

Peacebuilding Commission's annual session

Financing for peacebuilding

2 November 2020, 10:00-13:00 (New York)

Concept Note

Background

In his 2020 report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the Secretary-General described ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained resources for peacebuilding as our greatest challenge.¹ This is of even greater importance at present, as the COVID-19 pandemic is devastating communities and economies throughout the world, affecting in particular the poorest and most vulnerable, including those in conflict-affected states. The pandemic is aggravating development and humanitarian challenges, and it is profoundly affecting peace and security across the globe, making it more important than ever to promote global solidarity and partnerships in support of effective, coherent, multidimensional and people-centred responses that build and sustain peace. The extent to which humanitarian and development responses also address the root causes of conflict will be critical in determining how successfully those interventions contain the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19, and how effective our strategies and actions to build back better will be.

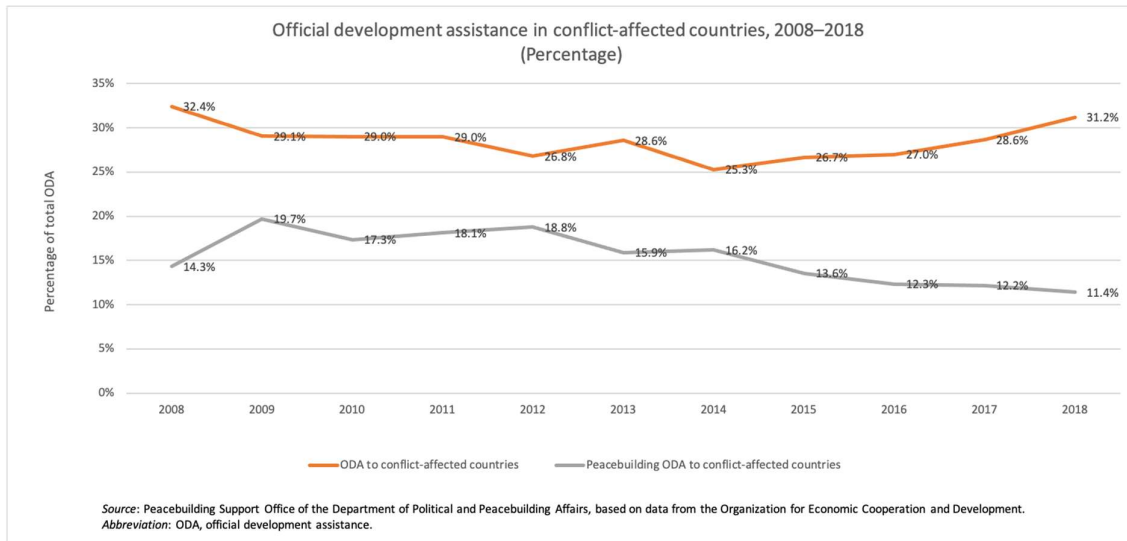
There is increasing recognition that peacebuilding work, globally, is the glue that keeps development, humanitarian and security efforts on a sustainable path. With this premise in mind, the United Nations system has focused in the last few years on strengthening coherence, leadership, accountability and capacities in support of national peacebuilding priorities, and continues to strive to enhance partnerships that maximize comparative advantages. This has been the case in the integrated UN planning processes, *inter alia*, in Colombia, Haiti, Libya and Sudan. The UN has also supported integrated assessment and planning processes in the DRC, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Mali and Sudan. Additionally, with timely and risk-tolerant support for nationally led efforts to build and sustain peace, the PBF has consistently encouraged conflict responsive, coherent, and integrated UN assistance in the field. More recently, it made timely adjustments while integrating the new risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic into its programming.² PBF has also piloted new approaches to explore innovative sources of funding. The pursuit of partnerships between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations, IFIs, civil society and the private sector has also intensified in the last years, focusing more strategically on support for field partnerships in conflict-affected countries, notably in Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic.

