

The Advisory Role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to the Security Council (SC)

17 December 2020

Coordinator's Summary

Background

1. On 17 December 2020, Germany, in its capacity as informal coordinator of the periodic stocktaking exercises on the PBC's advisory function to the Security Council, convened an informal meeting to reflect on the progress made by the Commission in providing its advice to the Council during 2019 and 2020. The members of the PBC that are also members of the Security Council and the PBC Chair and Vice-Chairs were invited to the meeting. PBSO/DPPA also attended, gave a brief presentation and contributed to the discussion.

Main points from the discussion

2. The coordinator opened the meeting underscoring the important work done by the Commission during the past two years and noting that the PBC fulfilled its advisory role to the Council on many occasions. He recalled in particular the advice on country-specific issues, such as on MINUSCA and UNIOGBIS, on regional situations, such as the PBC's letter on UNOWAS ahead of the mandate renewal, as well as on thematic issues, such as the advice on Youth, Peace and Security. He underlined the early and active engagement by the PBC on the impact of Covid-19 on peacebuilding efforts which were brought to the attention of the Council during the Informal Interactive Dialogue (IID) between the PBC and the Security Council under the German Security Council presidency in July 2020. He also recalled the relevance of the IID between the PBC and the Council that was convened in advance of a Security Council visit to Burkina Faso and Mali in 2019. In this regard, he encouraged, if applicable, the Council to expand such model to other situations where the advice of the Commission can help the Council prepare for a visit (once conditions allow, given the impact of Covid-19).
3. While underlining the progress made so far, the coordinator also highlighted areas for further improvement, also referencing the coordinator's summary from a previous stock taking meeting (S/2019/446). He noted that still more needs to be done to better align the programme of work of the PBC to that of the Council, including timely submission of the PBC's advice to the Council to allow for proper consideration. He stressed that the PBC's advice should be succinct and focused on recommendations that could be easily "actionable" by the Security Council. In this regard he pointed out the potential of improving the quality of advice by providing feedback to the PBC. He highlighted the increased usage of the agenda item "Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace" and advocated for regular involvement and engagement of the PBC when relevant activities under that agenda item are convened. In conclusion, he noted the general and positive readiness by Council members towards engaging with the PBC further and underlined that an effective advisory role of the PBC to the Council depends also on the engagement of all Member States, in particular the common members. He encouraged delegations to continuously consider opportunities, including

potential country- or regional situations where the Commission could support the work of the Council and include, if applicable, aspects of Peacebuilding in such deliberations.

4. PBSO/DPPA echoed the main findings of the coordinator and welcomed the progress made by the Commission. PBSO/DPPA informed that, in 2020, the Commission provided its advice on 12 occasions, which included letters or other written inputs, oral briefings, and IIDs, and noted that PBSO/DPPA stands ready to support the PBC in further strengthening its advisory role. PBSO/DPPA highlighted as good practice the PBC's effort to promote gender-responsive peacebuilding through more systematic engagement with women peacebuilders and better mainstreaming of gender dimensions of peacebuilding into its engagements, including by incorporating the recommendations of women peacebuilders and business leaders into its advice to the Security Council as appropriate, in line with the PBC gender strategy.
5. Participants welcomed the decision to convene this meeting and highlighted the following points:
 - They welcomed the work done by the coordinator which led to an improvement in the advisory role of the Commission to the Council. They also welcomed the role of PBSO in supporting the Commission, including by fostering more engagement of the UN system on peacebuilding. They underlined that the PBC, in line with its mandate, should continue to provide strategic advice on priority areas for the Council, in particular when the Council is considering countries undergoing transitions.
 - Several participants pointed to the improved quality of the PBC's advice and encouraged to seek more opportunities for the PBC to provide advice in preparation for Council's visits to countries or regions considered by both bodies. They noted that the PBC should be more engaged when the Council is considering issues under the agenda item "Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace". This could include an invitation to the PBC Chair to brief, or seek the advice of the PBC on substantive areas covered by the meeting or regarding possible briefers, in particular from civil society organizations.
 - Many participants encouraged the continuation of the Commission's efforts to promote gender-responsive peacebuilding, including by reflecting appropriate substantive inputs and recommendations into its advice to the Security Council.
 - Participants welcomed the improvements made by the PBC to align its calendar of work to that of the Council. Participants also called for further improvements, one participant noted that the advice ideally should be shared with the Council at least a few weeks in advance to allow for sufficient time for consideration.
 - They suggested seeking more informal engagement, including through a regular dialogue with the penholders.
 - They welcomed further stock taking opportunities, in particular in follow up to situations where the PBC has submitted its advice to the Council.