

**Press Release by the Peacebuilding Commission
on the impact of COVID-19 on peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

Following the virtual meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission convened by its Chair, H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, on 8 April 2020 on the implications of COVID-19 for peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the countries and regions under the Commission's consideration, at which members were briefed by UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Bank, the members of the Commission released the following statement:

The members of the Peacebuilding Commission express their deep concern at the COVID-19 pandemic, and stand in solidarity with all those affected by the virus, particularly in the countries and regions under the Commission's consideration. They note that the COVID-19 pandemic is both a public health emergency and a human crisis, and that the virus poses a considerable risk to hard-won peacebuilding gains around the world. Members of the Commission echo the Secretary-General's call for global solidarity and recognize the continued efforts of the World Health Organization in responding to the pandemic in the face of this unprecedented crisis, and stress the importance of working together and acting fast to address the multi-faceted and multi-sectoral impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members of the Peacebuilding Commission underscore the importance of multilateral cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in all countries under its consideration. Members of the Commission welcome the Secretary-General's plan, launched on 31 March, to address the potentially devastating socio-economic impact of COVID-19, as well as his report *Shared Responsibilities, Global Solidarity: Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19* of March 2020. The Members of the Commission note that the COVID-19 pandemic may undermine social cohesion, strain the capacity of governance institutions, increase risks of instability, and have potential consequences for food security in countries and regions under its consideration. They express concern that the crisis may adversely affect employment, livelihoods, and incomes and potentially exacerbate underlying tensions, as well as compounding already dire humanitarian situations in affected countries.

The members of the Commission welcome the Secretary-General's call for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world and note the initial positive reactions to this appeal in country-specific situations and around the world. Members of the Commission express concern about the possible impact of COVID-19 on conflict-affected countries, and reiterate their commitment to fully support efforts to maintain peace gains in the countries and regions under its consideration. They further stress the importance that responses to the pandemic recognize the importance of leaving no one behind and ensure that the most vulnerable are protected and empowered.

Members of the Commission take note of the ongoing efforts to leverage the global presence of the United Nations system in responding to the pandemic, including through its field presence. They call for appropriate and well-coordinated support to the UN and its field presences. Members of the Commission also reiterated the importance of coherent and coordinated action across all pillars of the UN system in support of nationally-defined peacebuilding priorities.

Members reaffirm that the Commission will continue serving as an intergovernmental platform to advocate for predictable financing and strong partnerships for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, as well as effectively fulfill its advisory role to the General Assembly and Security Council, as appropriate. The Commission's members express their intent to fully leverage the convening and bridging roles of the Commission in support of a coordinated and coherent international response to the crisis, including by strengthening partnerships with crucial actors like the World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, regional development banks, regional intergovernmental organizations, and other bodies as well as by enhancing transparency of ongoing and planned assistance by bilateral and multilateral stakeholders in the affected countries. Finally, the members emphasize the important role the Peacebuilding Commission can play in developing and sharing good practices in peacebuilding.

The Commission will follow up on this meeting with country- and region-specific discussions considering ways to address the impact of the crisis on the countries and regions under its consideration.