

Ambassadorial-level Consultation of the Peacebuilding Commission

2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture

“Institution Building and System-Wide Engagement for Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace”

22 May - 2 June 2020

Australian input

National institutions – that are capacitated, inclusive and share a common vision of a just and peaceful society – are central to the sustaining peace agenda. Australia values the Peacebuilding Commission’s (PBC) capacity to convene a range of stakeholders and encourages it to continue to act as a platform for sharing good practices and experiences, including in institution building.

Australia values the PBC’s ability to provide a platform for diverse perspectives, especially from the field and including those of women and youth. We urge the UN system to maintain a commitment to inclusive engagement in peacebuilding work. As the global COVID-19 response requires adaptations in engagement, all actors will need to be mindful to ensure processes are inclusive, including for women, youth and marginalised groups.

We urge the PBC to be proactive in carrying out its bridging role with other UN organs and agencies, so the UN system as a whole can benefit from the collective experience and prevention focus that the PBC is able to offer. Noting that human rights violations are often among the first warning signs of impending conflict, we encourage the PBC to strengthen its engagement with human rights mechanisms and actors as a means to using human rights as an important prevention tool.

Full implementation of the sustaining peace agenda requires a deliberate and coordinated change in approach by actors across the spectrum, including UN actors. We are pleased to see the Secretary-General’s reforms are leading to a more effective and coherent UN system – particularly in our Pacific region. A stronger and independent resident coordinator system and reconfigured country teams have also placed the UN in a better position to respond to COVID-19 on the ground where it matters.

Traditional siloed peace, humanitarian and development approaches will fall well short of addressing the deep-seated impacts of the current pandemic and our attempts to accelerate towards 2030. We welcome efforts by UN agencies, funds and programs to apply a sustaining peace lens to their work and strengthen peacebuilding programming. However, to develop a clear idea of the nature and scope of peacebuilding work being undertaken across the UN system, and the impacts on the ground, we urge the UN system to develop a shared understanding of what is counted as peacebuilding work, in order to more consistently track, monitor and evaluate system-wide efforts.

Ongoing commitment from leadership at all levels is essential to continuing to drive the changes in practice and culture necessary to embed a sustaining peace approach across the work of the UN system. Leaders must lead by example in working across pillars and in partnerships; create platforms to facilitate coherence in approaches; and be ready to share examples of best practice and lessons learned. Australia urges ongoing commitment to full implementation of the twin resolutions and the Secretary-General’s 42 recommendations to ensure that the benefits of the sustaining peace agenda are fully realised.