

STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

**PBC AMBASSADORIAL – LEVEL CONSULTATION OF THE
PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION
2020 REVIEW OF THE PEACEBUILDING ARCHITECTURE**

**“FULL, EQUAL AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF
WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING”**

APRIL 21 – 29, 2020

Excellencies and Dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for organizing this virtual consultation on the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture, which focuses on full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding.

2. There is no better time than now to truly highlight the critical role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, particularly with COVID-19 and its potential to worsen the situation in conflict-affected countries. Women comprise the majority of frontline healthcare workers globally, working hard to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Women work a second shift at home and carry the burdens of childcare and housework, as schools and childcare facilities close and people stay at home.

3. Women have also proven to be important peacebuilders. As outlined in the Secretary-General's report on Women's participation in peacebuilding, women are crucial partners in strengthening the three pillars of lasting peace, including: **economic recovery, social cohesion** and **political legitimacy**. Women have been successful in peace and security interventions, enhancing efforts to reduce poverty and accelerate development, and ensuring decision making in all sectors are responsive. Women inclusion in post-conflict planning, post conflict governance, human rights and rule of law therefore cannot also be overemphasized. These are elements in the UN peacebuilding architecture that help to empower local women peacebuilders.

4. However, it is worth pointing out that cultural challenges in some societies continue to hinder the active participation of women in peace processes. There is also an under-representation of the efforts of women in formal peace processes and a perception that women do not fight wars therefore, they cannot participate in the resolution. To this end, eliminating discriminatory cultural beliefs and practices against women is the first step to enhancing the inclusion of women in the sphere of peacebuilding. Educating and reorienting the public on the importance of women's contribution is key.

5. In Africa, the African Union has been a useful platform for the advancement of women in peace and security agenda by placing emphasis on the engagement of women and youth in the continent's development. This has been clearly reflected in the African Union (AU) Continental Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security in Africa and the Agenda 2063 of the AU. The African Union presently has over fourteen instruments that relate to women, peace and security.

6. At the sub-regional level in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa, in September 2010, developed an integrated plan of action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan of action emphasizes the importance of the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, mediation and peacebuilding efforts, as well as the rebuilding of post-conflict societies. The sub-region also developed the Framework for the Prevention of Conflicts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Women, Peace and Security component.

7. Building on the regional and sub-regional efforts, Nigeria in 2013, launched a national action plan to fully implement the relevant provisions of resolution UNSCR 1325 (2000). The plan was re-launched in 2017 to re-emphasize Government's commitment to ensuring the security of women and girls during armed conflicts and enhancing their active and direct participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

8. In this regard, Nigeria continues to focus on three priority areas of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda that strengthen women's participation in peacebuilding. They include: prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations; increased meaningful representation of women at all levels in international, regional and national institutions for the maintenance of peace and security; and ensuring that recovery initiatives in conflict and post conflict situations respond to the needs of women and girls, especially vulnerable groups (internally displaced populations, female heads of households, refugees and returnees, women living with and affected by HIV).

9. There are several mechanisms that best support women participation in peacebuilding. International organizations such as the UNWomen play an important role in promoting women participation and gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention. Regional instruments and policies including: the Lake Chad Region Prevention and Stabilization Plan and the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) are all important mechanisms that support women organizations and provide political momentum for women's peacebuilding work.

10. Nigeria welcomes the PBC Gender Strategy as an important tool in integrating a gender dimension into its country-specific, regional and thematic discussions. We believe that the strategy since 2016 has supported the Commissions work in addressing challenges and gaps in financing for women-led peacebuilding initiatives. With COVID-19, it is important that the Commission does not relent but intensify efforts to encourage and invite women leaders and peacebuilders around the world to sustain women participation via virtual platforms.

11. In terms of the 2020 review of the peacebuilding architecture as it pertains to today's topic, we believe that further opportunities for cross-learning and information sharing should be explored. These could include mechanisms for the dissemination of women, peace and security-related statistics and other information collected at global, regional and national levels; and stronger engagement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes. One area where little comparable information is available, that would benefit from greater information sharing and cooperation, is the financing of regional initiatives on women, peace and security.

12. In conclusion, the PBC can do more to formally engage and partner with local women peace leaders, women's human rights defenders and other civil society organizations in the work of regional organizations. Such engagement and partnership can usefully contribute to strengthening regional and national efforts of implementation of the global WPS agenda, as well as monitoring of implementation.

I thank you.