

# United Nations Nations Unies

HEADQUARTERS • SIEGE NEW YORK, NY 10017

TEL.: 1 (212) 963.1234 • FAX: 1 (212) 963.4879

28 October 2019

Mr. President,

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Recalling the advisory role of the PBC to the Security Council, I would like to share some observations and recommendations made at the Ambassadorial-level meeting of the PBC on 21 October on Strengthening Linkages between Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the SCR 1325 and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, it is clear that progress has been made by the UN and Member States through the adoption and strengthening of policies and tools to ensure that women are included across all aspects of peacebuilding, and through reiterated commitments to WPS through numerous statements and resolutions. However, we should be honest in acknowledging that there is still a major gap in implementation in different cases around world. Women continue to face exclusion from decision making and peacebuilding processes. A major effort has to be made. The gender dimension is too often considered as an afterthought when it must be an integral part of all conflict analysis and planning that feeds into peacebuilding strategies. Women, especially young women, cannot be effective peacebuilders when they are marginalised. This takes women's agency away. It also reduces our chances to succeed in building sustainable peace. Women should be put at the center of peacebuilding efforts.

Peace cannot be defined as the mere absence of conflict. A multidimensional, gender sensitive approach to peacebuilding, including good governance, justice, rule of law and economic development, is needed for the implementation of the WPS agenda. Promoting development entails both addressing root causes of conflict and removing barriers to women's meaningful participation, such as limited access to resources and economic insecurity.

H.E. Mr. Jerry Matthews Matjila  
President of the Security Council  
New York

The PBC is pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report on WPS (S/2019/800) places the promotion of gender equality at the heart of intergovernmental support for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The PBC takes note of the recommendations contained in the report and would like to share the following complementary commitments and suggestions made at the PBC meeting on 21 October.

The PBC would like to reiterate the importance of women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the need to increase the representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Ensuring that gender is considered in all discussions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace should remain at the front of the efforts of the United Nations and the international community.

The PBC welcomes the increase in participation of female peacekeepers which contributes towards achieving the objectives of the WPS agenda. We would also encourage to consider ways and means that would encourage deployment of more female peacekeepers.

The PBC would like to underscore the need to strengthen data collection, including gender disaggregated data, to support evidence-based United Nations policy in furtherance of the WPS agenda. In addition, gender expertise, analysis, resources and monitoring and reporting mechanisms should be included in all United Nations strategic planning initiatives and guidance at global, regional and country levels, including during transition processes. In this regard, the gender-responsive conflict analysis that informed the new United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework in Liberia and the role of women leaders in The Gambia in shaping the work of the Constitutional Review Commission are steps in the right direction.

The PBC encourages the Security Council to include of WPS issues in relevant statements and resolutions. Testaments from experts and practitioners in PBC meetings have underscored the importance of such references for women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention, peace processes and in the aftermath of conflict. This is especially important during the renewal of mission mandates and in transition contexts as these constitute critical moments for sustainable peace.

The PBC encourages continuous mobilization to adequately resource the implementation of the WPS agenda and invest in women peacebuilders. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCR 1325 coincides with the next review of the peacebuilding architecture. It provides an opportunity to reiterate political commitment, consider concrete actions, and scale-up investment in gender

# United Nations Nations Unies

HEADQUARTERS • SIEGE NEW YORK, NY 10017

TEL.: 1 (212) 963.1234 • FAX: 1 (212) 963.4879

equality, an essential part of the peacebuilding agenda. It also provides an important opportunity to strengthen the PBC's bridging role in this area.

The PBC will therefore continue to use its convening and advisory role to provide a platform for women peacebuilders from different contexts to share experiences and for exchange of expertise. The PBC agreed, during its 21 October meeting, to report annually on the implementation of its gender strategy, which was adopted on 7 September 2016. In line with its gender strategy, the PBC will scale up its inclusion of WPS considerations in its thematic and country-specific discussions as well as field visits. As part of the efforts to strengthen the cooperation between PBC and the Security Council, the PBC welcomes closer collaboration with the Security Council Informal Expert Group on WPS in this regard

I am also pleased to inform you that the Peacebuilding Fund surpassed the Secretary-General's target of 15 per cent of investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding, reaching 40 per cent in 2018 – a first for any United Nations fund.

In furtherance of its advisory role to the Security Council, the PBC also committed to holding an annual discussion on best practices on Women and Peacebuilding to feed into the Security Council's Open Debate on WPS.

The above points to advance the WPS agenda are all elements of peacebuilding and sustaining peace to the fundamental importance of women's meaningful participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peacebuilding. The PBC is committed to stepping up its efforts on WPS and remains at the Security Council's disposal for further exchanges and advice, if requested, on good practices.

Guillermo Fernández de Soto  
Chair  
Peacebuilding Commission