



*Ambassadorial-level Consultation of the Peacebuilding Commission  
2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture*

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

*Online platform*

Building on the concept note that was prepared for this event, I would like to elaborate on how the current peacebuilding architecture has enabled the UN to support the building of security institutions in conflict-affected countries. I also would like to identify key gaps in such architecture and provide a few recommendations to its ongoing review. These reflections take into account the outcomes of policy and country-specific dialogues convened by the UN Group of Friends on SSR, which I co-chair, as well as learned shared by the UN entities.

*[How has the UN system more broadly adapted towards strengthening institutions as a core instrument for building and sustaining peace? What are the challenges and remaining obstacles? How could the UN Peacebuilding Architecture better support efforts on institution building in countries impacted by conflict and fragility?]*

- The UN recognizes the building of strong security sector institutions as the cornerstone of peace and sustainable development and an important step for conflict prevention. The stand-alone Security Council Resolution on SSR 2151 (2015), as well as the twin resolutions on peacebuilding (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282) along with the Goal 16 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, call on Member States to foster sustainable development by building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- The existing peacebuilding architecture has enabled the UN in the last years to advance these norms in a number of conflicts affected and fragile countries. Through the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), the UN has engaged in institution building in The Gambia and Burkina Faso. Efforts included enhancing oversight and accountability, including for human rights abuses; and strengthening national institutions that counter organized crime, corruption, and fight impunity.
- Institution-building has also been a key element of the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Missions support it through the provision of strategic and technical assistance on the restructuring of the security sectors, including in contexts like in Mali, Central Africa Republic, Libya, among others.
- Assistance to institution building in the current architecture, however, faces several challenges.

- First, the short time frame and capacities of the PBF programmes and Security Council mandates. The field of security sector covers a variety of actors, addresses many crosscutting issues such as human rights or gender, and requires both political and technical expertise. The effective delivery of UN support to institution building, therefore, hinges on having the necessary capacities to meet mandates and programmes.
- Second, long-term institutional reforms cannot be sustained without political will. National priorities and strategies must be at the heart of institution reforms in the security sector and guide international assistance.

*[What could the Member States and the UN intergovernmental architecture do to support coherence of UN system efforts in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including around strengthening institutions, and to improve multilateral and bilateral assistance towards institution building? How could the PBC better serve as a platform to share good practices and experiences from multilateral and bilateral assistance?]*

- Third, support to institution building lack coordination of international partners. While policy frameworks of the UN, the Africa Union, and the European Union and World Bank concur that international support should be well-coordinated, the assistance provided by these organizations tends to be compartmentalized in practice. As a result, considerable time is often lost while each organization separately assesses a conflict, maps what others are doing, and agrees on a division of labor.
- Forth, donors continue to favor operational rather than strategic reforms in the security institutions. While the funding to support peacebuilding aspects of security remained steadily low, traditional aspects of the security assistance - including “train and equip” initiatives - have grown exponentially in the same period. The PBC has a vital role to play in promoting a balance of these two approaches and ensuring that catalytic funding is available for supporting the long-term institutional building.
- Fifth, women continued to face obstacle to fully participate in security institutions. Lessons from national SSR experiences have shown that the inclusion of all segments of society in the security sector institutions is crucial to rebuild people’s trust in the state, prevent the outbreak and escalation of violent conflicts and create an enabling environment for the withdrawal of peace operations.
- I would like to conclude by underling the need for Member States and the UN to address these persistent challenges by strengthening efforts to promote more coherent international assistance to the building of security institutions.