

## High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Financing for Peacebuilding 27 and 29 April 2022 in the General Assembly Hall

### Introduction

The President of the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, convened a High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Financing for Peacebuilding in the General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters on Wednesday, 27 April 2022 and Friday 29 April 2022. The High-level Meeting was held pursuant to the twin resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, A/RES/75/201 and S/RES/2558 (2020), respectively, at the conclusion of the 2020 United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture Review.

As peacebuilding financing remains a critical challenge, the High-level Meeting aimed to advance, explore and consider options for ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly served as a platform for Member States to discuss and consider possible solutions and make commitments to address the identified financing gap for prevention and peacebuilding in the context of fast-changing, protracted and complex violent conflicts.

The High-level Meeting consisted of an opening segment, with ten keynote speakers from the United Nations, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the private sector and civil society, including one representative each from youth-led and women-led organizations.

The plenary segment consisted of statements by 70 Member States, including 3 ministers, 2 vice-ministers, 2 high-ranking officials and 63 Member States. Six groups delivered statements: Bangladesh on behalf of the *Non-Aligned Movement*, Egypt on behalf of the *African Group*, the *European Union*, Fiji on behalf of the *Pacific Islands Forum*, the Netherlands on behalf of the *Feminist Foreign Policy Group* and aligned Member States,<sup>1</sup> and Egypt on behalf of a cross-regional group.<sup>2</sup>

This summary aims to capture the main messages that were highlighted during the plenary, and to reflect what was echoed, shared and emphasized with regard to addressing the financial gap in the peacebuilding sector, by Member States and relevant stakeholders.

### Opening Segment

**The President of the General Assembly, H.E. Abdulla Shadid**, underlined that peacebuilding is one of the most effective tools of the United Nations, both financially and humanly, to confront the changing nature of conflict involving complex cross-border dynamics; climate change; and the COVID-19 pandemic, to name a few. What began as a concept in the 1970s has

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<sup>1</sup> Feminist Foreign Policy + Group members: Albania, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Israel, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Tunisia; aligned Member States: Chile and Rwanda.

<sup>2</sup> 108 Member States of the African Group and the European Union, in addition to Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Lichtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, The Philippines, Qatar, The Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Yemen.

evolved into what is now a vital pillar for both conflict prevention and post-conflict rebuilding. The President invited all Member States to use this High-Level Meeting as an opportunity to explore all available avenues of financing instruments to ensure adequate, sustainable and predictable financing for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including through partnerships with regional organizations, International Financial Institutions, private sector, public-private partnership as well as the South-South and Triangular Cooperation. He also reminded Member States that peacebuilding is primarily a national challenge and responsibility, that is essential to achieve success and sustainability.

**Under Secretary-General for policy, Mr. Volker Türk**, underscored the growing peacebuilding financing gap as the resources are dependent on voluntary contributions from donors while the needs keep on rising. He called on Member States to make concrete commitments around several proposals highlighted in the Secretary-General's report, in particular the appropriation of \$100 million in assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund. He stressed that donors should invest at least 20 percent of Official Development Assistance in peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries and support the role of women and youth in prevention and peacebuilding, including through support to local peacebuilding efforts and by committing to but preferably exceeding the target of at least 15 percent of investments dedicated to address women's specific needs, gender equality and women's empowerment. Member States were also encouraged to explore innovative mechanisms to finance peacebuilding, including through blending public and private financial resources, and establishing partnerships with the private sector, which has a huge role and interest in creating conditions for peace.

**The President of the Security Council H.E. Barbara Woodward** mentioned that the Security Council and the General Assembly recognized in 2016 that peacebuilding must involve the entire UN system and encouraged Member States to consider a range of options in this High-Level Meeting. She mentioned that peacebuilding requires a broad set of financing instruments and cited the Secretary-General's report by encouraging Member States to explore several means of financing peacebuilding including through public-private partnership, partnership with regional and sub regional organizations, IFIs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). To conclude, she welcomed the Peacebuilding Commission's letter encouraging Member States to ensure adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding for peacebuilding.

