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**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL  
MARIA LUIZA RIBEIRO VIOTTI,**

**UNITED NATIONS CHEF DE CABINET**

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**REMARKS TO THE FIFTH COMMITTEE ON THE REPORT OF THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE AND SECURITY REFORM**

**New York, 18 November 2020**

Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates,

Chairman of the Advisory Committee,

I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the review of progress in the implementation of peace and security reform. I am joined this morning by Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations.

Mr. Chairman,

In his first week in office, the Secretary-General declared his intention to pursue opportunities to improve the working of the peace and security architecture of the Secretariat and its coordination with other activities of the Organization. An internal review launched in January 2017 identified four key goals for reform, namely prioritizing prevention and sustaining peace, enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of our missions, making the peace and security pillar more coherent through a “whole of pillar” approach and aligning the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars.

Three years ago, the General Assembly endorsed this vision for reform and subsequently approved the restructuring of the peace and security architecture at Headquarters. The former Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) were re-organized into the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). The two departments share a

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single political-operational structure under three Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities, as well as resources for coordination and shared services.

The most immediately visible elements of the peace and security reform are structural, but these structural changes directly translate into improved collaboration in the peace and security pillar across the areas of political expertise and technical capacities that help maximize our impact on the ground. The pillar now produces joint analysis and integrated strategies, and it can draw on a range of tools and resources to be employed flexibly in both mission and non-mission settings.

As has previously been reported to this Committee, a benefits management framework is in place to allow the Secretariat to measure progress in the achievement of expected benefits across all three tracks of reform. The report of the Secretary-General highlights a number of case studies that illustrate progress towards achieving these benefits.

Papua New Guinea provides a good example of how the pillar is better able to deliver together. Working with the population of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and the national and subnational governments, the United Nations supported the peaceful delivery of the non-binding referendum on the political future of Bougainville held in late 2019 and continues to provide assistance in the post-referendum period. Technical capacities from across the pillar have worked in a coordinated manner, including the Electoral Assistance Division of DPPA, which delivered critical support to the Bougainville Referendum Commission; the mediation capacity in DPPA, which helped facilitate the work of the ministerial-level post-referendum planning task force; and the Mine Action Service in DPO, which provided technical advice and undertook capacity-building efforts to help the Autonomous Region of Bougainville prepare for the referendum.

The comprehensive regional prevention strategy for the Horn of Africa was developed under the lead of one geographic division of DPPA-DPO and involved all three pillars of the Organization to ensure alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.

In peacekeeping contexts, the reforms have served to reinforce efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, including through the recent finalization of the Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework, as well as the broader Action for Peacekeeping agenda to facilitate mandate delivery and support political processes. The Central African Republic is a good case in point. In that context, the single political operational structure strengthened engagement with the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States and bilateral partners, engagement which was indispensable to the ultimate signing of the peace agreement.

The reform also facilitated increased support from the peacebuilding architecture to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, with

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the quick disbursement of \$23.9 million to the United Nations country team and civil society partners from the Peacebuilding Fund following the signing of the peace agreement.

The integration of PBSO into DPPA has facilitated improved integration of political analysis and strategy into Peacebuilding Fund programming, as in the case of Colombia, where the mission and the country team work closely to implement peacebuilding activities. It has also improved engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in support of nationally-led peacebuilding efforts and has improved the provision of advice to the Security Council.

The reform builds on previous work to strengthen cooperation with resident coordinators to facilitate deeper collaboration with the development pillar, including the Development Coordination Office. This allows DPPA and DPO to more effectively advise and support empowered resident coordinators and country teams in responding to specific country challenges. This has been particularly valuable in mission-settings in which a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General simultaneously serves as the resident coordinator.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of the heads and staff of the two departments responsible for the progress achieved. Of course, there is still more work ahead. DPPA and DPO continue to work to effect culture change within the peace and security architecture, and significant efforts are underway to standardize and simplify key administrative processes between the two departments.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic also presented challenges to the implementation of reform while also providing an opportunity to demonstrate improvements that are possible because of the reforms. The new arrangements and approaches introduced through reform also ensure that the two departments are coordinated and coherent in providing support and guidance to all peacekeeping and special political missions at a time of crisis. Through the establishment of the Field Support Group for COVID-19, DPPA and DPO work closely with the Department of Operational Support to develop unified guidance to missions and find cross-cutting solutions to address issues faced in the field.

Mr. Chair,

Today, as a result of its restructuring, the peace and security architecture is better positioned to fulfil its central role in helping to prevent violent conflict and reduce large-scale human suffering. The original vision of a whole-of-pillar approach to peace and security remains as valid today as it was three years ago. No specific actions are requested at this time on the part of the General Assembly, as implementation of the peace and security reform is proceeding and steady progress is being made in the realization of the expected benefits.

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The Secretary-General is grateful for your ongoing support in this vitally important undertaking.

Thank you.