

Peacebuilding Commission

Ambassadorial-level meeting on World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) 2020-2025 and quarterly briefing by the Chairs of Country Specific Configurations

09 October 2019

Chair's summary

Background

On 9 October 2019, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened an ambassadorial-level meeting, chaired by H.E. Mr. Guillermo Fernández de Soto, Chair of the PBC, to address the following agenda items: 1) World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV); and 2) Quarterly briefing by the Chairs of the Country Specific Configurations (CSCs). The World Bank FCV Strategy was presented by Mr. Franck Bousquet, Senior Director, FCV Group, World Bank by VTC. The Chairs of the Country Configurations for Burundi, CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone presented their progress reports.

World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence

1. In his introductory remarks, the Chair recalled the visit of the PBC to Washington D.C. for the annual PBC-World Bank Dialogue held on 1 July 2019 and reaffirmed the importance of continued PBC engagement with the World Bank to ensure coherence for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. He highlighted that the PBC meeting provided a significant opportunity to not only explore and advance PBC–World Bank collaboration, but also to ensure the World Bank FCV Strategy's contributions to peacebuilding and sustaining peace in conflict-affected countries that are supported by the Commission. The Chair suggested that the outcome of this meeting can serve as PBC's contribution to the finalization of the FCV Strategy.
2. The Senior Director, FCV Group of World Bank, Mr. Franck Bousquet, commended the excellent UN-World Bank relationship under the partnership agreement signed by the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank. Mr. Bousquet also announced that the World Bank and the PBSO are about to release a joint report on UN-World Bank cooperation in more than 40 countries. Mr. Bousquet introduced the FCV Strategy which builds on the P4P study findings and focuses on countries with increasing poverty. He stressed the challenges that are impacting the development outcome in general, such as the largest ever displacement of population (70 million) since World War II, terrorism and violent extremism, climate change, demographic pressure, and rising gender inequality. To support FCV countries, the World Bank doubled its finance to the poorest countries under IDA 18, from seven to fourteen billion USD in areas of conflict prevention, refugee support, boosting the private sector and economic growth. The World Bank is also deploying more staff on the ground, with 800 staff in over 30 FCV countries. Under the FCV Strategy, the World Bank proposes different approaches, including addressing the drivers of the FCV, protecting the vulnerable population and contributing to peace and prosperity. He outlined that the operationalization of the strategy will focus on the "4Ps", i.e. programming, personnel, partnership and processes, setting a new business model for the Bank. The

World Bank was in the process of consolidating the draft strategy with feedback received during the global consultation process from more than 1,700 stakeholders. The World Bank expects to post the draft paper of the FCV Strategy in the coming weeks and launch the final version by the end of the year. Mr. Bousquet re-emphasized several essential factors that are important for the success of the strategy, including leadership and commitment of governments and need for tangible progress at the country level.

3. The Director and Deputy Head of PBSO, Ms. Barrie Freeman, recalled the broad and deep partnership between the UN and World Bank and noted the many opportunities to grow it based on shared data, joint analysis, and coordinated prioritization with host governments. She stressed that there remain considerable transaction costs in the UN-World Bank partnership, and that it will take sustained attention and support to keep the forward momentum. In that regard, she commended Commission members for their focus on this issue and efforts to help achieve a closer partnership between the UN and the Bank in FCV settings. PBSO commended the important contribution of donors - Switzerland, Canada and the UK – who are supporting the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding Partnership (HDPP) Facility. She proposed that future PBC meetings can provide a platform for the FCV strategy to enable policy dialogue and a venue to gather lessons learned on strategy implementation.
4. PBC Members welcomed the briefing by the World Bank on the FCV Strategy and made the following general observations:
 - They welcomed the convening of the PBC meeting as timely, coming after the PBC-World Bank Dialogue Meeting held in Washington D.C. and considered the briefing as an opportunity to identify more synergies between the FCV strategy and the PBC activities.
 - They praised the World Bank for conducting wide consultations on the FCV concept before the drafting of the World Bank Group FCV strategy paper.
 - Member States expressed the need to further explore how the FCV strategy can better inform the work of the PBC, especially its country-specific Configurations (CSC) process, while others proposed that the consultations on the 2020 review should consider how the Commission's working methods can accommodate further FCV strategy engagement.
 - They indicated that the strategy should ensure national ownership by aligning its interventions with national priorities and consider the transboundary and regional dimensions of drivers of conflict. They also encouraged the Bank to invest in regional organizations and support underfunded grassroots organizations.
 - Member States stressed the importance of coordination and coherence and stressed the need to strengthen engagement with the UNCTs.
 - PBC Members underscored the need to further increase funding available to fragile countries in IDA-19 and called for greater coherence between the Bank UN funding instruments like PBF, CERF, SDG Fund, etc.
 - Member States proposed that next interactions on the FCV strategy needs to go beyond the strategy and into the operations and sharing lessons and experiences.

