

## **Mind the past to build the future: Systematic attention for MHPSS in peacebuilding efforts**

*An initiative to find opportunities to enable international bodies, tasked with building sustainable peace, to integrate psychosocial aspects in all stages of their work.*

29 April 2020  
10:00-11:30 EST

### **MHPSS and Peacebuilding**

Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) is an area of action that targets vulnerable populations in order to help cope with the effects of extreme stressors, including violence and conflict. MHPSS interventions can address trauma, strengthen resilience and foster reconciliation on both the individual and the community level, therewith contributing to creating the conditions for sustaining peace. As such, MHPSS is a potentially potent peacebuilding tool that can provide meaningful support across all phases of the peace continuum. However, MHPSS receives relatively limited structural consideration in the context of peacebuilding in terms of research, policy and practice. The ambition of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is to promote considerations of MHPSS in peacebuilding, especially by advancing this issue in the context of the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review (PBA-Review), and in close cooperation with the Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPSRL) and the Center on International Cooperation (CIC).

### **The Peacebuilding Architecture Review**

The PBA Review provides an opportunity for the UN-membership to reflect on the current UN peacebuilding architecture as articulated in the 2016 twin [GA](#) and [UNSC](#) resolutions, and to provide guidance on how it can be further strengthened. The Review provides the framework within which consultations can take place on specific thematic angles related to peacebuilding, organized by member states, think tanks, NGO's and other relevant stakeholders. These consultations can feed the drafting process of the SG report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace by PBSO (to be published late august/early September) and provide a basis for subsequent negotiations during the formal phase of the Review.

### **Taskforce and member state consultations**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands foresees two distinct thematic consultations on MHPSS and Peacebuilding during the informal phase of the Review, that serve to promote discussion and develop guidance on the ways in which peacebuilding can benefit from considerations on MHPSS. The first consultation took place on April 1st amongst a dedicated taskforce of MHPSS and peacebuilding experts representing a variety of organizations and convened by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The second consultation will take place on April 29<sup>th</sup> and provides a platform for interested member states to contribute to the discussion on the MHPSS/PB nexus. Jointly, these consultations will provide the foundation for a contribution on MHPSS/PB that will be submitted to PBSO by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, accompanied by a chair's summary of the respective discussions based on Chatham House rules.

### **Set-up for consultations**

In the process of organizing these consultations, the Kingdom of the Netherlands is advised and supported by the Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPSRL) and the Center on International Cooperation (CIC). The consultations will take place virtually (log-in details to follow) and are moderated by the KPSRL. The CIC has prepared a review paper that serves as the basis for discussion, and is annexed to this concept note. The paper summarizes opportunities and obstacles for more structural attention for mental health and psychosocial aspects and integration of MHPSS in peacebuilding efforts, on the basis of existing literature and data and of interviews with core resource persons. On that basis it also suggests initial directions for solutions, focusing in particular on (institutional) factors that may be addressed through the PBA Review.

### **Provisional Agenda**

- Welcome: Kingdom of the Netherlands (5 min)
- Megan Price – Moderator (5 min)  
*Head of Office, Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law*
- Henk Jan Brinkman (5 min)  
*Chief, Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships, PBSO*
- Professor Brandon Hamber (tbc)  
*John Hume and Thomas P. O'Neill Chair in Peace at the International Conflict  
Research Institute, Ulster University*
- Presentation IASC MHPSS Reference Group (tbc)
- Paige Arthur (5 min)  
*Deputy Director, New York University's Center on International Cooperation (CIC)*
- Open discussion moderated by Megan Price (50 minutes)
- Wrap-up (10 min)