



Dag Hammarskjöld
Foundation

A roadmap for the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture

Chair's Summary

6th Peacebuilding Commission Retreat organized by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
in collaboration with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office
15-16-October 2019, Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) co-led a retreat of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) intended to serve as an informal exchange on core thematic areas to be addressed in the forthcoming review of the Peacebuilding Architecture mandated by resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016) (hereinafter referred to as “the 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture”). The retreat opened with a reception and welcome dinner during which the Secretary-General shared key reflections on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the forthcoming review, emphasising its importance for the full UN system and all reform efforts. In addition to the Secretary-General, the Presidents of the General Assembly, Security Council and ECOSOC, Permanent Representatives/Ambassadors from the membership of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Under Secretaries-General of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, as well as Assistant Secretaries-General of other lead UN entities engaged in peacebuilding participated in the event.

Building on the experiences of 2010 and 2015, the purpose of the retreat was to give Member States an opportunity to identify critical themes and issues to shape the 2020 review, based on a shared understanding of the expectations and modalities outlined in the agreed Terms of Reference; and to explore practical ways for the PBC to build on its previous efforts in fulfilment of its advisory role to the General Assembly and the Security Council, including by convening discussions during the informal phase of the review.

The retreat was structured around three distinct but inter-connected sessions: 1) the context in which the 2020 review will take place; 2) progress and challenges from 2015 to 2020; and 3) the way forward: objectives of the 2020 review. A working lunch session served as an opportunity to update participants on the development of the 2020-2024 Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) investment plan, and to discuss its role within the broader peacebuilding architecture. Below is a summary highlighting key messages from the discussions, conducted under the Chatham House Rule.

Key messages:

Contextual Developments: from 2015 – 2020:

Discussions at the retreat recognised that the 2020 review is taking place in a different context than the previous two Peacebuilding Architecture (PBA) reviews. The first, in 2010, assessed that the peacebuilding architecture had not lived up to the expectations surrounding its creation in 2005 and identified ways to strengthen the operations of PBSO, the PBC and the PBF. The 2015 review looked not only at the operational capacity and reach of the PBA but considered more broadly UN support for nationally-led peacebuilding efforts. While underscoring the relevance and potential of the PBA, the 2015 review pointed to pervasive fragmentation across the UN system as the main factor limiting the ability of the UN to contribute meaningfully and substantially to building and sustaining peace. The resolutions that concluded the 2015 review underscored that sustaining peace is a shared responsibility of the entire UN system, in partnership with national, regional, bilateral and multilateral actors. They called for the dissolution of silos and more integrated, strategic, comprehensive and coherent approaches to peacebuilding by the United Nations.

Participants highlighted that the 2020 review is an opportunity to build on the progressive strengthening of the PBA, as noted in the two Secretary-General's reports that have been presented since the 2015 review (A/72/707 and S/2018/43; and A/73/890 and S/2019/448). Through these reports, the Secretary-General has affirmed his commitment to sustaining peace and for making prevention a priority across the UN system. The reports include recommendations for operationalising the 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture and highlight progress toward them, including through ongoing efforts to address fragmentation across the UN's work in peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

Discussions acknowledged the strong normative framework in place today that supports the operationalisation of the 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture and the UN's Charter responsibility on prevention. Central to the UN's work in support of Member States is the comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through which Member States recognise peace as essential to the achievement of the SDGs. The Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative has also led to Member State commitments that reinforce some of the main recommendations of the sustaining peace resolutions, including the bridging role of the PBC; committing to strong coordination, coherence and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission during peacekeeping mandates, as appropriate, as well as supporting UN Country Teams to continue assisting host countries to build peace in transition contexts. The 2018 UN-World Bank joint study and resulting report, *Pathways for Peace* (P4P), provides further evidence to support the main messages in the 2016 resolutions, in addition to strengthening the partnership between the World Bank and the UN. P4P identified and analyzed the intersections between development processes and conflict prevention efforts, noting the role exclusion and inequality increasingly play as conflict drivers. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the upcoming Report of the Secretary-General on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) were also highlighted as important components of building and sustaining peace. Participants repeatedly stressed the imperative of abolishing siloes, strengthening coherence and cross-pillar coordination, while respecting mandates, and the shared endeavor of peacebuilding and prevention, reaching across the work of the United Nations.

