

**PBC Annual Session
12 November 2018**

“Peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Sahel region”

Introduction

The resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)), adopted on 27 April 2016 by the General Assembly and the Security Council, reaffirmed the role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) as a dedicated intergovernmental advisory body to bring a strategic approach and coherence to international peacebuilding efforts. They stressed the importance of the PBC as a platform to convene all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including Member States, national authorities, UN missions and country teams, international, regional and sub-regional organizations, international financial institutions (IFIs), civil society, women’s groups, youth organizations and, where relevant, the private sector and national human rights institutions, in order to provide recommendations and information to improve coordination, to develop and share good practices in peacebuilding, including on institution building, and to ensure predictable financing to peacebuilding. The resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture also 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, considering regional and cross-cutting issues relevant to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Over the last two years, the PBC has convened several meetings on regional and cross-border peacebuilding challenges, including on the Ebola crisis, the Mano River Union, the Great Lakes, West Africa and the Sahel.

On 20 January 2017, the Security Council issued a Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2017/2), emphasizing the importance of the convening role of the 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. Since March 2017, the PBC has convened a series of meetings on the situation in the Sahel, with the participation of the countries in the region, the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the G5 Sahel, and the UN system. These meetings focused on ways to overcome the region’s multi-dimensional challenges by addressing the root causes of crisis pertaining to social, economic and environmental factors. PBC Members stressed the importance of national ownership, coherence and coordination in addressing the multifaceted peacebuilding challenges in the region. They highlighted the need to go beyond the peace and security response, and strengthen development and humanitarian assistance to effectively address the challenges facing the region. PBC engagement also recognized the importance of a regional approach to address the cross-border challenges in the Sahel. In support of the Sahel countries’ efforts to foster coherence and ensure coordination, the PBC Chairs attended the 5th and 6th meetings of the “Ministerial Coordination Platform for the Sahel” held in N’Djamena, Chad, respectively in June 2017 and March 2018. On 30 January 2018, the Security Council issued another Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2018/3) reiterating the importance of the convening role of the PBC in sustaining peace and peacebuilding efforts in the Sahel. Security Council Resolution ((S/RES/2391 (2017)) on the support to G5 Sahel Joint Force, adopted on 8 December 2017, stresses that a military response to the threats faced by the Sahel can only

be effective if accompanied by the rapid and effective implementation of inclusive regional strategies encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues. In this regard, Security Council Resolution 2391 reaffirms the centrality of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) in providing such a comprehensive framework to the international response.

Framework for UN Engagement in the Sahel Region

In July 2012, the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to develop and implement a United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues (S/RES/2056 (2012)). UNISS was developed and launched in 2013, to support the Governments and people of the Sahel region in their efforts to address the root causes of instability in the Sahel within a sustainable and long-term perspective. UNISS identifies specific objectives and actions under three strategic goals, namely, (a) enhancing inclusive and effective governance throughout the region; (b) strengthening the capacity of national and regional security mechanisms to address cross-border threats; and (c) integrating development and humanitarian interventions to build resilience (S/2013/354).

Despite the enormous potential of the Sahel, the region continues to be confronted by serious governance, security, humanitarian and development challenges. On 30 June 2018, on the margins of the African Union Summit in Nouakchott, the Deputy Secretary-General launched the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel. The UN support plan targets 10 countries, namely Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia. The Support Plan, covering the period 2018-2030, aim to further boost the UNISS implementation through six key strategic priorities, putting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 at the core of our collective action. The plan focuses on six key areas: i) Promoting cross-border cooperation for stability and development; ii) Preventing and resolving conflicts, violent extremism and crime and promoting access to justice and human rights; iii) Promoting inclusive and equitable growth and increasing access to basic services; iv) Building resilience to climate change, decreasing natural resource scarcity and food insecurity; v) Facilitating access to renewable energy; vi) Empowering youth and women as agents of socio-economic transformation and peaceful societies. The Support Plan is based on the priorities and needs of the people and countries of the Sahel and was developed in consultation with governments and regional partners, including the African Union to ensure inclusiveness, as well as national ownership and leadership.

The PBC Annual Session, which will provide an opportunity for PBC Member States to offer initial reflections on the UN Support Plan for the Sahel, will be structured around two sub-themes:

Sub-theme 1: The United Nations partnership with key stakeholders at strategic and operational levels to bring coherence to international support to the Sahel region.

Sub-theme 2: Empowering youth and women as agents of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Sahel region.

Structure/Programme:

Opening session: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

- Opening remarks: Chair of the PBC - H.E. Dr. Ion Jinga
- Opening remarks: Deputy Secretary General - H.E. Ms. Amina Mohammed
- Vice-President of the General Assembly – Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso
H.E. Mr. Yemdaogo Eric Tiare
- President of the Security Council – Permanent Representative of China
H.E. Mr. Ma Zhaoxu
- President of ECOSOC - H.E. Inga Rhonda King
- Permanent Representative of Niger (Chair of G5 Sahel) - H.E. Mr. Abdallah Wafy

Interactive working session (1): 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Partnership with key stakeholders at strategic and operational levels for coherent international support to the Sahel region.

Moderator: Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for the Sahel – Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw

Speakers

- G5 Permanent Secretary – Mr. Maman Sidikou
- AU High Representative for the Sahel – H.E. Mr. Pierre Buyoya
- Representative Civil Society (1) from the Sahel

Interactive working session (2): 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Empowering youth and women as agents of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Sahel region.

Moderator: UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth – Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake

Speakers

- Deputy Executive Director UN Women – Ms. Åsa Regnér
- Member of Parliament and Mayor of Dori, Burkina Faso – Mr. Ahmed Aziz Diallo
- Representative Civil Society (2) from the Sahel

Closing session: 5:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

- Concluding remarks by PBC Chair

Outcome:

As set out in the agreed modalities, the principles, conclusions and recommendations of the annual session will be considered and agreed by the Commission and reflected in the PBC's annual report. The Chair will submit an informal Chair's report of the discussions which will be the basis of the PBC continued engagement in support of the Sahel.