**Meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission   
(18 July 2018)**

**Chairperson’s Summary of the Discussion**

1. On 18 July, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an Ambassadorial-level informal interactive dialogue with the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) on “Enhancing cooperation and coherence with the African Union (AU) in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa”. The meeting was chaired by **H.E. Mr. Ion Jinga, Chair of the PBC**. The Chair opened the meeting expressing his appreciation to the Chair of the AU PSC for accepting his invitation to the interactive dialogue with the PBC. He noted that the growing UN-AU strategic partnership, in line with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, had been essential to conflict prevention and sustaining peace in Africa. He recognized that over the past decade, the AU had significantly bolstered its role in building an architecture of peace and security, and welcomed the developments in UN-AU cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The PBC Chair welcomed the meeting as an opportunity to reflect on how the two organizations could do more and better to prevent conflict and support peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts in Africa. Highlighting the importance of addressing root causes of conflicts in conflict prevention efforts, he stressed the need to reframe and reprioritize responses of both the UN and AU to ensure sustaining peace runs through all joint efforts ranging from conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, reconstruction and development. A more holistic approach, he added, would allow the UN-AU partnership to best adapt to evolving global challenges. The PBC Chair emphasized the role of national ownership and leadership in peace efforts, as well as the need for broader partnerships in a coordinated and coherent manner. He underlined the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063 as mutually reinforcing frameworks that could provide a solid foundation to achieve sustaining peace.
2. **H.E. Mr. Sebade Toga, Chair of the African Union Peace and Security Council,** expressed gratitude to the Chair and members of the PBC, recognizing this meeting as another milestone to further bolster cooperation between the UN and the AU. He emphasized that Africa is at the heart of the concerns of the peacebuilding architecture, noting that all countries on the PBC agenda are within the African continent, with countries from Africa having received 80% of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) between 2007-2014. He recalled the important role of the PBC and PBF in Liberia and Sierra Leone in supporting peaceful and transparent elections, reaffirming the importance of political solutions. The AUPSC Chair made a special plea for more reconciliation and reconstruction efforts in the Central African Republic, underscoring worsening economic and social conditions since the 2016 elections and the need to address the root causes of conflict. The AUPSC Chair noted that violent extremism has been a major challenge to peacebuilding and sustaining peace in many parts of Africa, including the Sahel region, where poverty and social injustice make young people vulnerable to violent extremism. He underscored socio-economic development as the only pathway to break this cycle of vulnerability and to tackle threats of terrorism and violent extremism. He welcomed the significant improvement in the security situation in Darfur, and underscored the need to build on this momentum to develop a peacebuilding priority plan for Darfur. In this context, he wished to raise the Darfur situation within the PBC. The Chair AUPSC emphasized that the AUPSC was ready and willing to strengthen collaboration with the PBC to work towards conflict prevention and sustaining peace in Africa.
3. **Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union,** commended the PBC for the opportunity to reaffirm shared values and discuss comparative advantages between the PBC and the PSC. She recalled the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on 19 April 2017, which agreed to develop a predictable, systematic and strategic partnership throughout the conflict cycle. She recognized that sustaining peace requires strengthened capacity to address root causes of conflict in all its forms. She noted that in addition to the Joint UN-AU Framework on Peace and Security, the UN and AU have also made a commitment to work together towards the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063 and the 2030 sustainable development agenda, in recognition of the nexus between peace, security, human rights and development, and the need to dedicate due attention to addressing root causes and tackling socioeconomic dimensions of conflict. She also mentioned the increased number of joint reports and statements as well as enhanced and better-coordinated communication between the two organizations as good practices. In this regard, SRSG Zewde welcomed increased collaboration between the PBC and the PSC, taking note of the MoU between the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the AU Commission (AUC). She recognized the critical support of both the PBC and the PBF to sustaining peace in at least sixteen African countries emerging from conflict and called for deepened engagement between the two organizations to ensure that collective interventions achieve the desired outcome of sustaining peace across the African continent.