Positive changes in the UN's work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace:

First and foremost, the retreat acknowledged the significant progress made in how the UN works on peacebuilding and sustaining peace since the creation of the peacebuilding architecture in 2005 and in follow up to the 2010 and 2015 reviews. The past few years have seen a greatly increased understanding of the concept of sustaining peace, now embedded in the strategic plans of many different UN entities and in policies of several Member States.

Participants welcomed the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as a vital platform for accompanying countries and as a place where Member States could come for accompaniment, with a focus on support to national governments and their people. There have been notable advances in diversifying the working methods of the PBC, with the goal of enhancing its flexibility as a dedicated intergovernmental advisory body for international peacebuilding efforts. The PBC has considered a range of country-specific and regional situations at the initiative of the countries concerned (e.g. Burkina Faso, Papua New Guinea, the Gambia, the countries of the Sahel region), and strengthened its advisory role to the Security Council (e.g. on MINUSCA mandate renewal). The PBC was described as a bridge between the General Assembly and the Security Council where sustainable development, peace and security and human rights can be seen in a holistic fashion. The development of a gender strategy in the PBC demonstrates efforts to ensure that gender considerations are integrated in all of the Commission's work.

Participants recognised the continued and growing role of the PBF in ensuring strategic, effective and rapid funding for peacebuilding initiatives at critical moments, including in support of peace agreements (e.g. in the Central African Republic) and in fragile transition settings (e.g. in Liberia). Increasingly, the PBF has focused investments on cross-border programming, and in support of women and youth-led peacebuilding initiatives.

The three reform streams the Secretary-General initiated when he took office in 2018 - reform of the UN's Peace and Security Pillar, UN Development System and the Management System - aim to ensure the United Nations system is well positioned to uphold the Charter and to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. Implementation of the reforms has also contributed to greater coherence and effectiveness, and increased nimbleness, in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts. The new regional divisions within the peace and security pillar facilitate shared analysis, planning and programming. The UN system is increasingly working together across peace, development and humanitarian assistance, with integrated inter-agency committees at HQ and through, for example, the engagement of Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs) at country and regional levels. The repositioning of the UN Development System, in particular the new RC system and the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (including the Common Country Analysis), allow for stronger leadership and greater coherence within UN Country Teams (UNCTs) for planning, programming and reporting in support of national priorities.

Challenges and gaps:

While the forthcoming review is seen as an opportunity to take stock and articulate progress since 2015 in strengthening UN engagement in building and sustaining peace at country and regional levels, participants emphasised that it is also a critical moment to articulate remaining challenges and gaps. The review should identify what is needed to ensure peacebuilding and sustaining peace are incorporated into the mandates and operations of all entities and departments at the UN; sustaining peace should be doctrine.

Further efforts are needed to **address fragmentation** across the system and to break silos that persist between peace, development and humanitarian efforts and between headquarters, regional and country

levels. The new RC function is fundamental to ensuring greater coherence and strong leadership for UN country teams. The review should be regarded as an opportunity to deepen understanding of how the new generation of RCOs (and the new Cooperation Framework including the CCA) can better support peacebuilding outcomes and the tools needed by RCs to fully realise their potential in this regard, giving real effect to the indisputable linkages between peace and the 2020 Agenda with its principle of leaving no one behind.

The 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture call for a coherent and integrated approach to peacebuilding, noting that the three pillars of the UN's work are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Some Member States encouraged that the review provide an opportunity to look at how the PBA can ensure consideration of the human rights dimension, in particular in the context of mission drawdown. To **increase coherence** participants also noted the potential of strengthening the PBC's bridging role to ECOSOC and urged greater engagement between the two. While the PBC's advisory role to the Security Council has intensified, some participants suggested more could be done to strengthen the relationship and to increase the value added of the advice provided. Implementation and impact of the UN's work to support peacebuilding and sustaining peace also relies on the commitment of Member States, including to reducing the fragmentation that drives that of the UN system. It was emphasized that progress is required by Member States in ensuring coherence between messages delivered in capitals and those sent in New York, Geneva, Washington DC or Rome.

