

**Thematic Consultation organized by the German and French Missions to the UN
On the 2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture**

**“Linkages between Climate Change and Challenges
to Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace”**

23rd of April 2020 (via VTC) 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Background and rationale

In his report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) the Secretary-General underscored the need for a more comprehensive, strategic and coherent approach across the UN system and amongst Member States, in our work in peace and security, development, human rights, and humanitarian action, guided by national ownership and people-centered approaches. **The 2020 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture offers the opportunity to reconfirm integrated thinking and assess where progress is still lacking.**

→ As stated in the Terms of Reference (6.i.c.) inclusive **thematic consultations** conducted by Member States and engaging relevant actors from different fields, are a central element of the informal phase of the review.

In the efforts to promote sustainable peace and further long-term development prospects, cross-cutting issues play an increasingly important role. Complex, transnational and multidimensional themes such as Women/Youth, Peace & Security, Migration, Transhumance or Climate Change require Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace to be truly understood and implemented in a holistic and integrated fashion.

Climate change and climate-related security risks in particular has become the critical global challenge of our time. Its devastating effects on livelihoods through food insecurity, loss of income and displacement due to diminishing natural resources, decreased fresh water availability and degradation of arable land, among others, not only endanger progress achieved by development efforts but also pose a threat to global security and political stability through the amplification of drivers of conflict. While climate change is a global phenomenon, exposure and risk of its negative impacts disproportionately affect the most vulnerable countries in which physical impacts of climate change intersect directly with conflict drivers. These effects are already felt in many regions and will continue gaining in severity in terms of frequent and extreme weather phenomena and more gradual with increasingly erratic precipitation, prolonged droughts, soil degradation, ocean acidification and -warming, rising sea levels.

Yet the interlinkages between climate change, conflict prevention and sustaining peace are not simply a story of risk and negativity, but **also symbolize opportunities and potential.** Requiring inclusive cooperation among the international community, climate-sensitive conflict prevention can generate enormous synergy effects and contribute to improved coordination of peacebuilding efforts. The entire UN system must promote knowledge sharing, carry out more joint assessments and improve the available tools for an early, proactive and holistic tackling of climate-related security risks. A common strategy that integrates actors across all three pillars of the UN system and from all relevant fields including development, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and peace and security is crucial in addressing this cross-cutting challenge.

Equipped with the intent to bring **all elements of the UN system together to address risks of conflict along the whole conflict-cycle, the PBC enables a deeper engagement** with a wider range of countries, on national, regional, international and thematic issues. The PBC's increasing support for peace efforts in conflict affected countries and its cross-pillar engagement have already led to a strong increase in demand that led to an expanded portfolio. In the context of climate, security and conflict prevention, the PBC should use this bridging role to promote an integrated and coherent approach to allow for joint efforts in striving for sustainable solutions to combat the adverse effects of climate change. Bringing together countries affected by climate-related security risks, a diverse membership and experts from the field, the PBC can play a special role in guiding collective efforts on climate-related security risks and peacebuilding.

Objective: The objective of meeting is to inform the formal phase of the 2020 review of UN Peacebuilding Architecture and to provide input for the 2020 report of the Secretary General on the theme of "Linkages between Climate Change and Challenges to Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace". The speakers' perspectives and the following discussion will provide the basis for the outcome (Chair's Summary) containing the reflections during the meeting.

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Agenda and Speakers

- Opening remarks by co-hosts
- Input PBSO (Barrie Freeman, Deputy Director), cross-cutting peacebuilding projects & aspects of climate change
- Commentary by think-tank representative (IPI, tbc)
- Input(s) from country perspective (PR Niger)
- Discussion, moderated by German & French co-hosts
- Closing remarks by co-hosts

We encourage delegations to limit their participation to a max of two participants (PR/DPR and expert level). We encourage delegations to make use of the opportunity to discuss and exchange instead of delivering statements. Interventions from the "floor" should be limited to 2-3 minutes.

Guiding questions

1. How can the peacebuilding architecture better reflect the prevention of climate-related crises and their implications on peace and security?
2. How can UN Member States and the UN Secretariat adapt peacebuilding efforts to climate-related conflict situations and how can climate adaptation and mitigation measures include a peacebuilding approach, e.g. by reducing the risk of climate-related set-backs?
3. How can the PBC develop a strategy in order to anticipate, prevent and manage climate-related security risks, increase regional and international cooperation and create added value in its advisory function? To which partners should the PBC reach out in such a process?
4. How can the PBC make better use of its unique cross-pillar role to enhance its commitment on climate and security related issues?

5. How can the UN member states together with the UN secretariat promote knowledge sharing, carry out more joint assessments and coordinated responses and improve the available tools for early and proactive tackling of climate-related security risks?