**Peacebuilding Commission Ambassadorial-level Meeting**

**South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace**

**11 September 2019**

**Chair’s summary**

1. On 11 September 2019, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace. The meeting , chaired by H.E. Mr. Guillermo Fernández de Soto, Chair of the PBC, was convened to discuss the role of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/TC) in peacebuilding and sustaining peace processes and share good practices in this area.
2. In his introductory remarks, the Chair recalled the Secretary-General’s 2018 report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, which encouraged United Nations senior leadership to support SSC/TC in peacebuilding, as well as the outcome document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (also known as “BAPA+40”) held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 20-22 March 2019 (A/73/L.80), which was endorsed by the General Assembly. The Chair outlined the linkage between SSC/TC and initiatives in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, underscoring the positive role of such cooperation to support sustainable development based on the guiding principles of non-interference, non-intervention, respect for national sovereignty and national ownership. To illustrate SSC/TC’s potential in peacebuilding contexts, the Chair shared three examples involving Colombia: i) Colombia’s contribution to the Contadora Group, together with Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, to promote cooperation, democratization, international law and to prevent armed conflict in the region; ii) how Colombia benefited from support from Guatemala, Brazil and Mexico in facilitating peace negotiations between the Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the end of the 1990s; and iii) support provided by the international community during the implementation of the more recent Havana Peace Process, which led to the signature of a historic peace agreement between the Government and the FARC, by countries as China, El Salvador or Argentina in critical issues as historical memory and search of missing persons. The Chair stressed how SSC/TC efforts did not only facilitate the peace process in Colombia, but also allowed his country to extend economic ties and build trust with regional partners.
3. The Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, Mr. Jorge Chediek, underlined the genesis of the SSC/TC approach and its principles, particularly noting how the former Technical Cooperation for Developing Countries (TCDC) was transformed into the SSC/TC approach by countries of the South. Key factors that have contributed to the new approach included the emergence of middle-income countries among developing countries, growing trade among countries of the South, and an increasing number of countries of the North interested in facilitate SSC/TC. On this basis, SSC/TC has seen expansion and diversification, evidenced by examples of developing countries finding their own solutions, swifter responses to other Southern countries’ needs, and the establishment of cooperational institutions in the South that facilitate SSC, including the establishment of financing institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the New Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank. However, SSC still faces barriers to expansion due to information gaps, institutional limitations and political considerations. According to the Director, in such contexts, triangular cooperation, supported by developed countries or multilateral organizations, is instrumental to facilitate equal exchange of knowledge and expertise. The Director briefly introduced the work of UNOSSC in support of SSC/TC, to include three development funds administered by his office: the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Facility; the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund; and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund; as well as the South-South Global Thinkers and the Global South-South Development Expo initiatives. The Director highlighted the significance of BAPA+40, which opened up a new discussion for countries in the North and South. The Director concluded by inviting PBC members to the official launch of its SSC/TC knowledge-sharing and partnership brokering online platform called “South-South Galaxy” on the United Nations International Day for South-South Cooperation, 12 September 2019.
4. The Director and Deputy Head of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), Ms. Barrie Freeman, described the PBC meeting as opportunity to exchange views on the BAPA+40 outcome and to explore ways that the UN can build on lessons learned and good practices. In support of PBC consideration of SSC/TC, the Director noted a number of points in favor: the consistence between the twin resolutions on sustaining peace and the BAPA+40 outcome document; the growing recognition of SSC as an important element of international cooperation for sustainable development; the shared commonality between the PBC’s approach to country-led engagements and the voluntary, participative, and demand-driven nature of SSC/TC; and how PBC engagement is consistent with SSC principles. She further stressed that while numerous studies and experiences illustrate the relevance of SSC to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with growing acceptance of and demand for it in conflict-affected countries, tracking the cooperation remains a challenge. For example, the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund both facilitate and support a variety of efforts that reflect and support SSC, but this has not been tracked systematically. In terms of UN support, the Director referred to the new DPPA structure, with PBSO as the designated focal point for SSC/TC, as an opportunity to deepen UN engagement on SSC/TC through enhanced collaboration with other pillars of the organization. The Director also noted the Secretary-General’s request for the development of a system-wide South-South Cooperation Strategy, under the leadership of UNOSCC, to achieve more coherent and coordinated support by the United Nations system.

1. The Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Crisis Bureau, UNDP, Ms. Asako Okai, briefed on UNDP’s long history as a knowledge broker, partnership and capacity development facilitator, describing how SSC/TC is helping countries of the South to maximize their development impact towards the achievement of the SDGs. The ASG stated that UNDP’s experiences show that SSC/TC offers lasting benefits for peace and development, especially in areas like social cohesion, inclusive and accountable governance, development dialogue, and regional integration. She noted that in 2019 alone, UNDP collaborated with partners on more than 600 SSC/TC initiatives with a total funding of over $840 million provided by 218 donor contributors. In addition to the UNOSSC’s Galaxy and South-South Global Thinkers, UNDP has developed many initiatives to support its SSC/TC endeavors, including systems to connect partners (e.g. Behavioral Insights Tool called Power BI); dissemination of best practices and proven solutions (SSMart for SDGs system); and the YouthConnekt programme (a flagship programme in Africa for gender-sensitive job, skills and leadership development). In addition, UNDP also supports cross-border initiatives in Africa that are based on the SSC modality to promote conflict-sensitive investments, cross-border trade and private sector development, diversification of livelihood initiatives, and building capacity to manage shared natural resources. Another important initiative the ASG underscored is Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation, an important sub-set of South-South cooperation designed to draw lessons on how the g7+ countries can collaborate and share technical expertise and similar experiences to assist their transitions to resilience.
2. Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations:
* They commended the PBC Chair’s leadership for convening the meeting, which they considered as a timely follow-up to the BAPA+40 outcome document, and complementary to the twin resolutions on sustaining peace.
* They expressed support for the use of the PBC as a platform to facilitate the sharing of good practices and experience on SSC/TC for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and further encouraged greater collaboration between the PBC and the UNOSCC.
* A number of Members States took advantage of the meeting to share their own relevant good practices and examples on South-South and triangular cooperation in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.
* They acknowledged the growing importance of SSC/TC in international development cooperation in support of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and commended concrete steps taken by the UN development system and other entities to enhance support for this modality.
* Some Member States emphasized that SSC/TC must be a complement to, and not a substitute for, traditional North-South cooperation.
* Member States noted that the SSC/TC initiative must be driven by countries of the South in line with SSC principles and harmonized with national development plans under the principle of national ownership. Some Member States called for greater SSC/TC attention to Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.
* A number of Member States noted the importance of SSC/TC in enhancing coherence across peace and development continuums in support of national priorities.
* They also noted that SSC/TC can take many forms, including facilitation and support to peace and reconciliation processes by countries of the North based on the SSC principles of national ownership, non-interference and sovereignty.

The Chair adjourned the PBC meeting.