

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission
Ambassadorial Level Meeting on Peacebuilding in Guatemala
6 December 2025, 10:00 a.m. Trusteeship Council Chamber
Concept Note

Context

On 4 June 2024, the Peacebuilding Commission held an Ambassadorial-level, inaugural meeting on peacebuilding in Guatemala, attended by the President of the Republic of Guatemala, His Excellency Bernardo Arévalo, who provided the keynote briefing on his Administration's national peacebuilding priorities. The presence of the President, and his emphasis on the instrumental partnership with the Commission, was an illustration of the growing recognition of the Commission's prominent role and value in advancing peacebuilding efforts.

In his remarks, President Arévalo noted that the New Agenda for Peace addresses the universality of prevention and the need for an integrated approach to linking peace, sustainable development and human rights. Similarly, the PBC Ministerial-led meeting on the *Road to the Peacebuilding Architecture Review: perspectives and priorities*, held on 26 September 2024, underlined the importance of investing in conflict prevention as a means of achieving sustainable peace and resilience in communities, and called for the integration of prevention mechanisms into national peacebuilding initiatives, as well as highlighting the Commission as a powerful tool for conflict prevention and ideally positioned for the development and implementation of national prevention strategies.

In the Commission's meeting on Guatemala held in June, President Arévalo underscored the following peacebuilding priorities underpinning his Government's transformative reform agenda, namely, the focus on the active participation of its citizens, especially Indigenous peoples and civil society; fostering of national dialogues; strengthening of the institutional framework of democracy and the rule of law (fight against corruption and impunity); transitional justice; the empowerment of women and gender equality; national agreements to promote the delivery of health care, education, environmental protection, and sustainable development; and an overarching intention to return to the principles enshrined in the 1996 Peace Accords.

PBF support

The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has been supporting Guatemala since 2011, investing more than USD 54.5 million in peacebuilding priorities since then. PBF support has focused on strengthening the rule of law through capacity building of institutions and civil society organizations in the areas of security, justice and transitional justice, promoting dialogue and respect for human rights in addressing land/agrarian and social conflicts, empowering women and youth to participate in peacebuilding, and seeking justice and transformative reparations for sexual and gender-based violence, as well as the protection and reintegration of migrants.

During 2024, in close coordination with PBSO, the Resident Coordinator, the PBF Secretariat, and the United Nations Country Team in Guatemala have been working closely with President Arévalo's Government to continue aligning PBF support with national peacebuilding priorities.

In that context, a PBF project on Women, Peace and Security (UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA amounting to us\$ 2.5 million) was approved to support the implementation of the 1325 National Action Plan and increase women's participation in decision making. Subsequently, the PBF approved an initiative on Transformative Reparations for victims of the internal armed conflict (allocating US\$1.75 to UNDP and UNESCO) in support of efforts led by the Presidential Commission on Peace and Human Rights (COPADEH). Additionally, last August, a cost extension of existing PBF investments was approved to support new national institutional arrangements for dialogue and conflict transformation and for the protection of human rights of rural Indigenous communities affected by land conflicts.

Furthermore, a new trinational project (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) to support conflict prevention and transformation mechanisms related to access and use of water in the Trifinio cross-border region, is expected to be submitted to PBF shortly. Finally, ideas for initiatives that aim at strengthening dialogue with Indigenous authorities and guaranteeing Indigenous peoples rights to prior, free and informed consent, are being explored for potential Fund support in 2025.

Partnership

Complementary to the PBF investments, international Financial Institutions and regional development banks have an important role to play as "agents for peace" in respect of Guatemala. In addition to the World Bank, which maintains an \$2.5 billion portfolio over four years in Guatemala, the role of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is particularly relevant, given that it introduced its first Framework to support populations in Fragility, Conflict, and Criminal Violence (FCCV) in 2024. The FCCV Framework outlines plans to adjust IDB analysis, tools and portfolios to more effectively support Latin American Governments in tackling drivers of insecurity and violence. In August, Guatemala was among the countries represented at the first Latin American Security Summit, co-hosted by IDB and Ecuador, which launched an Alliance for Security, Justice, and Development to foster regional cooperation. This session will allow the PBC to understand what opportunities these developments may present for closer partnership and further support to peacebuilding in Guatemala.

In November, the Government of Guatemala, which has been making notable efforts in advancing its peacebuilding priorities, approached the Chair of the PBC proposing an update to the PBC on the progress achieved on its peacebuilding and prevention efforts, as well as to highlight areas of possible additional PBC support.

Objectives of the meeting

The meeting will provide an opportunity for the government of Guatemala to update the Commission on their national efforts for prevention since the last PBC engagement and seek further support in the implementation of its key peacebuilding priorities.

Provisional Agenda

Opening remarks by H.E. Mr. Sergio França Danese, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

- Statement by H.E. Bernardo Arévalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala
- Briefing by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) – *(tbc)*
- Briefing by Ms. Raquel Zelaya, President of the Board of Directors of the Association for Research and Social Studies (ASIES)
- Interventions from the floor
- Remarks by Ms. Awa Dabo, Director and Deputy Head, PBSO/DPPA

Closing remarks by the Chair