

Third Meeting of the Seventh Advisory Group to the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund

New York, 16 – 17 November 2023

Chair's Summary (Public)

This note summarizes conclusions and recommendations of the third meeting of the seventh Advisory Group organized by the key agenda items covered at the meeting

Strategic outlook and key opportunities

The Group underscored that despite – and perhaps also because of – multiple escalating crises around the world, there was a small window of opportunity to foster a stronger ‘constituency for peace’. To seize this, more concerted efforts are needed, and fast. In particular, the Group felt there was the possibility, as outlined in the *New Agenda for Peace*, to capitalize on national and regional prevention strategies as a framework or organizing principle for such efforts.

In addition, the IDA replenishment at the World Bank and the IMF's work to shore up financing for peace and stability present an important opportunity to strengthen multilateral alliances and efforts for peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding Fund partner visit to Mauritania

Three Advisory Group members (Pantuliano, Edrees, Wieland-Karimi) took part in the PBSO ASG-led partner visit to Mauritania in October 2023. The visit was hosted by the Mauritanian Government and facilitated by the UN Resident Coordinator. Members saw first-hand the value of the Fund in a prevention setting, and the importance of the UN system coming together behind a strong Resident Coordinator to support national peacebuilding priorities. They also saw how PBF's financing of the UN's work in remote border regions was supporting inclusive and community-based approaches, and concrete examples of the PBF's role in bringing together humanitarian, peace, and development action. The Group greatly valued the trip and endorsed the importance of such visits alongside donor country representatives.

Extension of Peacebuilding Fund Strategy

The Group discussed extending the Fund's current 2020-24 Strategy by two years. This would align the strategy with outcomes of the Summit of the Future in 2024 and the 2025 Peacebuilding Architecture Review. It would also synchronize with DPPA's current Strategic Plan cycle ending in 2026.

The Group advised against reducing the Fund's investment target of \$1.5 billion. If anything, it should be increased in an extended strategy period. Even if contributions lag behind the targets, the need and demand for more investment in peacebuilding and prevention are clear.

The Group advised the Fund to further refine and communicate its approach to sustainability and engagement with national institutions and beyond, and called for much stronger emphasis on localization. This should be highlighted more consistently in the Fund's communications. Many

donors are struggling to put localization into practice. The Fund has a clear offer in this respect, building on its ability to leverage the full UN system.

Resource mobilization

PBSO briefed on the Fund's resourcing levels and donor contributions. The Group noted the historically low liquidity level, the slightly improved but still highly uneven burden-sharing among voluntary donors, and significant reductions by several longstanding top donors, which have not been offset by – however welcome – increases from other donors.

The Group made the following recommendations with regard to funding mobilization:

- Further improve strategic communications, highlighting the ability of the Fund to leverage the full UN system including missions, Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, and to support local peacebuilders.
- Develop a new funding relationship track with private sector actors through a “coalition approach”.
- Increase the PBF's own resource mobilization capacity.
- Increase the diversification of voluntary donors.

Peacebuilding Fund Terms of Reference revision

The Group noted that, especially if the Fifth Committee approves the Secretary-General's proposal on assessed contributions, the Fund's Terms of Reference (last updated in 2009) would need to be revised. In discussion with PBSO, the Group recommended consideration of the following issues when PBSO begins the revision process:

- Increase engagement with the PBC, including an annual interactive strategic session and participation in country visits.
- Confirm the importance of the eligibility request made by Member States as the key document for determining high-level peacebuilding priorities, accompanied by Joint Steering Committees at country level.
- Consolidate the current practice concerning 5-year eligibility periods for the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF) and evaluations of the 5-year period for renewal of eligibility.
- Consider recommendations from *A New Agenda for Peace*, especially national prevention strategies, insights from other key peacebuilding policy documents issued in the past several years, such as the UN-World Bank joint study *Pathways for Peace*, and the importance of sustainability and sustained engagement.

- Strengthen the importance of the role of PBF in peacebuilding learning through studying the impact of the PBF's peacebuilding investment and its role in supporting design, monitoring, evaluation and learning processes in peacebuilding, through the programmes it supports.

Peacebuilding Commission – Peacebuilding Fund synergies

The Advisory Group very much appreciated the broad engagement from across the membership at the first full session between the Group and the Commission, held on 17 November 2023. The Group felt that this exchange with the Commission should become a regular feature, and could support recommendations on strengthening the role of the Commission and the wider peacebuilding architecture, as presented in the Secretary-General's policy brief on *A New Agenda for Peace*.

The exchange with the Commission made it clear that the Summit (and Pact) of the Future is a major opportunity to advance commitment to both national peacebuilding and prevention efforts, and multilateral support for these. The Group noted how strongly many member states emphasized the need for prevention.

Impact

The Group received an update on PBSO's new Peacebuilding Impact Hub, to be formally launched in early December. The Group was supportive of the conceptual direction the Hub has taken, while underscoring the need to ensure that resources match ambition. The Advisory Group welcomed the global peacebuilding overview report presented as a flagship initiative of the Hub.

The Group also received a briefing on findings of the PeaceFIELD¹ impact evaluation in Darfur. The Group was impressed by the rigour of the approach, noting how rare it was to be able to fully demonstrate causality of impact. This approach should be taken further to scale.

The Group was briefed on the Fund's broader design, monitoring, evaluation and learning (DMEL) practice and future plans. The Group welcomed the increased emphasis on learning, highlighted the importance of linking the Fund's efforts to the Impact Hub and endorsed the Fund's use of programme funds for country-oriented DM&E work.

¹ An independent multi-year initiative testing a rigorous methodological approach applied to PBF-supported programmes in three countries, with dedicated funding from Germany and Canada.