobilization, as well as enhancing engagement with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs).

He noted that The Gambia was welcomed to the Peacebuilding Commission, not as a post-conflict country but as a country in fragility, desperate to prevent the escalation of a political impasse capable of leading to a humanitarian catastrophe. He further, underscored conflict prevention as key to peace and security, as well as a logical approach to saving lives and livelihoods. While welcoming the pledges for support by the international community, he noted that the lack of disbursement of adequate and sustained funding is an obstacle to undertake the necessary reforms in support of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Within this context, he underscored the importance of timely support, contextual approaches, as well as synergies between the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the Commission. He welcomed the General Assembly decision to allocate \$50 million of assessed contributions to the PBF which would enable more predictable funding. In connection with the 2025 PBAR, he called for innovative solutions to enhance the Commission's relevance, particularly in strengthening relations with Member States, the IFIs and regional organizations, including through collaboration between the African Union and the Commission, to better support countries in transition.

3. On the good practices of the Commission's engagement with The Gambia and the Commission's role in fostering greater coherence and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, highlighted The Gambia's remarkable progress towards stability, economic development and democratization. He mentioned the importance of the adoption of the 2016 twin resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, which contributed to the revitalization of the Commission, marking renewed commitment and collective action for conflict prevention and sustaining peace. Within this context, The Gambia's request to engage with the Commission represented a critical momentum to showcase the Commission's impact on the ground. Furthermore, the PBC visit to the country in 2017 was also pivotal in setting the ground for the Commission to engage on the basis of national ownership. Thereafter, several PBC meetings on The Gambia were convened with relevant stakeholders, such as senior UN officials, Member States, the IFI's, regional organizations and civil society, to support the country's peacebuilding priorities. Throughout the engagement, The Gambia's leadership and ownership has been key, as well as the full political support of the PBC membership - which demonstrates the unique values that the Commission can bring to nations navigating complex political transitions. He underscored the 2025 PBAR as a strategic opportunity to strengthen the Commission's convening power to reinforce partnerships with key stakeholders, especially the IFIs and regional organizations - in particular to secure sustainable financing and support resource mobilization for countries in need. In that regard, he recommended that the Commission intensifies its efforts to identify and implement concrete actions to advance durable peace, including through regular advocacy with donors and facilitating networks that can address local needs. He further recommended to strengthen collaboration with the private sector, given its substantial financial resources and innovative technologies. Last, he urged the effective implementation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus to address conflicts and instability through a comprehensive approach.

4. Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, highlighted that the successful Commission's engagement with The Gambia was an example which Member States could build when looking at ways to strengthen the Peacebuilding Architecture. Furthermore, and in drawing on the Secretary-General's A New Agenda for Peace and the Summit of the Future, she encouraged a deep dive into the importance of leadership,

national ownership, political accompaniment as well as the Commission's unique convening role in forging partnerships and in prevention. On the latter, she highlighted the Commission's role in supporting Member States in their peacebuilding efforts and initiatives in a sustainable and continuous way - before, during and after crises and conflicts as well as its flexibility in responding to a variety of needs. While noting the various areas for expansion, she suggested to capitalize on the role of the PBC Vice-Chairs in supporting those needs. She further dwelled on the importance of prevention and how The Gambia's engagement with the Commission was a proof of successful prevention efforts. She therefore encouraged to elaborate on nationally-led and owned prevention strategies and underscored the potential role of the Commission to accompany countries in these processes. Considering the critical nexus between peacebuilding and development, she encouraged to fully exploit the Commission's ability and mandate as a key intergovernmental body in advancing greater coherence in peacebuilding. Referring to the good practices related to The Gambia, she also recognized the strong PBC-PBF synergies in support of transitional justice and women and youth empowerment. Last, she underscored the importance of tracking how the role of the PBC and its decisions and actions translate on the ground and pledged DPPA's Peacebuilding Support Office's continued support in that regard.