Participants underscored that **financing** for peacebuilding remains a critical concern. Financing remains insufficient and unpredictable, and reinforces fragmentation in the way it is prioritised and disbursed. The PBF was praised for its proven track-record as a critical mechanism, allowing the Secretary-General and the system to respond quickly to needs in vulnerable contexts and to promote coherence between UN entities. Yet, participants were reminded, it continues to be a challenge to meet the target of 500M USD annual replenishment through voluntary contributions to the Fund and to answer the call for a more diversified donor base. Member States identified the usefulness of the review to gather examples of the catalytic effect of the PBF and how the fund connects and complements other funding mechanisms at country level (e.g. SDG fund, CERF, HR instruments). The review also presents an opportunity to further explore and identify synergies between the PBF and the work of the PBC.

The 2019 Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace unambiguously highlights the need to improve operational **partnerships**, including with regional and sub-regional organizations and to further explore ways to partner with international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank and the African Development Bank, as well as civil society organizations and the private sector. Participants called for partnerships between the UN, AU and EU, as well as the partnership between the UN and the World Bank, to be strengthened and noted the PBC's pivotal role in this effort. Finally, national **leadership and inclusive national ownership**, was an important element emphasised during the retreat, underpinning all of the discussions, and guiding the potential for enhancing the work of the UN system and Member States on the ground.

Modalities for the 2020 Review:

Participants discussed expectations for the modalities of the 2020 peacebuilding architecture review, recalling that in September PBC members agreed on the final version of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the review, subsequently transmitted by the PBC Chair to the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The ToR outline a two-phase process. The first, informal phase will include: 1) consultations on various aspects of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the PBC (open exceptionally to all Member States in a fully inclusive manner); 2) an independent assessment from eminent persons

selected by the Secretary-General; and 3) regional and thematic consultations organized by Member States and UN entities with think tanks and research centers. The findings of these three informal tracks will be transmitted to the Secretary-General as an input to his 2020 report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and to the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council as an input to the second, formal phase of the review. This second phase, likely to be led by two co-facilitators, will draw upon the Secretary-General's 2020 report and the findings of the informal phase, and is expected to conclude with the adoption of two new resolutions from the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Member States agreed that the review should take stock of implementation of the 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture and progress made since 2015, underscoring the importance of the review being comprehensive, looking beyond the PBC, PBSO and PBF. Progress should be explored in a variety of contexts, with a focus on the core reason for establishing the PBA to support and accompany conflict-affected countries whose peacebuilding challenges suffer from attention gaps and notably situations of transition, including drawdown in missions. However, participants urged that the review also look at the experiences of peacebuilding in non-mission settings where risk factors raise concern about potential escalation or outbreak of violence. This will provide an opportunity to understand how the new generation of RCs and UNCTs are positioned to work with better joined up analysis, bringing all of the UN's assets to bear in support of national priorities, ensuring that no one is left behind.

The way forward:

Member States expressed their expectations that the 2020 Review and the Report of the Secretary-General be focused on demonstrating both progress and challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace at the regional and country level. It should speak to the impact of the UN's support to Member States' efforts to realise the SDGs and to build and sustain peace. The review should be ambitious and bold, going beyond a catalogue of good examples to identifying systematic change, with the recognition that some of the recommendations will take several years to achieve and to show impact. In conclusion, participants acknowledged that the 2020 review touches all points of the UN system and requires leadership and engagement at the highest level within the UN and from Member States. It should be completed through an inclusive and comprehensive intergovernmental process with regular consultations with delegations, and dialogues with other intergovernmental bodies, to ensure broad Member State engagement.
