

Remarks of the PBC Chair

Security Council meeting to discuss the latest report of the Secretary-General on the G5 Sahel

18 May 2021

Mr. President,

- I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the President and to all the members of the Security Council for the invitation to brief on the Peacebuilding Commission's continued engagement in pursuit of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the Sahel.
- First of all, I would like to extend my condolences to the Government and people of Chad on the tragic death of President Idriss Déby Itno on 19 April. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of restoring stability and constitutional order in Chad, which is vital for stability in the broader Sahel region.
- We are all aware of the complexity of the situation in the Sahel which has never been more dire. However, more remains to be done to address the root causes of conflict in the region through a long-term, comprehensive and integrated approach for sustaining peace and development.
- Consistent with its longstanding engagement in support of the Sahel region, the PBC met on 28 April to discuss peace and development trends since its last related engagement in October last year. The Commission recognized the budgetary burden caused by increased security expenditures and reduced revenue collection in several countries in the Sahel, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is also constraining resources. The Commission called for greater coordination between the security, development and humanitarian actors in the region to ensure effective efforts for programming and resource mobilization needs including through the development and use of a shared information management system.
- The Commission also recognized that UNISS remains a useful framework for ensuring proactive and effective UN activities in the Sahel to help tackle the root causes and drivers of instability and violence in the region and welcomed the continuing support from the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund for cross-border investments and for empowering women and youth. The Commission has repeatedly encouraged the coordination of efforts for the effective implementation of the UNISS through the UN country teams in the region and welcomed the recent appointment of Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye as Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel.
- Over the last few years, the Commission has been supporting peacebuilding efforts in Burkina Faso, at the request of and under the leadership of the Government. The Commission promoted coherent UN action and coordinated international support, including

through the Peacebuilding Fund, mobilizing over USD \$400 million from PBC members in support of the country's peacebuilding priorities in 2020. This was followed by Burkina Faso being the first country to benefit from the World Bank's Prevention and Resilience Allocation (PRA) under its Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Envelope. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to encourage the UN and the World Bank to build this approach with other G5 Sahel states, with a focus on joint analysis of conflict and response.

- The Commission welcomes the role of “Coalition for the Sahel”, in promoting a combined and coordinated approach aimed at fighting against terrorism, strengthening the Sahelian States' military capabilities, supporting the restoration of State authority throughout the territory, and bolstering development assistance. The Commission supports the call made during the N'Djamena Summit of 16 February of the G5 Sahel for a “civilian surge”, complementary to military efforts, designed to increase coherent development, humanitarian and good governance initiatives enhancing the economic autonomy of the population. During the PBC meeting, Mr Dieye underlined the relevance of such approach including through strengthening investments in the periphery regions.
- To help enhance national and regional peacebuilding efforts in the Sahel, the Commission encourages more robust and coherent action as well as stronger partnerships in line with national and regional peacebuilding priorities. . In this regard, the G5 Sahel states appealed for international support for their Priority Investment Program (PIP)..
- The Commission has also called for additional measures to empower women and youth to undertake leadership roles in peacebuilding initiatives and to strengthen their role in governance structures. In this regard, during that PBC meeting, Ms. Fatchima Nayaya from the NGO WARAKA based in Niger presented examples of positive change in Niger brought about by empowering women and youth, including through initiatives that aim to build economic, social and psychosocial resilience as well as cohesion and trust , through community training, promote peaceful coexistence and tolerance, and enhance sustainable livelihoods .
- The Commission has welcomed contributions to the Liptako Gourma mechanism as well as the World Bank 'Green Wall' and AfDB 'Desert to Power' initiatives, and it is calling for more structural investments in the Sahel, including in response to challenges related to environmental degradation and climate change.
- The Commission has acknowledged the invaluable contribution of MINUSMA to building peace in Mali and the region including through support provided to the G5 Sahel Joint Force. We welcome the leadership taken by regional actors and organizations in confronting and countering terrorist groups and other organized criminal groups.

Mr. President,

- After two generations of international, engagement in the region we owe it to the Sahelian population to ensure real dividends and impact. In this respect, the Commission has an important role to play in complementing the focus of the Security Council on peace and security by strengthening engagement with ECOSOC and the development system and supporting strengthened UN partnerships with international financial institutions. The Commission will therefore continue to encourage greater system wide coherence to tackle the root causes of violence and rebuild much needed peace and stability in the region.

I thank you, Mr. President.
