

Security Council – Open Debate on Youth, Peace & Security

Statement by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

23 April 2018

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Security Council today in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

The Peacebuilding Commission congratulates Peru for its initiative to organize this open debate on an important and timely issue. The PBC recognizes the indispensable role young people could play in any effort to build and sustain peace, and welcomes the presentation of the independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security, which brings insightful opportunity for Member States to analyze and think over the ways of engagement with young people in the field of peace and security and enrich our discussions. According to the Study the consistent exclusion young people experience, and the mistrust they express in national and international authorities should be, for all us, a wake-up call. The PBC notes that young people's favorable participation in peacebuilding is, all at the same time, a right, a demographic necessity in making our societies more inclusive, and peaceful.

If we are to achieve inclusive, sustainable, development, and build and sustain peace, we simply cannot afford to lose the largest generation of young people the world has ever known.

The PBC recognizes the importance to include young women and men into the mainstream of peacebuilding and to see young people as partners to engage. The PBC has heard directly from young people about their peacebuilding work in contexts as diverse as Burundi, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan and the Solomon Islands, and experienced first-hand the resourcefulness and resilience of young people in the face of conflict and violence. We recognize that the majority of young people strive for peace and should be given meaningful opportunities to participate in peacebuilding efforts. Trust in, not fear of youth has to guide our work, – the Study says. This requires giving them the right opportunities: ensuring that, quality education

at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels are available, including in refugee and displaced settings, and young people are provided with appropriate employment opportunities.

The PBC expresses its support for the peacebuilding initiatives with positive reflections undertaken by young women and young men in conflict-affected countries. Such activities are often launched with limited funding, assistance and recognition by national and international actors alike. The PBC recognizes that a lack of adequate funding to youth-led organizations, in part because of the challenges youth organizations face in accessing existing funding streams, is limiting the contribution of young people to peaceful societies. Significantly, initiatives such as the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative of the Peacebuilding Fund allocated nearly US\$15 million to programmes on youth and peacebuilding in the past two years, including direct funding to non-governmental organizations. Herewith, 40% of the budget was allocated to local civil society organizations. We also welcome PBF efforts promote initiatives that support the involvement of young people as contributors to political processes.

The PBC encourages the Security Council to take into account the role of young people could play in peacebuilding, From our standpoint, the PBC intends to continue and expand its direct engagement with young people, both in the countries and regions it supports and in its meetings here in New York.

Thank you.