5. Member States who took the floor welcomed the briefings and highlighted the following:

- They welcomed the long-term and fruitful engagement of the Commission with The Gambia and encouraged continued collaboration. They commended the resolve of the Government of The Gambia in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace and highlighted the country's significant progress in transition efforts, including on transitional justice, security sector reform, and governance. They further recommended The Gambia to continue strengthening legal frameworks and to implement the TRRC recommendations.
- Building on The Gambia's experience, they echoed the importance of national ownership and leadership as well as building institutional capacities for peacebuilding. They noted that the 2025 PBAR should continue to place national ownership at the center of all peacebuilding engagements.
- They reaffirmed collective commitment to continue supporting The Gambia in consolidating peace dividends and achieving sustainable development, including through enhancing coordination among national stakeholders, the UN, and international and regional institutions and organizations, to maximize impact and sustainability on the ground.
- In that regard, while emphasizing a multidimensional and coherent approach to peacebuilding, they called for the 2025 PBAR to advance integrated approaches to overcome the siloed nature of the humanitarian, development and peace actors.
- They emphasized the pivotal role of robust international and regional partnerships in support of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development endeavors.
- They underscored the Commission's key role in facilitating engagement for resource mobilization, including with the international and regional financial institutions and organizations, and emphasized the importance for the 2025 PBAR to explore ways to further strengthen that collaboration.
- They encouraged Member States to consider developing and sharing nationally-led and nationally-owned prevention strategies.

- In relation to the Commission’s advisory role, they called for strengthening the relationship with the Security Council and called for the 2025 PBAR to explore ways in which the Council can better utilize the bridging and convening roles of the PBC.
- Highlighting the imperative of inclusive governance, as well as women and youth empowerment in peacebuilding and political processes, they called for the 2025 PBAR to reinforce their participation in all stages of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace processes, including by fostering dialogue and advancing their leadership.
- They further stressed the role of women and youth as agents of peace and sustainable development. They also highlighted the need for the protection and promotion of women and girls’ rights in the context of ongoing efforts that aim to repeal the law criminalizing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in The Gambia.
- They underscored the need for localized solutions for peacebuilding and sustainable development and therefore emphasized the importance of investing in local capacity-building efforts, which should be further developed in the 2025 PBAR.
- They called for adequate, sustained, flexible and predictable financing for peacebuilding. In that regard, they recognized the instrumental role of the PBF in providing catalytic funding for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. They also emphasized the importance of PBC-PBF synergies.

6. In their concluding remarks, **H.E. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and Gambians Abroad**, reiterated that The Gambia’s priority is sustaining peace, particularly through constant dialogue, as well as implementing the Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparation Commission’s (TRRC) recommendations and providing support to the victims and their families as per the Government’s White Paper. He further shared the Government’s commitment to prevent efforts to repeal the FGM law. **H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea**, emphasized that the 2025 PBAR will provide a critical opportunity to make the Commission more agile and relevant in terms of accompanying countries in transition, particularly through strengthening the HDP nexus. **Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, UN DPPA Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support**, encouraged to adopt a pragmatic approach and concrete ideas for the 2025 PBAR. **H.E. Mr. Sérgio França Danese, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission**, concluded the meeting by emphasizing the need to assess the value of the PBC on the basis of the impact of its work at the country-level. He recalled that 23 June marks the anniversary of Peacebuilding Day and noted that it was an opportunity to better promote the work of the PBC. He further noted that the 2025 PBAR should ensure that the PBC is better positioned to address peacebuilding and sustaining peace challenges and support the prevention efforts integral to sustainable peace and development. He closed the meeting announcing that the PBC would convene a Ministerial-level meeting on 26 September 2024.

7. Chair’s recommendations

- Encourage The Gambia’s continued engagement with the Commission, particularly to inform of the progress in the area of critical reforms in support of durable peace and sustainable development.
- In the context of the 2025 PBAR, for the Member States to consider strengthening the Commission’s role in facilitating coherent support to countries in transition, based on national request, leadership and ownership.

- Adopt a pragmatic approach in which the 2025 PBAR can be used to further improve the functioning and impact of the work of the PBC.
- Based on the Commission's convening and bridging role, identify concrete obstacles to coherence in humanitarian, development, and peace efforts and provide practical proposals to overcome them.
- Reinforce the Commission's engagement with the international and regional financial institutions and organizations in a practical and action-oriented manner.
- Explore ways for the Commission to partner with the private sector in support of durable peace and sustainable development.
- Enhance the Commission's timely and more operational advice to the General Assembly and the Security Council, and its bridging role with the ECOSOC.