



Consultation on the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture Review 20–21st February 2020, Stockholm, Sweden

The workshop:

- The consultation was hosted by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Stockholm and opened by Johannes Olejund, Director-General for International Development Cooperation, and Annika Söder, member of the group of independent eminent persons;
- The meeting was well attended with 40 representatives from the European Union Special Representative (EUSR), the European Commission, European External Action Service (EEAS) representatives from Brussels and the field, the Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSGs) for the Central African Republic (CAR) and Somalia, Resident Coordinators (RCs) from Burkina Faso, Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Crisis Bureau, Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs) from Liberia and Ethiopia and several think tanks and civil society organizations (CSOs). The meeting concluded with final reflections from the Head of UN Policy Department at the Swedish MFA, Efraim Gomez, and SIPRI's Jago Salmon;
- The meeting focused on peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel with country discussions on Burkina Faso, Kyrgyz Republic and Jordan and breakouts on peace operation transitions and middle-income countries. The meeting focused particularly on EU–UN cooperation. SIPRI urged all inputs to be concrete, actionable and result-oriented;
- Speakers referred to 'Pathways for Peace', the 'Progress Study on Youth Peace and Security' and the UNDP report 'Journey from Extremism' as important frameworks, and repeatedly endorsed the AGE report findings of 2016.

Detailed issues and recommendations:

Summary of Conclusions

- The UN's Peacebuilding Architecture has proven to be a catalytic instrument for UN effectiveness on efforts to sustain peace. The Peacebuilding Architecture requires further support, particularly through demonstration of 'good peacebuilding donorship' to ensure sustainable, predictable and coherent funding to peacebuilding, including resources for the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).
- The Peacebuilding Architecture, however, cannot be the only instrument for advancing peacebuilding in the UN. Country cases show us that UN development system reforms are a critical vehicle for translating the 2016 resolutions into operational realities and that leadership of RCs and their capacities are key to preventing conflict and sustaining peace.
- Changes and developments in the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) are welcome, but greater efforts are needed to further advance member state (MS) and partner coherence on efforts to sustain peace. A focus on diplomatic engagement to build coalitions of support to countries, including with regional organizations and international financial institutions (IFIs), are an important addition to formal PBC sessions and procedures.
- Prevention must be an integral part of the Sustaining Peace Agenda.

Please note any key examples of how the UN has contributed to delivering on peacebuilding priorities, with an emphasis on impact and results in the field. Are there any examples demonstrating a more holistic approach to peace; greater connection across the UN system; emphasis on strengthening national capacities, using of the 'tools' of prevention available to the UN system (including PDAs, PBF and PBC etc.), better use of partnerships or improved financing?

RCs described country examples that demonstrated different models through which sustaining peace had been operationalized with the help of the Peacebuilding Architecture. These examples highlighted the context of specific country-led efforts (and as such how important decentralized leadership was), but also brought to the fore certain commonalities, including the centrality of reinforcing policy dialogue between government, partners and member states.

- **Burkina Faso:** Discussions underscored the importance of the development system reforms and the Peacebuilding Architecture working together to empower the RC to respond to risks of crisis in Burkina Faso. In 2016 when the Secretary-General (SG) announced a Sustaining Peace Initiative in Burkina Faso, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture responded with pledges of support, but no platform for coordination, no accountability amongst agencies and no plans involving partners. In 2019 after the development system reforms, the report of SRSR Chambas, the executive Task Force, the recurrent PBC meetings created accountability with agencies and government for efforts to sustain peace, and served as a 'trigger' for wider engagement with partners and donors on national resource needs through the Prevention and Peacebuilding Assessment undertaken by the UN, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the EU and the World Bank (WB).
- **Kyrgyz Republic:** Discussions highlighted the importance of the Peacebuilding Architecture, as a tool to reinforce RC-led policy dialogue with government over domestic peacebuilding priorities in a middle-income country. Participants described using UN mandates and instruments to build a dialogue with government, including security forces, over conflict analysis on tensions in border regions. This was reinforced in the case of **Ethiopia** where examples of relatively limited PBF funds being supplemented by national budgets enabled lesson learning on demobilization and built national ownership of peacebuilding actions.
- **Jordan:** Discussions highlighted the importance of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture supporting UN expertise and leadership in advocating partners to adopt coherent strategy and investment on efforts to sustain peace. In a country with \$1 billion of humanitarian investment, a large United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) budget and an extensive International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme under negotiation, the UN plays an extremely important influencing role with partners through evidence, and argument, on the impact these plans will have on peace.

