

PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Second Annual Session

Closing Statement by

H.E. Ms. Margot Wallström
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden
Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission

23 June 2015

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Mr. President of the Security Council,

Excellencies,

I am pleased to join you to chair this closing session of the Peacebuilding Commission Annual Session, on Peacebuilding Day.

I hope that today's working sessions spurred interesting debate and generated a number of conclusions worth taking forward on the need for more predictable, flexible and sustainable funding for peacebuilding.

My visit to New York this week centers on two interrelated themes.

Apart from participating at this Annual Session on predictable financing for peacebuilding, I am honored to have been appointed as a member of the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, which met for the first time today. The panel on humanitarian financing has been tasked to find ways in which the gap between rising humanitarian needs and the resources available to meet them can be closed. We have also been asked to look ways in which resources can be used more effectively.

In my view, the discussions on humanitarian and peacebuilding funding should inform one another. One of the most important linkages is the need to focus more on prevention. We must do more to prevent crises from happening in the first place. This year, the UN launched humanitarian appeals for over 16 billion dollars to help 57 million people around the globe. According to the OCHA, 80% of the people that the UN intends to support through humanitarian aid live in countries affected by conflict. Similarly, the budget for UN Peacekeeping amounts to over 8 billion USD this year, to respond to conflicts. While it is imperative to continue to aid those in need of

humanitarian assistance, and deploy peacekeepers as crisis has struck, it begs the question if not more resources should also be invested on early, preventive measures.

This does not only make sense from an economic standpoint. More importantly, the human cost and the development losses associated with escalation of violence or relapse of conflicts are immense. One challenge of conflict prevention is the difficulty to demonstrate results. We can do better in terms of conveying the success stories, where peace was maintained and an escalation of violence was averted.

As a major contributor to the Peacebuilding Fund, Sweden continues to value the PBF for its catalytic, flexible and rapid financing. The PBF furthermore plays an important role by incentivizing the UN system to work together. I am particularly pleased to note the fund's focus on gender equality. Early investments in inclusive peacebuilding processes that empower women lay a stronger foundation for reconciliation, which contribute to reducing the risk of

relapse.

However, the PBF is one small instrument and cannot replace the need for additional support to peacebuilding.

In addition, more resources do not constitute the only solution to enhance the effectiveness of peacebuilding. As today's meeting has highlighted, we need to address challenges around the fragmentation in the international aid architecture. This requires increased coordination and coherence between international actors, to enhance sustainability of the response. Furthermore, to spur domestic resource mobilization in countries emerging from conflict, there is a need for coherence across different policy areas, such as international development, trade and investments.

To conclude, I call upon all actors in the international system to go beyond rhetoric and start acting in a more coherent and integrated manner. The recovery to Ebola is an example of a challenge that needs a holistic solution, and a situation which will test our ability to think and act across the stovepipes. Recovering from Ebola cannot

and should not be treated primarily as a health crisis; rather it is imperative to recognize the importance of integrating peacebuilding into our response.