Despite this progress, ensuring adequate and predictable resources for peacebuilding initiatives remains a critical challenge. Financing for peacebuilding activities in the UN system remains insufficient, unsustainable and heavily dependent on a small group of traditional donors to provide voluntary and extra-budgetary support - and is far from reaching

¹ <https://undocs.org/S/2020/773>

² https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/covid_brief8.pdf

the Secretary-General's goal of \$500 million per year for the Peacebuilding Fund. While ODA allocations to conflict-affected countries grew by 26 per cent in real terms from 2009 to 2016, this growth was mainly due to the surge in humanitarian assistance. The share of ODA committed to peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries has actually decreased in recent years. As noted by the Secretary-General in his reports on peacebuilding and sustaining peace,³ and as shown in the graph below, the percentage decreased from 19.7 per cent in 2009, to 13.6 per cent in 2015, and to 11.4 per cent in 2018.⁴ Meanwhile, the proportion of ODA going to gender equality programmes is stagnating below 5 per cent.



In his 2018 and 2019 reports on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the Secretary-General has presented options on increasing, restructuring and better prioritizing funding dedicated to UN peacebuilding activities. Out of the 42 recommendations contained in his 2018 report, 35 are in various stages of implementation, three are completed and four (all related to financing through voluntary and assessed contributions) are pending. There has also been very limited progress on innovative financing solutions for peacebuilding. In 2020, the Secretary-General elaborated further on ways in which financing for peacebuilding can be ensured, including through sufficient programmatic funding for multidimensional peacekeeping missions to support mandated peacebuilding activities, increasing as a mission approaches drawdown. He also urged donors to commit to spending at least 20 per cent of ODA on peacebuilding priorities in conflict settings.

In its 2 July letter to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General,⁵ the Peacebuilding Commission highlighted that Member States need to further discuss the financing options formulated by the Secretary-General. The Commission recommended that the donor base for peacebuilding should be broadened and diversified, encouraged Member

³ <https://undocs.org/A/72/707%E2%80%9393S/2018/43> and <https://undocs.org/S/2020/773>

⁴ Methodology developed by PBSO based on data from the OECD.

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https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbc_letter_on_2020_review_pga_psc_approved.pdf

States that have not contributed to the PBF to consider doing so, and suggested further exploration of innovative financing for the PBF. The Commission called for funding streams to be brought together in the spirit of “good peacebuilding donorship” in order to enhance coherence and coordination, and stressed the need to more regularly track funding for peacebuilding activities.⁶ The Commission also recognized that funding to support the meaningful participation of women-led and youth-led peacebuilding organizations and businesses should be supported, in accordance with national peacebuilding priorities.

Purpose of the meeting

The PBC annual session offers the opportunity to emphasize the centrality of peacebuilding in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and share ideas for ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. The objectives of the meeting are to:

- Share practices and experiences with key partners on ensuring sustained support to nationally- and locally-owned peacebuilding strategies and initiatives in conflict-affected countries;
- Make concrete suggestions for how the Peacebuilding Commission can be better utilized in promoting more coherent and sustainable approaches to peacebuilding financing and in ensuring conflict-sensitive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Consider options for ensuring predictable and sustained financing of United Nations peacebuilding activities, including those proposed by the Secretary-General, as well as suggestions by Member States and civil society, which could be implemented on a bilateral, plurilateral, or multilateral basis; and
- Identify good practices from the catalytic and flexible approach of the PBF, its complementarity with other funding mechanisms, and its synergies with the PBC.

Format

The meeting will be conducted in English on Zoom. As per established practice in the PBC annual sessions, delegations are encouraged to participate with capital-based senior officials, including at the level of Directors/Directors General. Priority in the list of speakers will be given to delegations participating with capital-based senior representatives.

Agenda

- Opening remarks by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Mr. Bob Rae
- Keynote speech by the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres (*Pre-recorded message*)
- Chair of OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), H.E. Ms. Susanna Moorehead: *How is the DAC working to improve coordination, programming and financing in support of coherent, complementary and effective approaches in fragile contexts?*
- Vice President for Regional Development, Integration and Business Delivery, African Development Bank, Dr. Khaled F. Sherif: *What investments are needed to ensure inclusive, sustainable economic growth in conflict-affected African countries?*

⁶ See, for example, the ODA Snapshots at <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/oda-snapshot>.

- Senior Director, World Bank Group, Mr. Franck Bousquet: *How has the World Bank changed the way it supports conflict-affected states?*
- Chair of the Peacebuilding Fund's Advisory Group, H.E. Ms. Anne Anderson: *How does the PBF complement and catalyse other sources of financing for peacebuilding?*
- Ms. Benbaba Jamila Ferdjani, Chairwoman of the Board of Directors, Laham Industries, Mali: *How can international partners support the local private sector in conflict-affected countries?*
- Interventions from the floor
- Closing remarks by the Chair