4. **Mr. Admore Kambuzi, Acting Director of the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission** welcomed the convening of the meeting at a critical time when the two organizations are consolidating implementation of the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, with ongoing efforts to boost coordination and cooperation between the two organizations at strategic and operational levels. He noted that collaboration between the PBC and PSC will further enhance the broader framework of UN-AU cooperation. He recalled that the MoU signed between the AU Commission and the PBSO in September 2017 paved the way for the AU Commission to undertake joint initiatives with the PBSO to build resilience and consolidate peace in countries emerging from conflict and going through transitions. He also noted that the Secretary-General’s proposal to strengthen the PBSO and to enhance coherence between the peace and security, development and human rights pillars are in line with the AU’s “silencing the guns” strategy (also known as Vision 2020). He added that the AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy also provides an entry point for further collaboration, especially in support of countries emerging from conflict to address the root causes of conflict. Recognizing the current challenges of resource and financing shortfalls, he requested that the UN and the AU build on existing mechanisms to achieve better results together. Mr. Kambuzi also called for more effective and stronger collaboration between the PBC and the PSC. He stressed the importance of meaningful participation of women and youth in peacebuilding and sustaining peace; more focus and investment in conflict prevention; and UN-AU joint planning, analysis and assessment missions to identify countries in need and to mobilize resources.
5. **Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support,** recalled the signing of the MoU on the UN-AU partnership in peacebuilding as a concrete step to implement the Joint AU-UN Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. He noted that the MoU provided the framework for joint efforts in peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa in addition to reinforcing the coordination of interventions. He added that the MoU also contributed to a more predictable and strategic partnership in the areas of conflict prevention, peace and security, development and human rights. He underlined that the MoU was the result of a successful partnership with the AU in Burundi, where the PBF supported the early deployment of human rights observers. The PBF has also provided direct funding to the AU-led African Initiative in the Central African Republic to support mediation efforts. He noted that a joint UN-AU technical level team is currently underway to review and propose other priority areas for possible peacebuilding support in Africa. He added that the PBC continued to increase attention to regional cross-border conflicts, including those in the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin, Great Lakes and Horn of Africa, where the PBF has already funded many cross-border and regional peacebuilding initiatives. He noted that through the UN reforms, the working relationship between the UN and the AU will be further strengthened and more dynamic.
6. **On Liberia,** Member States welcomed the open collaboration between the government and the PBC, including during sensitive periods. They highlighted the integration of peacebuilding priorities discussed in the PBC in the Statement of Mutual Commitment and the National Development Plan. Several Member States pointed out that Liberia went through a dynamic transition, including important challenges around the elections. It is in this context that the partnership between the UN, AU and ECOWAS, especially their coordinated preventive diplomacy efforts, contributed to peaceful elections. The good practice of the UN-AU partnership was also referenced for other upcoming elections in Africa. The PBF support to youth and women participation in the elections was recognized. Some Member States called for efforts in support of increased roles for women and youth in peacebuilding, and more focus on support to the government with the inclusion of all segments of Liberian society. The AU has assisted Liberia through the PCRD framework, particularly with quick-impact projects on building schools. The PBC could work with the AU and other partners, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank and ECOWAS, to accelerate socioeconomic development through private sector-led economic growth, rapid reconstruction, and public-sector development etc.
7. **Sierra Leone** was also recognized as a country with good practices around the recent elections. Member States agreed that the role of the UN, AU and ECOWAS was crucial in the roll-out of free, fair and credible elections in Sierra Leone. This was possible due to key good practices, including, but not limited to: (1) excellent coordination and cooperation among all international observers with joint statements and unified positions that contributed to the credibility of the elections; (2) sustained UN-AU-ECOWAS engagement before, during, and after the elections; (3) effective UNCT coordination in support of preventive diplomacy efforts by AU and UNOWAS; (4) the existence of a good information and knowledge sharing platform among major actors; (5) strong support of the PBF in targeting risks of election-related conflict; and (6) close working relationships with local actors that reinforced the credibility of the electoral commission in creating a safe space for involved parties. Member States expressed appreciation to the PBC, the PBF and ECOWAS for supporting peacebuilding priorities in the country, and noted that the best way to prevent recurrence of conflict and sustain peace was to ensure that the new government could deliver on immediate and long-term peacebuilding priorities, including creating employment opportunities and addressing the ethnic/regional divide.
