

## **Peacebuilding Commission's engagement in the Sahel** (Updated 13 September 2018)

**The resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016))** encourage the PBC to consider diversifying its working methods to enhance its efficiency and flexibility in support of sustaining peace including by, among other things, enabling it to consider regional and cross-cutting issues relevant to sustaining peace.

**Security Council Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2017/2)**, issued on 20 January 2018, emphasized the importance of the convening role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in mobilizing deeper commitment and partnership between the UN system, the countries of the Sahel and other international and regional partners with the view to advancing the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) in collaboration with UNOWAS.

On 6 March 2017, in response to S/PRST/2017/2, the PBC convened a meeting on **“The situation in the Sahel”** and was briefed by: the Permanent Representative of Mali in his capacity as Chair of the G5 Sahel, Ambassador Issa Konfourou; the SRSG for West Africa and the Sahel, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas; the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, former President of Burundi H.E. Pierre Buyoya; Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel, Mr. Najim Elhadj Mohamed; the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel, Mr. Angel Losada; the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa of UNDP, Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye; and the ASG for Peacebuilding Support, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco. The meeting encouraged efforts to enhance coordination and cooperation among the countries in the region, United Nations and other regional and international actors. It highlighted the need to go beyond the peace and security response, and strengthen development and humanitarian assistance to effectively address the challenges facing the Sahel region. It also emphasized the importance of a regional approach to address the cross-border challenges and strengthening partnerships. In this connection, the PBC recognized the unique role of the PBF in supporting cross-border peacebuilding initiatives in the region.

Following up on the PBC engagement in the Sahel, the Chair, together with the Permanent Representative of Chad and ASG PBSO, attended the 5th meeting of the **“Ministerial Coordination Platform for the Sahel”** on 14 June 2017 in N'Djamena, Chad. The meeting pointed out the continuing fragile security situation in the Sahel, despite the multiple initiatives on the region, and called on the relevant actors to act with greater cooperation and solidarity. Countries of the Sahel region participating to the meeting reiterated their commitment to maintaining the Platform as the political coordination framework to foster coherence and coordination among the various efforts to address the challenges in the region.

On 19 June 2017, the President of the **Security Council convened an informal interactive dialogue (IID) with the PBC**. The IID offered an opportunity to discuss practical ways to strengthen coordination, coherence and cooperation between the Security Council and the Commission. The IID took stock of the work

of the PBC in response to Security Council PRST/2017/2 which emphasized the importance of convening role of the Commission in support of peacebuilding efforts in the Sahel. Participants pointed out that the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin face complex and multidimensional challenges that not only touch upon political and security dimensions, but also humanitarian and development ones. These include transnational and cross-border challenges such as terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, illicit trafficking and other transnational crimes, weak institutions, climate change, migration, and displacement of populations. The meeting highlighted the need to strengthen partnership and enhance coordination between the countries concerned, UN actors, regional and sub-regional organizations, and international financial institutions in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in these regions.

On 28 June 2017, the **PBC convened a joint event with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**. The Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, the SRSG for West Africa, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and UNDP ASG and Regional Director for Africa, Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye participated in the meeting. The event focused on ways to overcome the multi-dimensional challenges by addressing the root causes of crisis that pertain to the social, economic and environmental factors in the Sahel region. Member States discussed the importance of ECOSOC and the PBC continuing their efforts to support a coordinated and coherent UN response to the peacebuilding challenges in the Sahel. The cross-border challenges facing the Sahel region to foster stability, build resilience of communities and enhance economic opportunities, was considered important. Several delegations noted that ECOSOC could use its coordination and oversight role of the United Nations development system to promote a coordinated and coherent approach in the United Nations' response. The Peacebuilding Commission is ready to continue assist UNOWAS, regional institutions, and all countries in the Sahel area in its peacebuilding work.

On 13 December 2017, the PBC convened another meeting on “**The situation in the Sahel**”. The Deputy Secretary-General briefed the Commission on the ongoing efforts within the United Nations system to enhance coordination and coherence in the implementation of UNISS, including through the mapping of the 17 strategies that are implemented by the UN agencies, funds and programmes and development of a United Nations “investment plan” to support national and regional initiatives in the Sahel. The Deputy Secretary-General also explained broader coordination efforts with other regional and international partners, including the AU, G5 Sahel, Commission of the Lake Chad Basin, ECOWAS and the European Union. Member States and Representatives of the G5 Sahel welcomed the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General in ensuring coordinated and coherent UN system-wide efforts towards the implementation of the UNISS, and highlighted the importance for the UN to further foster coherence and complementarity of its humanitarian, development and peace and security interventions in support of the countries and people in the Sahel region. The meeting also welcomed the focus on empowering women and youth, and ensuring their participation in the peacebuilding processes in the Sahel region. The meeting also stressed the importance of national ownership, coherence and coordination in addressing the multifaceted peacebuilding challenges in the region.

On 30 January 2018, the **Security Council issued another Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2018/3)** reiterates the importance of the convening role of the PBC.

As part of PBC efforts to sustain its engagement on the situation in the Sahel, the Chair, together with the Permanent Representative of Chad and ASG PBSO, attended the 6th meeting of the “**Ministerial Coordination Platform for the Sahel**” on 15 March 2018 in N’Djamena, Chad. The meeting recognized that despite the considerable efforts to ensure peace and stability, the countries in the Sahel region were facing persistent and growing security challenges, in addition to the already serious economic, environmental and food security risks. It stressed the need for a holistic approach to deal with the multidimensional threats facing the Sahel region, calling on the relevant regional and international partners to act with greater synergy. The participants reiterated their commitment to the platform as the political and diplomatic platform for the countries in the Sahel, international, regional and sub-regional organizations to deal in a coordinated and coherent manner with the complex and transnational security, socio-economic and humanitarian challenges facing the region.

On 16 July 2018, the PBC convened a meeting on “**Peacebuilding and sustaining peace in West Africa: recent developments in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Sahel**”. On the Sahel, the meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the recent development in the security, political and humanitarian situation in the Sahel. The meeting welcomed cooperation among the countries in the Sahel, including through the G5 Sahel Force. The PBC stressed the importance of coordination and partnerships in efforts to address the multi-faceted challenges facing the region.

On 18 July 2018, the situation in the Sahel was discussed, among other county-specific and regional issues, in the meeting of the PBC with the AU Peace and Security Council. The meeting recognized the UN Support Plan for the Sahel, launched on 30 June 2018 on the margins of the AU Summit in Nouakchott as crucial to help realign UN engagement to national priorities and the sustainable development goals.

**The PBC Annual Session**, scheduled on 12 November 2018, will focus on the situation in the Sahel. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the PBC to convene Member States and partners, including the UN system, IFIs, regional organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector, to discuss ways of mobilizing deeper commitment and partnership in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in The Sahel. The Deputy Secretary-General will participate in the meeting. The Session will also provide contribute to strengthening strategic partnerships among a wide range of stakeholders, both within and outside the UN system, to mobilize financial resources for sustaining peace in the Sahel.