

Peacebuilding Commission Chair's letter on the 2025 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture

In accordance with the Terms of Reference of the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture, I wish to share with the General Assembly and the Security Council [*identical letter will be addressed to the SG*] the main elements that have emerged from a series of consultations that the Peacebuilding Commission convened and which were open to all Member States of the United Nations, relevant parts of the United Nations system, civil society representatives and independent experts, with a view to contributing to the formal phase of the review. The consultations represented an opportunity for Member States to take stock of the work of the Commission and to identify areas that the 2025 review may consider at its formal phase.

At an Ambassadorial-level meeting convened on 21 June, the Commission discussed the support and accompaniment it has provided to The Gambia since its first engagement in 2017. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of The Gambia and of the Republic of Korea (Chair of the PBC in 2017) recalled how, in 2017, as The Gambia faced a difficult and intense political transition, its government decided to seek the support of the PBC with a view to garnering international attention to prevent an escalation of the evolving crisis. Both Ministers highlighted that the Commission played a critical role in convening stakeholders across the international community, the United Nations system, International Financial Institutions, regional and sub-regional organizations, and civil society, in support of the country's peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities. The Ministers also recalled that the strong synergy between the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund contributed to provide coherent support from the United Nations and the international community. They agreed that the timely intervention of the PBC and of the Peacebuilding Fund, working with other stakeholders, to prevent an escalation of the evolving crisis, were instrumental to the progress of sustainable peace and development in The Gambia.

The Ministers underscored that the Commission's flexible engagement with The Gambia represents a positive case study, with important good practices that the 2025 review should build on. These include, inter alia, the importance of respecting and addressing the relevant national needs, building the national institutions' capacities, and ensuring adequate financial resources. In this regard, they noted that the 2025 review should emphasize these aspects, including through strengthening the collaboration with International Financial Institutions and the private sector.

The meeting helped to demonstrate that successful stories in peacebuilding and sustaining peace rely on the support of governments and people and, therefore, the participants commended the Government and people of The Gambia for their willingness to provide an inclusive and conducive environment for conflict prevention programs to be implemented. They also reiterated the vital role of sustaining development in achieving lasting peace, and appealed to the international community to enhance their efforts on the sustainable development of The Gambia.

They noted that the 2025 review provides an opportunity to reflect on how to further strengthen the elements that have ensured successful engagements by the Commission, such as in the case of The Gambia, but also an occasion to identify areas that deserve improvements and further investment.

On 17 July, the Commission held an Expert-level meeting on Youth, Education and Peacebuilding. The meeting was an opportunity to take stock of the role of youth and education in peacebuilding and provided inputs into the 2025 review. Youth briefers were invited to share good practices and lessons learned on the topic, and they emphasized the critical roles of youth, in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, based on their experiences.

Youth leaders stressed the importance of engagement of youth in policy-making and programming, ensuring that youth are not only advisors but can actively contribute to these processes. Education was recognized as a fundamental right and an essential tool for fostering mutual understanding, critical thinking, preventing conflicts, and rebuilding trust, particularly in conflict-affected countries. The need to include all segments of society in peace processes was also underscored as key to building resilient communities and addressing exclusion and discrimination. In this regard, the efforts of the Peacebuilding Fund in supporting youth were recognized.

However, several challenges were noted, including insufficient funding for youth-inclusive peacebuilding programs and a growing trust deficit between youth and political leaders. Participants called for the protection of the rights of youth, and for the improvement of communication with governments. Participants highlighted the importance of support to youth and youth-led organizations to implement and support peacebuilding and education efforts, and of facilitating an enabling and safe environment for their work. The role of education in empowering youth and facilitating social cohesion was emphasized, along with the need for regional action plans to address cross-border conflicts influenced by violence and lack of education. Greater attention to peace education as well as access to education more broadly was suggested for the consideration by the Commission and ECOSOC.

On 26 September, the Commission convened a Ministerial-level meeting to discuss perspectives and priorities for the 2025 review. Building on the Summit of the Future, Member States exchanged views on their expectations, opportunities, and challenges regarding the review process, reaffirming their commitment to active participation. A central theme was the need to enhance peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts through national ownership and to strengthen the PBC's role in peacebuilding initiatives. They stressed in this regard that the growing number of countries that have decided to be considered by the PBC – currently 31 – testifies to the important advocacy role that the Commission is playing. A number of the countries benefiting from the PBC and PBF support expressed their appreciation to both instruments as playing crucial roles in fostering sustainable peace and stability in their countries. The support from the PBC and the broader UN system has resulted in tangible and impactful initiatives that are vital for peace process. These efforts have not only advanced their country journey toward peace but has also helped align the

United Nations' activities with broader national objectives, illustrating the importance of a collaborative approach to addressing global peace challenges.