5. In line with the World Bank plan to solicit comments on the draft FCV Strategy, PBC members raised the following questions on the draft FCV Strategy to be shared with the World Bank:
- How will the concept of partnerships with diverse actors on the ground, including the new Resident Coordinator system and UN Country Team, be operationalized, especially in view of the need to deconflict/align overlapping mandates of UN entities?
 - How will the FCV strategy impact the work of the PBC in support of its Configuration Countries?
 - Will the Bank's engagement entail more financial resources for fragile states?
 - What measures will be taken to ensure that all parts of the World Bank Group own and comply with the new strategy?
 - Does the strategy focus sufficiently tackling the corruption scourge?
 - Is the strategy encouraging increased engagement with the private sector?
 - What monitoring and evaluation mechanisms does the strategy envisage?
 - Will strategy programming take into consideration climate change multiplier threats and triggers?
 - Will the strategy support the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security and the Youth, Peace and Security agendas?
 - What are the Bank's expectations from the 2020 Review of UN peacebuilding Architecture, in relation to FCV strategy?

Quarterly briefing by CSC Chairs

6. The Chair started the second agenda item of the meeting by recalling the Commission's engagement in Burkina Faso, which is an example of UN-World Bank cooperation. He introduced the upcoming events of the Commission, including the PBC Annual Retreat (week of 15 October); Expert-level meetings on the preparation of PBC Annual Session and the Joint ECOSOC-PBC meeting (October); Ambassadorial-level meeting on Women, Peace and Security (21 October), which would well serve the Security Council's open debate on Women, Peace and Security (29 October); Ambassadorial-level meeting on The Gambia (28th October); PBC-AU Peace and Security Council informal dialogue (11 November) and the Annual PBC Session and Joint ECOSOC-PBC meeting (21-22 November respectively).
7. The Chair of the CAR Configuration (Morocco) noted that the Configuration would present a written advice of the Commission to the Security Council on the mandate renewal of MINUSCA, focusing on the 2020 elections, the rule of law and RCPCA support. The Chair presented a future visit to Washington D.C. for consultations with the World Bank and the IMF. A field visit to Bangui was also on the agenda.
8. The Chair of the Sierra Leone Configuration (Canada) recalled a side event on the implementation of Sierra Leone's National Development Plan during the high-level political forum in July, which was co-hosted by the Configuration. The event, attended by the World Bank and IMF, under the theme of "Walking out of Fragility," highlighted the country's commitment to delivering free education for all and access to justice. The Chair mentioned his participation in a PBC/UNOWAS visit to Sierra Leone and the Mano River Union, which would focus on common challenges, cross-border initiatives and strengthening regional partnerships.

9. The Chair of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration (Brazil) noted that the Configuration's focus has been on the electoral cycles, including legislative elections (successfully held on 10 March) and the upcoming presidential election scheduled for 24 November. The Chair indicated that the international community should sustain attention on the country and double its efforts for a peaceful transfer of power. During the Chair's briefing to the Security Council on 10 September, the Chair informed of the political situation and peacebuilding needs that require stronger focus in anticipation of the drawdown of UNIOGBIS. The Chair noted that he was scheduled to visit Bissau from 22-24 October to reiterate the need to hold the presidential election.

10. The Chair of the Liberia Configuration (Sweden) recalled the Ambassadorial-level meeting held on 28 June to follow up on the latest country development, particularly the protest in the capital on 7 June. After the meeting, the Commission adopted a press statement welcoming the peaceful protest, commending the dialogue among stakeholders and reiterating the Commission's commitment to supporting the country. The Configuration would convene an expert-level meeting on 11 October to follow-up on the recent national economic dialogue, the new cooperation framework, the PBF projects, and the synergy between the Commission and the PBF in the country. The Chair noted that support for women and youth participation in peacebuilding processes is crucial and must be continued.

11. The Chair of the Burundi Configuration (Switzerland) briefed on the Configuration's activities since the last update, including the Chair's visit to Burundi in May; the ambassadorial-level meeting (June); the briefing to the Security Council (14 June); the Chair's participation (by VTC) in the Security Council interactive dialogue in connection with the situation in Burundi; and the meeting with the Burundi Foreign Minister held during the 74th General Assembly session. The Chair noted that the government's preparations for the 2020 elections had advanced considerably. The implementation of the National Development Plan for 2018-2027 sets the priorities for cooperation between Burundi and its international partners on social and economic matters. The Chair indicated that the activities of the Configuration follow a holistic approach to peacebuilding which recognize the political, social, economic, humanitarian and human rights nexus. The Chair also commended the efforts of the Burundi Women Mediator Network at the community level, funded by the PBF. He also underscored the need for sustained funding for the voluntary and dignified return of Burundians from neighboring countries.

The Chair adjourned the meeting.