Were there any reflections relevant to the 42 recommendations of the SG's 2018 Report to note?

The PBF's catalytic and risk-taking work was praised in several sessions. Participants highlighted that the fund needed more resources, but all agreed that the fund must focus on quality not quantity. As a catalytic and risk-taking fund, the fund needs to see how it can engage even more flexibly and quickly in fluid situations. Do we always need to have government requests for all envelopes, or can we think **creatively** around this?

- **Participants emphasized that it is wrong to describe peacebuilding as a competitor for financing.** Conflict leads to the blockage of money for peacebuilding priorities—both from national and international budgets—and it is often difficult to secure government ownership of peacebuilding activities. Peacebuilding programmes, when done effectively, are often low in resources, transaction heavy to initiate and complex to manage and implement. As a catalytic fund, peacebuilding funding is used as an instrument to adapt country programmes to changing context, rather than a source of major new resources.
- **It is important that the PBF recognizes that project level results are not sufficient.** Taking note of the above, policy dialogue and diplomacy to extend ownership over peacebuilding priorities

are as important as project results in ensuring that governments, member states and UN country teams (UNCTs) allocate resources to peacebuilding priorities. Projects funded by the PBF must be sustained and scaled up through UN or local/national actors, and national capacities must be built, to achieve impact.

- **A compact between IFIs, donors and the UN might help link catalytic funding to long-term programmatic frameworks to finance peacebuilding in relevant contexts.** Very often this compact should be tied to the economic situation in a country—donors invest a lot in peacebuilding but these investments do not always translate into governance gains or policy reforms that can achieve sustainable results.

Several good examples of how the Peacebuilding Architecture helps country operations mobilize partnerships were highlighted. These examples highlighted that when partnerships work, we can make things better for a country. When they do not work, we make further problems for the countries.

- **Partnerships have focused on strategy, assessment, and dialogue.** Many examples of partnerships demonstrated how the UN used partners to establish coherent strategies and dialogue with government. There is more potential to be explored in operational areas such as rule of law, justice and financing, perhaps also revisiting the conclusions of the Civilian Capacities Review.
- **Successful partnerships frameworks need to be designed so that national actors can implement and monitor.** While comprehensive partnerships such as the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPA) in CAR bring strategic vision together with expertise and money, when driven by donor priorities they create heavy processes that fragile governments suffering from capacity gaps cannot implement. As peacebuilding depends on national ownership, there needs to be a balance between technical processes and government ownership.
- **Strengthening the EU–UN partnership.** The EU–UN partnership has moved beyond peacekeeping into peacebuilding, but this partnership has to be scaled. Closer partnership on strategy and advice to governments was discussed. The UN as a normative actor was underlined and the EU could see value in the PBC as a forum for bringing cohesion to government action. A move towards more operational partnerships would require better and more granular analysis on objectives, comparative advantage and synergies. The relationship is not only institution-to-institution, member state forums also need to be linked. The EU’s recent support to the PBF, the first of its kind, was also highlighted.

RC leadership and capacities are key to maximizing the Peacebuilding Architecture’s impact on preventing conflict and sustaining peace. RCOs now have more capacity, PDAs, human rights advisors (HRAs) and senior economists, but there is an opportunity to reinforce accountability across the UNCT to the RCs on efforts to sustain peace.

- **The Peacebuilding Fund has been successful in empowering RCs...** PBF processes and financing were praised in several sessions as a tool for empowering RCs vis a vis the government and the UNCT. PBF has been successful at bringing UNCTs together around common priorities, but also in connecting them to the strategic vision in New York. This role of the PBF should be better utilized to foster integrated action.
- **... however, RCs should also be equipped to lead in peacebuilding situations.** Beyond financing, peacebuilding can learn from support structures and tools provided to Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HCO), on leadership, planning and assessment (peer-to-peer (P2P), humanitarian needs overview (HNO), humanitarian response plan (HRP)). RCs are responsible for both creating strategic entry points with host governments and bringing the UNCTs together around these priorities. This is inherently a political role, and RCs need to have relevant political/diplomatic competencies and easy access to regional missions, bodies and forums to fulfil these roles.

- **Operational examples of Sustaining Peace need to be linked to lesson learning and strategic planning capacity available to RCOs.** As operational examples of Sustaining Peace spread, it would be important to establish a lessons-documentation and learning capacity and 'doctrine building' focus within the UN. This capacity should be focused not just on programmatic or technical lessons but on critical operational questions.

What challenges were highlighted by the consultation?

