

## Peacebuilding Commission

### Ambassadorial-level meeting on national efforts for prevention and peacebuilding – lessons learnt from Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste

22 March 2024

#### Chair's Summary

On 22 March 2024, the Peacebuilding Commission held the Ambassadorial-level meeting on national efforts for prevention and peacebuilding – lessons learnt from Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste. The Commission heard briefings from the Principal Secretary of the State Department for Internal Security and National Administration, Ministry of Interior and National Administration of Kenya; the Vice-Chair of the Independent Panel of Advisors of the Kenya Peacebuilding Architecture Review; the Policy Director at the Department of National Security with the Ministry of Justice of Norway; the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste; and the Life and Peace Institute, as well as the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General. Member States commended the three countries' efforts in addressing root causes and drivers of violence, instability and conflict and enhancing approaches and strategies to this end. Acknowledging the universality of prevention, they emphasized the benefit of sharing good practices and lessons learnt at the Commission.

1. On 22 March 2024, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), H.E. Mr. Sérgio França Danese, convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting on national efforts for prevention and peacebuilding – lessons learnt from Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste. The meeting aimed to provide a platform to learn from the three countries on their strategies for prevention and peacebuilding.
2. In his opening remarks, the PBC Chair welcomed Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste's willingness to exchange experiences on their respective prevention and peacebuilding strategies. He emphasized the paramount importance to discuss how prevention has been operationalized by countries that experience different risks and challenges. He noted that the PBC provides a unique platform to discuss prevention in a comprehensive and concrete manner. By voluntarily bringing their diverse experiences to the Commission, countries can demonstrate the relevance of national ownership and highlight the importance of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, he emphasized.
3. **Mr. Raymond V. O. Omollo, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Internal Security and National Administration, Ministry of Interior and National Administration of Kenya**, informed that comprehensive review of Kenya's peacebuilding architecture was conducted by an Independent Panel of Advisors in 2023. The review sought to re-examine the mandates and positioning of Kenya's formal and informal institutions, capacities and processes, and to assess the degree to which the architecture is fit for purpose to holistically address recurrent and emerging challenges to peace, social cohesion, security, and to identify opportunities to promote greater national ownership. He highlighted that Kenya's review process involved 10,800 actors, including women and youth, civil society organization, government agencies, the subnational actors, elected leaders, as well as think tanks and the

private sector, and international organizations to make recommendations for addressing the identified threats. He noted that the Panel submitted a report that identifies strategic risks to Kenya's peace and security and offers a comprehensive set of observations and recommendations to Kenya's political leadership. The recommendations included: (1) defining the national agenda for peace, (2) promoting political inclusion, (3) enhancing conflict prevention and resolutions, and (4) proposing a new institutional architecture for peacebuilding. He emphasized that while there is no one-size-fits-all strategy, Kenya's experience could inform other countries in developing or reviewing their own prevention and peacebuilding policies. He underscored that the next critical step for Kenya is to have the recommendations of the report implemented, emphasizing Kenya's commitment to channeling resources to this effort. He called for the Commission's partnership, looking forward to returning to the Commission in near future to report on the progress.

4. **Ms. Shamsa Abubakar Fadhili, Vice-Chair of the Independent Panel of Advisors of the Kenya Peacebuilding Architecture Review**, noted that over the past 20 years, Kenya has had relative peace and stability with a robust peacebuilding architecture established by the 2010 constitution. She explained that during the 2022 elections, robustness of the architecture was reflected, leading to the government commissioning a 13-member Independent Panel of Advisors to conduct the review of the peacebuilding architecture, spearhead a national inclusive conversation, and submit a report to the President, with proposals for a new agenda for peace for Kenya. She noted that the Panel carried out country-wide consultations, ensuring the representation of marginalized groups and communities. She emphasized that the review found that Kenya's peacebuilding architecture has exemplary mechanisms for early warning, conflict prevention and reconciliation; however, it also found that longstanding conflict drivers remain present in the society, and that new stressors brought forth by the effects of climate change and new technologies pose challenges. She highlighted opportunities to strengthen the current systems of conflict prevention and resolution with the aim of equipping Kenya with robust, independent and well-resourced peacebuilding architecture. She emphasized the commitment of Kenya to ensuring the voices, interests and needs of people are heard and represented.
5. **Ms. Elin Solberg, Policy Director at the Department of National Security with the Ministry of Justice of Norway**, noted that while Norway has no single overarching violence and conflict prevention strategy, several strategies collectively make up the country's prevention framework. She explained that countering violent extremism is the focus of one of these strategies, as radicalization, extremism, and terrorism represent serious threats to peace and democratic values. She underscored that despite the public's strong trust in institutions in Norway, the terrorist threat level in Norway is assessed to be moderate. She emphasized that prevention of violent extremism demands long-term effort, requiring constant assessment of the need for new or adaptive measures. She underscored the importance to understand how extremist movements inspire, recruit, grow, and incite violence, through research on risk factors and effective preventive measures. Stressing the need to address extremism in all its forms, she introduced Norway's effort in establishing an Extremism Commission consisting of independent experts from various fields and sectors. She emphasized the need to have a whole-of-government as well as a whole-of-society approach, encouraging cooperation among all the key actors including schools, health and welfare services, civil society, the police and

the correctional services. She underlined the need to maintain a high level of trust, transparency and open conversations for effectively countering violent extremism.

