

**Ambassadorial-level Consultation of the Peacebuilding Commission
2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture**

“Financing and Partnerships for Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace”

8-15 June 2020
Online platform

Background and Rationale

In recent decades, crises have evolved from catastrophic, short-term, and highly visible events to more structural, longer-term situations with complex underlying factors. Protracted crises have become the new norm and new challenges are continually emerging. Almost a quarter of the world’s population lives in countries and territories affected by crisis and conflict, and it is estimated that by 2030 as much as 80 per cent of the world’s poor will be living in fragile contexts. Population movements, climate change – and now the COVID-19 pandemic – are also creating new risks that must be managed and shared at both national and international levels. The peacebuilding landscape has also changed, with the emergence of new actors, approaches, and opportunities, particularly at the local and community level.

The complexity of modern-day cycles of crisis and conflict require scaled-up peacebuilding responses. Close strategic and operational partnerships between the UN, national governments and other key stakeholders, such as regional and sub-regional organizations, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society, as also are required as never before to appropriately share risk and ensure coherent, complementary and joined-up responses. International partners need to find ways to support locally-led and community-centered peacebuilding efforts, and the newly developed UN system-wide community engagement guidelines can help in that regard.

Adequate, predictable and sustained financing of peacebuilding efforts is the cornerstone of effective responses to assist countries to build and sustain peace over time. However, this widely acknowledged and understood requirement of peacebuilding continues to be an unmet challenge.¹ In his 2018 report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the Secretary-General proposed options²

¹ *On one hand, the share of total ODA allocated to conflict-affected countries and territories continued to increase in 2018 to 31.2 per cent, from a low in 2014 of 25.3 per cent. But this increase has mainly been driven by humanitarian needs, while the share of ODA in these settings focused on peacebuilding – the bridge between humanitarian and development assistance – has declined, from 19.7 per cent in 2009 to 11.4 per cent in 2018.*

² *The options that were outlined in A/72/707–S/2018/43 are: (a) Voluntary resources; (b) Assessed contributions; (c) Assessed contributions during mission drawdowns; (d) Unspent assessed contributions; (e) Assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund; (f) Re-investing savings from assessed budgets; (g) Diversifying available resources.*

to increase and make more predictable the financing of UN peacebuilding activities from voluntary, assessed and innovative sources. Unfortunately, there have been missed opportunities in pursuing these options, and peacebuilding remains overly dependent on voluntary contributions.

The proportion of aid going to programmes in fragile and conflict affected countries with gender equality as the primary objectives is stagnating at the same level under 5 per cent, relying on a very small group of major donors. In recognition of this challenge, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), in its November 2019 advice to the Security Council, called for increased funding in support of the work of women-led peacebuilding organizations

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is a key integrator in the field. The PBF works closely with UNCTs to design peacebuilding program interventions that are timely, catalytic and risk-tolerant, and that complement support from other funds such as the CERF, the SDGF and more recently the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. In the context of the pandemic, the PBF is specifically supporting UNCTs to (i) reinforce crisis management capacities and communications; (ii) ensure inclusive and equitable response and recovery; (iii) strengthen inter-community social cohesion and border management; and (iv) counter hate speech and stigmatization and address trauma. Unfortunately, demand for PBF support, which has grown exponentially in recent years, is outstripping contributions to the Fund. In 2019, the Fund could not respond to some requests for investments in critical situations. Unless the current trend changes, unmet requests for PBF support might further increase in 2020, when they are needed the most.

Following the launch of the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture on 22 November 2019, the PBC is convening all UN Member States in discussions on themes relating to peacebuilding and sustaining peace as part of the informal phase of the review. The 2016 twin resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)) recognized the importance of strategic partnerships, pooled funding and blended finance between the United Nations, bilateral and international donors, multilateral financial institutions, the private sector and civil society, and also noted the importance of adequate, predictable and sustained financing in order to provide effective assistance. In this 2018 report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the Secretary-General called for increased, restructured, and better prioritized funding dedicated to UN peacebuilding activities.

This consultation will be dedicated to exploring ways to ensure sustainable financing for peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts and to strengthen partnerships that enhance coherent and effective peacebuilding support at the country level. This consultation will hear from representatives from the UN, World Bank, the African Union, the private sector and civil society. The PBC will provide a platform for a discussion with these entities with a view to identifying lessons learned, good practices and remaining challenges. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will take place on an online platform.

Objective

The objective of the consultation is to inform the formal phase of the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture and provide inputs for the 2020 report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. It will aim to stimulate discussion on financing for peacebuilding options, as well as good practices and experiences from the United Nations, World Bank, African Union, the private sector and the civil society on strategic partnerships and initiatives in conflict-affected contexts. The speakers' perspectives and the response from Member States will provide the basis for the development of focused recommendations.

Questions for guiding discussion

- How should Member States ensure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for nationally-led United Nations peacebuilding activities? What good practices and initiatives can we share?
- Which of the financing options proposed by the Secretary-General in his 2018 report could be taken forward by Member States, and if not those, what other options do they see?
- What innovative financing solutions for peacebuilding have emerged since 2015, particularly at the country level? How can the international community better support locally-led and community-centered peacebuilding efforts?
- In what ways have institutional collaboration and partnerships changed since 2015? How have partnerships with national governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, IFIs, the private sector and civil society been strengthened? What are the challenges and opportunities?
- What opportunities and entry points exist to maximize collective impact for peacebuilding in the coming years, *also given the expected impacts of COVID-19*?
- How can the Peacebuilding Commission foster greater partnerships?

Format

The consultation will take place on an online platform. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission will circulate a link to a website containing video presentations from speakers. Subsequently, Member States will be invited to submit their statements in writing, responding to these presentations and to the guiding questions, which the Secretariat will upload on the website.

Speakers

- Mr. Franck Bousquet, Senior Director, Fragility, Conflict and Violence, World Bank
- H.E. Mr. Smaïl Chergui, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security
- Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, UN Assistant Secretary-General, Peacebuilding Support
- Ms. Libby Hoffman, Founder and President, Catalyst for Peace