The Peacebuilding Architecture has proven to be a vital vehicle, but it cannot be the only one. The whole UN system must take responsibility and work together on these issues.

- **Coordination is not a silver bullet.** Mechanisms like the Inter-Agency Task Forces and even the Executive Committee/Deputies Committee highlight the silos between UN actors as often as they break them.
- **Risks to instability are concentrated in areas of UN Agency Mandate and Capacity.** The PBF can help address underfunding, but questions of technical capacity, programmatic guidance and surge capacity lie within the core responsibilities of AFPs. UN agencies need to have programmes and offices that can produce data, provide technical advice and deliver projects at scale in order to deliver results.
- **It is important that the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) is duly implemented and continues to be mainstreamed throughout efforts to sustain peace, not as an afterthought but built into projects from the beginning.** This includes support to women peacebuilders delivering peace at the local level but also efforts to address structures and barriers in women's participation and leadership.
- **The Youth, Peace and Security Agenda also needs to be implemented systematically in all efforts to sustain peace.** The Peacebuilding Architecture needs to continue to ensure that UN efforts to build peace promote, and are coherent with, the UN's policy framework on peace and development.
- Through the **Gender Promotion Initiative (GPI) and the Youth Promotion Initiative (YPI)**, the PBF has demonstrated both impact on the ground, and promoted the UN's wider understanding of peace and development.

Human rights. This was raised not just as a normative question, but a practical question for the UN Peacebuilding Architecture—engagement with human rights should be part of UN risk management strategies on peacebuilding. Demonstrable national ownership of human rights diffuses investment risks with donors over sensitive areas, such as security sector investments.

- **Human rights balances national ownership in fluid situations.** Human rights should be part of the policy dialogue between RCs and government on peacebuilding, with national ownership of human rights norms used to determine how far the UN can work with government on peacebuilding. At a project level, monitoring abuse shows areas where the PBF can invest, it relaxes donors and diffuses investment risk, at a strategic level, special procedures and the Human Rights Council (HRC) resolutions must be taken into consideration when determining the nature of dialogue with government. Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA): whenever there is an RPBA request from government, there is a briefing from the Office of the United Nations high Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (what are the red lines)—the UN should consult with the OHCHR for analysis and information on peacebuilding programming. This is important for conflict sensitivity
- **Constructive engagement is about engaging with the country about risks.** To do this, we should empower civil society and talk about what can be done. Justice and human rights violations are key if we want peace to hold. These are critical peace dividends, as key as development (CAR).

Prevention must be an integral part of the Sustaining Peace Agenda. With rising risks of fragility and instability in middle- and high-income countries, many countries even with robust economic growth are only one crisis away from extensive fragility. We have seen in the past how one demonstration, one human rights abuse or one hurricane has moved countries into instability.

- **UN peacebuilding instruments need to move away from a binary understanding of crisis vs. non-crisis countries and focus more heavily on prevention and multi-dimensional fragility.** Early warning and early prevention need better tools and stronger investment from donors/MS. ‘PBC should use its double hinge’, in the words of the SG. Meaning, a hinge not only between the various intergovernmental organs, but also between intergovernmental bodies and the activities undertaken by the UN system.
- **Early prevention cannot be left to the development system alone.** While the 2016 resolutions defined peacebuilding as an activity across the conflict cycle, most of the tools of peace and security are only available in ‘late’ prevention when a crisis has already escalated. The connection between human rights and prevention should be explored and should be part of efforts to mitigate shocks and develop platforms for risk analysis in country.
- **Develop a dedicated focus on complex political transitions.** In the same way that the PBF is developing knowledge and examples of cross-border programming, funding, learning and partnerships should be invested in **mitigating shocks** coming from macroeconomic, security or political transitions.
- **In emerging crisis contexts, the UN should be able to rapidly mobilize political capacity and resources.** The UN has to have good insights about the next frontier, and has to be able to quickly respond. For this, the UN should be able to rapidly move political capacity, peacebuilding/peace resources and human resources into crisis contexts as they escalate. Prevention and peacebuilding efforts should in particular be integrated into peace operations from the beginning, not as an afterthought when scaling down etc.

Sustaining Peace needs to advance further in building member state coherence.

- **Where member states coalesce, we see action.** The SG’s report focuses on the technical (operational coherence) but delegating political problems to technical solutions does not work.
- **We need to think about the triggers and platforms for member state action—at global, regional and country levels.** The PBC was brought up by several speakers as an important platform to galvanize support and attract necessary attention (e.g. Liberia). Flexible format important: key role also beyond advising the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR). Fragile countries in the Horn also want to hear from those other than western countries (e.g. Turkey, Malaysia and Indonesia). This can be done through the PBC.
- **Member states must come together around countries managing Sustaining Peace initiatives, such as Burkina Faso, and align and agree on ways forward.** A ‘Compact’ could be established between IFIs, donors, EU and UN and government, and provide an approved basis for moving forward.