Participants underlined the role of dialogue, national early warning efforts and diplomacy at various levels to prevent and resolve conflicts. They called for data-driven approaches to better understand and respond to conflict situations. Furthermore, they commended the Commission's efforts to strengthen links with the Peacebuilding Fund and welcomed the recent General Assembly resolutions A/RES/76/305 and A/RES/78/257 on financing for peacebuilding. They recognized Commission's efforts to improve coordination with the UN system to effectively support sustaining peace, encompassing activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.

To increase impact and coordination of scarce resources, participants recommended the strengthening of partnerships with regional organizations and regional and international financial institutions to leverage national and local expertise and enhance peacebuilding and sustaining peace collective investments. Additionally, engaging at the country level was recognized as crucial for improving on-the-ground impact, with a call for the PBC to facilitate regular dialogues with UN resident coordinators and relevant stakeholders. The participants underscored the importance of national ownership and enhanced collaboration of UN agencies with national governments to foster sustainable peace. They also acknowledged innovative initiatives, such as the Peacebuilding Impact Hub that provides data and empirical evidence on peacebuilding for better informed and effective peacebuilding interventions.

Participants emphasized also the critical need for inclusive peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives that are tailored to specific contexts. They highlighted the vital roles of women and youth in community-level peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts, which are essential for effectively addressing local challenges and needs. Investing in and empowering these groups in decision-making processes, bearing in mind their respective concerns, experiences and demands was deemed crucial for tackling the root causes of conflict. The importance of implementing developmental programs that focus on economic empowerment and social inclusion for women and youth were also emphasized, as these efforts are critical for preventing the relapse of conflicts and fostering lasting peace. Participants also recognized the unique challenges and violence faced by women in conflict-affected regions and urged the PBC to give greater attention to promoting the WPS agenda during the review process. The threats posed by conflict settings to youth were also highlighted, having the participants shown support to the YPS agenda and its strengthening in the PBC.

Regarding the advisory and bridging role of the PBC, participants emphasized the need for more structured communication channels between the Peacebuilding Commission and key UN bodies, namely the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council. They advocated for interactive dialogues and updates to foster a unified approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Additionally, they urged the PBC, in line with its mandate, to offer substantive

advice to the Security Council to enhance its focus on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the context of UN peace operations and to promote multilateralism in international peace and security.

While acknowledging the review as a crucial milestone for assessing the Commission's progress, the need for the PBC to review its working methods to address evolving conflicts and emerging threats more effectively was emphasized. In that regard, there was a call for a review process that incorporates the perspectives of Member States regarding the opportunities and challenges in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including the promotion of South-South and Triangular Cooperation to facilitate knowledge sharing and enhance capacity-building efforts. The changing global landscape, with diminishing trust in multilateral solutions, underscores the difficulty in translating peacebuilding and sustaining peace principles into practical, on-the-ground action. As Member States are about to embark on the 2025 review process, several areas demand attention:

- First, the review should explore practical ways to enhance the role of the Commission as a platform for building and sustaining peace and increase its impact, in accordance with its mandate, notably through sharing good practices among Member States and mobilizing political and financial support for national peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts.
- Second, the review should explore ways whereby the Peacebuilding Architecture can provide assistance to States, upon their request, including through the Peacebuilding Commission and the entire United Nations system, in full conformity with national ownership and needs, to build national capacities to promote, develop, and implement their nationally owned prevention efforts and address the root causes of conflict in their countries, including through sharing best practices and lessons learned.
- Third, upon request of the country concerned, ensure that the Commission plays a vital supporting role, in line with its mandate, in countries during and after the transition of a UN peace operation, in cooperation with the Security Council and supported by United Nations country teams.
- Fourth, the review should focus on strengthening the PBC's collaboration with the General Assembly, the Security Council and ECOSOC, exploring ways in which the Commission can better play a complementary role through improved coordination, drafting and negotiation processes to provide more informed, targeted and useful advice, as well as follow-up and feedback mechanism.
- Fifth, it should explore innovative ways to mobilize and secure sustainable financing for peacebuilding, including by recommending the full implementation of GA resolutions on financing for peacebuilding (A/RES/76/305 and A/RES/78/257).
- Sixth, the review should further explore practical ways in which the UN can foster greater internal coherence and stronger partnerships with international, regional and sub-regional organizations, especially the international and regional financial institutions, with a view to supporting national efforts led by national governments based on their needs and priorities to build and sustain peace.

- Seventh, the review should also explore how to enhance the synergies between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund.
- Eighth, the review should also encourage PBC's further engagement with women and youth, as well as civil society, as appropriate, in line with the mandate of the Commission.

I kindly ask you to circulate the present letter to the members of the General Assembly and the Security Council and to issue it as a document of the Assembly and of the Council.