

**DRAFT STATEMENT OF H. E. MRS. OLTA XHAÇKA**  
**THE MINISTER FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**HIGH-LEVEL REPLENISHMENT CONFERENCE OF THE PEACEBUILDING FUND**

January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 15.00 - 18.00 (09.00 - 12.00 EST)

Dear Mr. Chair,

Allow me on behalf of the Government of Albania, to congratulate you<sup>1</sup>, alongside High Representatives of Sierra Leone, Sudan, Germany and Canada, as co-Chairs of the Peace-building Commission, for convening this High-level Replenishment Conference of the Peace-building Fund.

On this 75<sup>th</sup> year since the founding of the UN, we are more convinced than ever of the importance of the UN as the cornerstone of the multilateral rule-based cooperation for sustainable peace. And we strongly support the vision of the SG, as expressed in the Strategy for 2020 - 2024 - a very clear, ambitious and yet realistic document - on the need for a multidimensional approach to conflict prevention.

To this end, the Secretary-General's Peace-building Fund (PBF) is indeed an indispensable financial instrument in advancing the implementation of peace-building and prevention actions. Albania adds its voice to the other delegations in support of exploring opportunities for new partnerships and innovative financing models which become all the more indispensable in light of the unprecedented crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. A crisis which has revealed how significant are the risks of a persistent underinvestment in peace-building and conflict prevention efforts.

Albania is a staunch believer in the value of multilateralism and a UN led rules based order in addressing today's challenges and problems. It has shown this through the constructive role it has played in its neighborhood, where, it has promoted cooperation and inclusiveness as the best way to strengthen peace and security. Albania is an active player in regional initiatives. It hosts the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, and we are grateful to PBF for its support to this initiative which by supporting the regional exchange of youth is playing a crucial role in building bridges between our societies as the best way of consolidating

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<sup>1</sup> The UN - Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres is the Chair=

peace and security. In that context, I want to emphasize Albania's strong commitment to working together with all Balkan countries, including the new State of Kosovo, in the service of peace, security and prosperity of our region.

Albania has played and continues to play a role, however modest in the global scale, to strengthening peace and security in the world, and to ensuring a sustainable and equal development for all. In relation to its population, Albania has given a considerable contribution to peacekeeping and peace-building initiatives, having provided around 8,000 troops to peacekeeping missions since 1996.

We believe that the renewal of our profound commitment to effective multilateralism is today more necessary than ever. As a candidate for a non-permanent seat to the United Nations Security Council 2022-2023, Albania remains committed to working together with other regional and international actors towards conflict prevention and building and sustaining peace.

We have learned through our history that peace-building takes time and the effort must be all-inclusive. All the voices of the communities must be heard. In this context, we believe that women and girls have a special role to play in building peace. Albania has made Women, Peace and Security part of its domestic legislation, but also part of its foreign policy action. In 2019, for the first time, Albania started to participate in an UN-led peacekeeping Mission, by initially sending two women army officers with the main aim to gradually increase its presence in UN Peacekeeping operations. Women, Peace and Security agenda remain a priority for the Albania's bid for Security Council 2022-2023, as well.

Furthermore, Albania has just successfully concluded its chairmanship of the OSCE in 2020 where it worked to strengthen the cooperation on the dossier with the United Nations, and other international organizations.

Lastly, Albania welcomes the UN Secretary-General's 2020 report on peace-building and sustaining peace. We appreciate SG's multidimensional approach, in connecting peace and security with sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian pillars, reaffirming the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We remain confident in the cooperation with the UN Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team in providing strategic guidance and support in

promoting Albania' s attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030, as the framework for collective efforts to build peaceful, just, prosperous and inclusive societies. Albania will continue to support regional cooperation, dialogue and trust-building and in this context we welcome increased engagement of PBF in the Western Balkans region in the future.

Thank you!