6. **H.E. Mr. Dionisio Da Costa Babo Soares, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste**, emphasized the importance of resilience and commitment in peacebuilding and statebuilding in Timor-Leste. He explained that since its independence in 2002, Timor-Leste has been leading development efforts to build institutional frameworks based on the rule of law and the principle of democratic governance. He noted that Timor-Leste focused on prevention, including through addressing root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality, and political exclusion; promoting social cohesion and reconciliation; bringing communities together; strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law; encouraging dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms; and preventing the rise of extremism and violence. He then introduced Timor-Leste's effort to sustain peace, including through implementing the peace agreement; working together with civil society organizations and local leaders; strengthening institutions; promoting economic development and social justice; protecting and promoting human rights; and fostering regional cooperation and international support. H.E. Soares noted that Timor-Leste also made efforts to harmonize the universal ideals and principles of governance with the local norms to promote democracy, human rights, and justice, and that the 2010 Strategic Development Plan played an important role, underlining the importance of implementing these economic policies, addressing the needs of youth and developing legal frameworks. He further introduced Timor-Leste's efforts in facilitating community-based reconciliation; promoting security sector reform; empowerment of women and youth; supporting veterans; creation of law to regulate gang groups and law on land and property; creation of mobile courts; repatriation of refugees and displaced persons and encouragement of civil society organizations to carry out community reconciliation programmes. He acknowledged the remaining challenges to the development trajectories such as the issue of multidimensional poverty, climate change, the lack of high-quality infrastructure, and lack of access to high-quality basic services, calling on development partners to continue to support the country.
7. **Ms. Lesley Connolly, Team Leader of Global Policy, Life and Peace Institute**, commended the efforts of the Kenyan Independent Panel of Advisors to bring in a range of peacebuilding actors and ensure the meaningful inclusion of a vast array of civil society voices, including young people. She elucidated the role played by her organization in supporting this process and convening multiple consultations to bring in community-based networks. Ms Connolly underscored that organizations with long-term trusted connections and partnership can create meaningful and open spaces that facilitate conversations. She recalled that the consultations targeted new voices, those that are often left out of these consultation processes, noting that the review used different methodologies and approaches that created an equal playing field and created spaces where different voices could come out. For example, by using an approach such as participatory mapping enabled youth leaders to meaningfully participate in the consultations. The Independent Panel of Advisors' conscious approach to inclusivity created new partnerships and opportunities that reach across silos, breakdown stereotypes, and advanced meaningful engagement, she underscored. She noted that civil society organizations were seen as a thought partner throughout the review, leading to a stronger process, recommendations, and commitment to future implementation.

8. **Mr. Earle Courtenay Rattray, Chef de Cabinet to the United Nations Secretary-General,** underscored that the critical importance of prevention and peacebuilding is more evident than ever. He highlighted that the Secretary-General’s policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace recognizes: (i) universal responsibility of all States to prevent conflict and violence within their societies; (ii) national action and ownership, including through the development of national prevention strategies. He noted that violence is present in all our societies, stressing the need to address violence in a more holistic approach. He stressed the need to promoting a shift from a culture of reaction to one of prevention. For this paradigm shift to work – and for us to eliminate the stigma around prevention and make it truly universal – we must collectively advance this shift, he emphasized. Commending Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste for sharing their experiences, he hoped that more countries feel encouraged to come forward to share their own experiences. The Chef de Cabinet highlighted the important role played by international partners, such as the Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund and the World Bank, in supporting nationally-led prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Recalling that A New Agenda for Peace recommended the Commission to create a mechanism to mobilize political and financial support for the implementation of national prevention strategies, he hoped that Member States will seriously consider this recommendation. He underscored that the United Nations system will be ready to support those countries developing national prevention strategies and building national infrastructures for peace, when requested.
9. **Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following remarks:**
- They commended Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste for sharing experiences, good practices and lessons learnt from their national efforts in addressing root causes and drivers of violence, instability and conflict and enhancing approaches and strategies to this end.
  - They emphasized the opportunity of utilizing the 2024 Summit of the Future and 2025 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture to further strengthen peacebuilding tools and pursue nationally owned prevention strategies, building on the Secretary-General’s policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace.
  - They called for strengthening the role of the Commission as a platform for exchanges of experiences, good practices and lessons learnt and exploring ways to go beyond advocacy.
  - They stressed the need of a holistic approach to prevention and peacebuilding, including through the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - They emphasized the importance of adequate, predictable and sustained financing for the development and implementation of national prevention and peacebuilding strategies.
  - They underscored the role of the United Nations, including the Peacebuilding Fund, in support of the development and implementation of national prevention and peacebuilding strategies.
  - They underlined the critical importance of partnerships, including international financial institutions, bilateral donors and private sector.
  - They appreciated the important roles played by civil society organizations, women and youth in support of national efforts for prevention and peacebuilding.
  - They called for promoting South-South and triangular cooperation for peacebuilding, including through the Commission platform.

*Chair’s recommendations*

- Continue to utilize the Commission as a platform for exchange of experiences, good practices and lessons learnt.
- Encourage Member States to present their own national prevention and peacebuilding strategies at the Commission.
- Call for strengthened partnerships among a wide variety of international, regional, national and local actors and promotion of inclusivity in national efforts for prevention and peacebuilding.