Progress on inclusive national ownership is needed. The ‘Sustaining Peace’ resolutions prioritized national ownership and helped destigmatize peacebuilding. National governments now want to engage with the Peacebuilding Architecture, this should be on the basis of inclusive national ownership at all levels.

- **The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) could be further utilized.** The PBC should advocate for an inclusive approach for peacebuilding across all levels and activities. Improvements could be made to ensure women’s participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in PBC meetings and deliberations. The WPS agenda must be universally integrated if sustained peace is to be achieved and not be understood as an add on.
- **Working beyond the central government.** While government approval is essential, sometimes the best results are reached through working with municipalities, communities, local actors, first responders, private sector and civil society. Engaging these groups sometimes requires working

outside of formal spaces—for instance, young people find it easier to engage in informal settings. The PBF has already started engaging these actors in its analysis and planning, and it is important that these practices are recognized and encouraged.

- **Inclusive national ownership means more than project implementation.** The UNCT under the leadership of the RC should engage a wide range of stakeholders in programme formulation and oversight and support the advocacy and networking efforts of civil society. Promoting access and influence of national and local actors is key.

Please highlight emerging recommendations (or possibilities for concrete recommendations worth further exploration).

Invest in multi-dimensional analysis and planning:

- **More field-based analysis:** Political analysis should take place in the field. With an increasing number of conflicts taking place in periphery regions, across borders or in urban areas, it should go beyond high politics at the inter- and intra-state level and invest in local level conflicts and their drivers. Common Country Analyses (CCAs) are increasingly emerging as a good tool for driving coherence and strategic action at the national level while opening space for dialogue through shared analysis within the UNCT and with government;
- **More regional analysis:** With the SG's reforms, the UN is increasingly able to link the national context to the regional context, as there is more regional capacity (Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), Development Coordination Office (DCO), UNDP etc.) and more conversations between UN's national and the regional engagements (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs–UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (UNOCA–MINUSCA), DCO regional hubs, RCs). There is also need for joint analysis, planning and capacities at the regional level (through regional capacities like PDAs), including on particular themes such as climate and security etc. This can help better define sub-regional and cross-border programming.

Lesson learning and strategic planning capacity:

- As operational examples of Sustaining Peace spread, working with RCs and across the UN, it would be important to establish a lessons-documentation and learning capacity with a 'doctrine building' focus within the UN. This capacity should be focused not just on programmatic or technical lessons but also on critical operational questions.

Support RC leadership, planning and assessment:

- RCs are responsible for both creating strategic entry points with host governments and bringing the UNCTs together around these priorities. Taking inspiration from humanitarian systems such as P2P, HNO, HRP, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture should provide training, methodologies and tools to reinforce RCs' capacity to lead peacebuilding policy dialogue, assessment and programming.

Ensure that inclusive national ownership is reflected in national plans:

- Several participants underscored the importance of peacebuilding priorities being integrated into national planning to secure national budgets and IFI financing. For example, in Burkina Faso the UN has helped the government move from requesting PBF eligibility to requesting the phase 1 of the PPBA, to requesting a phase 2 of the PPBA focused on the national development plan.

The UN should explore how IFIs, donors and the UN might enter into compacts with governments to provide long-term financing for peacebuilding.

- The need for sustainable, predictable and coherent funding to peacebuilding was highlighted by several speakers and reference was made to 'good peacebuilding donorship'. It is critical to work towards more coherent approaches within donor institutions and between donors and IFIs for financing peacebuilding. This includes departing from a common analysis.
- The PBF can improve demonstration of project results, by showing how PBF projects link to programmatic changes and catalyse efforts to address conflict dynamics.
- This compact should be tied to the economic situation in a country—donors invest a lot in peacebuilding but these do not always translate into governance gains.

The UN should revisit the Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and the Civilian Capacities Review in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

- **The AGE report and 2016 Resolutions focus on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture**, however, most sources of risk within countries lie within the mandate of specialized agencies, funds and programmes. To support the translation of improved coherence into results, the UN should revisit the conclusions of the CivCap review and the call for the 'UN to broaden and deepen the pool of civilian experts to support the immediate capacity development needs of countries emerging from conflict.'

Key individuals, reports or evaluations worth following up with for more detailed information?

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