8. **Central African Republic** slid backwards since 2015 due to resurgence of violence by armed groups, including in Bangui. Lack of state capacity was noted as one of the biggest challenges confronting the country. Some member states also highlighted the manipulation of ethnic and religious divides by armed groups to exacerbate tensions. Member States called for more quick-impact development projects as well as reintegration of militias within the national armed forces and police. Several Member States highlighted the need for coherence and coordination among the various international actors present on the ground. In this regard, increased voluntary contributions to the PBF were considered crucial as the PBF could bridge different international actors on the ground and help address root causes of conflict. The need for more diverse national and sub-regional experts was also highlighted as the current mechanism of implementing peacebuilding activities solely through the Secretariat within the Ministry of Finance was not enough to undertake such ambitious plans. Member States also called for the international community to support the AU’s African Initiative for Peace, which aims to achieve reconciliation through mediation and political dialogue. The UN-AU partnership to implement the Initiative was extremely important and was the main driver behind the PBF’s support of US $2.5million. The PBC-PSC collaboration was also anticipated to provide space to formulate regional and sub-regional strategies for more effective peacebuilding efforts on the ground, and the PBC could move these recommendations forward to the Security Council. Member States took note of the PBC’s planned visit to the country in September and agreed to explore opportunities for another joint UN-AU meeting in the field.
9. **The Lake Chad Basin** was recognized as a unique and vulnerable context with four countries facing terrorism and violent extremism. Member states noted the increased number of women and children suicide bombers in Nigeria, and suggested enhanced UN focus on support to the AU-led Stabilization Strategy for the Lake Chad Basin. The AU worked with the Lake Chad Basin Commission to develop the Stabilization Framework, which operates under principles including national and regional ownership; mutual accountability; reinforcing partnership; transformative approach to stabilization; gender mainstreaming; and respect for international human rights instruments. Member States called for the PBC and the PSC to ensure the quality of government service delivery by strengthening State capacity as 40% of the national budget in Chad and Niger went to counter-terrorism efforts alone. In addition, the concept of peacekeeping was deemed outdated and less necessary in the Lake Chad Basin region as some Member States called for the UN to invest more in political processes rather than mere protection of civilians.
10. **The Sahel** was also coined as an increasingly complex and vulnerable region where many nomadic, pastoral and farming communities have been affected by conflict and tensions linked to climate change, security dynamics and competition over natural resources. In this regard, several Member States reaffirmed the importance of the UN reforms that will reconfigure DPA and DPKO divisions into a single regional division, enabling better interface with other regional and sub-regional organizations, especially with the AU. “A whole of pillar” approach would also address the outdated dimension of the UN’s peacekeeping and development work and focus on the integrative nature of the UN in responding to evolving dynamics of regional conflicts, especially at community levels. The UN Support Plan for the Sahel was recognized as crucial to help realign UN engagement to national priorities and the sustainable development goals. The issue of growing gaps in needs assessments between HQ and the ground, leading to the lack of capacity to address regional and cross-border issues, was also underscored. In response, Member States expressed anticipation for the new Resident Coordinator system under the UN Development System reform, where an empowered RC would represent One UN and coordinate all different branches of the UN active in the country or region for better control and management. Better financing of empowerment mechanisms for youth and women to play important roles in cross-border peacebuilding initiatives and the inclusion of the private sector and civil society were also highlighted.
11. Member States welcomed the opportunity to discuss how to enhance cooperation and coherence with the AU in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa. In their interventions, they raised the following issues:
    * The UN-AU partnership needs to explore ways for more frequent formal and informal communication. This should be achieved at all levels (e.g., ambassadorial, and working-level), utilizing innovative tools, including the VTC.
    * Institutionalization of regular PBC-PSC interactions by holding annual meetings between the two entities, alternating between New York and Addis Ababa.
    * The PBC could convene a meeting solely dedicated to further exploring ways to strengthen PBC-PSC collaboration and engagement.
    * The PBC-PSC joint platform could coordinate and advocate for resources to peacebuilding issues, including for the PBF. This joint platform could also be utilized to share and apply lessons learned and good practices from countries such as to other country contexts.
    * Noting that the Security Council does not look at one country situation continuously, the PBC could play a complementary role with its flexibility and undertake broader activities, such as identifying and analyzing root causes of conflict through joint assessments and analysis, mobilizing resources and convening relevant actors, including from the country under consideration.
    * The UN-AU joint analysis of root causes of conflict requires regular follow-up action and mechanisms to monitor whether recommended courses of action are implemented and evaluate whether strategies/action points should be readjusted.
    * PBSO was invited to become a partner of the new Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Center (once operational by the end of 2018) in Cairo, Egypt, including to provide resources and expertise on developing concepts and processes.
    * In light of the AU’s revision of the PCRD policies and the UN’s revision of the peacebuilding architecture, the two frameworks should be mapped and synergized for a better understanding of each other’s work.