

Peacebuilding Commission

Advice to the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security

20 October 2021

Mr. President,

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission to report progress in the Commission's work in support of women, peace and security and women in peacebuilding, and to make suggestions for collective follow up effort.

It is encouraging that, since the last open debate of the Security Council on women, peace and security a year ago, a growing number of Member States have taken positive steps towards the objectives of the agenda, while at the same time the work of women led, and women focused organizations has continued to inspire us. However, implementation gaps persist, and women continue to be disproportionately affected from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the Ambassadorial-level meeting of the PBC that took place on 13 October under the theme "*Enhancing the Leading Role of Women in Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Efforts*," PBC members encouraged the United Nations to adopt further measures to ensure that the number of women delegates in peace processes led or co-led by the United Nations (currently at 23 per cent as reported in S/2021/827) increases in the future. The Commission has been taking action to help address this and other related gaps, including by encouraging countries that engage with the Commission to adopt national action plans on women, peace and security.

Guided by a gender strategy adopted in 2016 and reviewed in 2020, and its associated action plan that was approved in February 2021, the PBC has been working to ensure progress in all areas of work specified in the approved [action plan](#). A recent stock taking exercise revealed that, when comparing PBC's outcome documents from October 2020 to October 2021, to the baseline data following the 2020 review of its gender strategy, it is apparent that a concerted effort has been made to increase the consistency in which the PBC gender analysis based on verified, reliable and sex-disaggregated data is included in all relevant PBC country and region-specific outcome documents, as appropriate. A record number of women peacebuilders¹ have been invited to provide the Commission with their own contextual analysis and recommendations. In the last year, half of the PBC's meetings included briefings from women peacebuilders either representing civil society organizations or local businesses. The overall substantive quality of gender references in PBC outcome documents has also improved, as has how the PBC reflects the messages conveyed to it by women peacebuilders invited to brief the Commission. Just under half of outcome PBC documents include calls for the elimination of discriminatory practices against women or the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment measures. A third of

¹ For the purposes of the advice, "women peacebuilders" means women representatives from civil society organizations, the private sector, academia or think tanks and women independent experts who lead and contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace in countries and regions considered by the Commission.

outcome documents include calls for women's economic empowerment or advocate for the equal participation of women in socioeconomic development.

In the last 12 months, the PBC has also held dedicated meetings to discuss various peacebuilding issues that affect women peacebuilders across different region and country specific contexts, including in the Great Lakes and Liberia. These led to more substantive discussions and recommendations by the PBC and strengthened support for the overall peacebuilding priorities identified by the countries it engages with, including on women peace and security. Examples include expressing support for the implementation of the second Liberia National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for 2019-2023 and the National Roadmap on Rape and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV); and encouraging the Government of Somalia to consolidate gains in gender equality and women empowerment, building on the different thematic area commitments anchored in the holistic and nationally owned Somali Women's Charter.

Consistent with its commitment to amplify the voices of women peacebuilders who brief the PBC and to support their efforts, the Commission would like to bring to the attention of the Security Council the following recommendations which also take into account suggestions made by women peacebuilders who have engaged with the Commission:

- Encourage the United Nations Secretariat to ensure that relevant reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council include analysis, including verified and reliable data and recommendations, for the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Individual members of the Council could have a priority role to play in strengthening gender analysis in substantive discussions and outcome documents of the Council, as appropriate.
- Encourage strengthened United Nations efforts to increase women's quotas as appropriate, but also to focus on the quality of women's participation in political and peace processes, as well as in peacebuilding initiatives, building on the work of United Nations field presences, including initiatives funded by the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).
- Promote better connection between women's participation and protection and empowerment. Protection and participation are mutually reinforcing priorities that need to be invested in simultaneously. Sexual violence in conflict is a major challenge that deserves our attention. Similarly, we must address other forms of widespread gender-based violence that specifically target women peacebuilders, particularly in armed conflicts. Women's economic empowerment is crucial for their meaningful participation and protection. This is all the more important at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic continues to magnify and exacerbate the very issues the women, peace and security agenda tries to address.
- Encourage and support the efforts of all countries that engage with the Commission to develop and implement their own comprehensive National Action Plan for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325.
- Support efforts to ensure that young women are empowered to contribute to peacebuilding initiatives, including through support to grassroots peacebuilding initiatives, youth leaders, and youth organizations.

- Support the efforts of women’s peace outreach activities, including in the Sahel region, which have recently been further complicated due to challenges related to climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Promote dedicated funding for efforts by women peacebuilders and women-led organizations and other efforts aimed at promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding. This is particularly important in view of the high-level General Assembly meeting on financing for peacebuilding next year. Related to this recommendation, the Commission welcomes the fact that the Peacebuilding Fund’s Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI) has recently allocated a total of \$19.2 million to promote meaningful participation of women and youth in peacebuilding. The Commission encourages the PBF to sustain this effort and exchange best practices with other UN funds.

Finally, the PBC pledges its full support to the efforts of the Security Council in support of the women, peace and security agenda. The Commission will support this effort by continuing to implement its gender strategy and action plan.

Chair
Peacebuilding Commission