**The President of the Economic and Social Council, H.E. Collen Vixen Kelapile**, recalled the need for member states to hold themselves accountable to the assurances given in Addis Ababa in 2015 that they would step up their efforts to assist countries in accessing financing for peacebuilding and development. To provide predictable and adequate development assistance to address emergency and longer-term needs, he echoed the call made by USG Türk to development partners to contribute at least 20 percent of their ODA to peacebuilding priorities in post-conflict settings. He also stressed the need for greater collaboration of ECOSOC with other intergovernmental bodies, including the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council.

**The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Rabab Fatima** outlined the recommendations of the Commission to help ensure adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for peacebuilding, contained in the letter of the Commission, which was transmitted to the General Assembly on 21 April 2022. She voiced concerns about the growing gap in

peacebuilding financing, reiterating the need to ensure that recovery and sustainable development efforts are conflict sensitive and promote peacebuilding. She also underlined that the demand for support from the Peacebuilding Fund is exceeding its resources and recommended that the donor base for peacebuilding should be broadened and diversified. She advocated for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth and the improvement of the financial support for countries in transition phases. She stressed the importance of “good peacebuilding financing” through stronger partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions, bilateral partners, traditional and non-traditional donors, civil society organizations, local peacebuilding stakeholders and the private sector and through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

**The Director of the Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group at the World Bank, Ms. Soukeyna Kane** recalled the strong engagement of the World Bank on the Fragility, Conflict and Violence agenda and to find new ways to adapt to challenging and volatile situations. She pointed out that the World Bank works closely with partners with complementary mandates, including the UN, to support governments to achieve their commitments. On financing, she mentioned that the World Bank’s financial support to fragile and conflict countries increased four-fold, from \$3.9 billion in 2015 to \$15.8 billion in 2020.

**The Deputy Director of the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Franck Bousquet** underlined IMF’s readiness to do its part as a multilateral institution established to promote prosperity and economic stability. He reiterated the IMF’s readiness to complement development, humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts through its mandate and core activities, and willingness to collaborate with the UN for tailor-made engagements at the country level.

**Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Ms. Carole Kariuki** underlined the important contribution of the local private sector to peacebuilding. It includes economic influence and political contacts; financial resources; information; peace and mediation; capacity to drive balanced development; and connections at all levels of society.

**Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Ms. Mavic Cabrera-Balleza** regretted the fact that despite proving themselves as peacebuilders and frontliners, local women peacebuilders remain undervalued and their activities underfunded. She called for better representation of women in peacebuilding efforts and for their recognition as real peacebuilding partners. She also called for adequate, long-term and flexible funding that caters for women’s meaningful engagement from the design phase.

**Founder and Executive Director of URU, Ms. Martine Kessy Ekomo-Soignet**, underlined the importance of significantly supporting young women and men in designing and implementing the peace agenda. She called on Member States to commit to allocating a minimum percentage of funding to local peacebuilding, especially to support youth and women-led organizations. She also stressed the need to ensure longer-term and more flexible funding mechanisms to directly support local peacebuilding, and to make a strong commitment to the protection of local peacebuilders, including youth and women, through collaborative mechanisms and adequate and dedicated funding.

## Plenary

Member States in their interventions conveyed the following points:

- **Peacebuilding** is not only about providing security and stability in affected territories, but also *about healing society and rebuilding trust in governance*.
- Secretary-General's report (A/76/668-S/2022/66) on peacebuilding and sustaining peace" was frequently referred to and the need for *adequate, sustainable, flexible and predictable financing* for prevention and peacebuilding to yield better results was highlighted.
- *Broadening of the donor base* of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was urged. Donors were also requested to provide financing to the PBF via *multi-year commitments to result in more predictable and sustainable financing streams*.
- Peacebuilding Fund's (PBF) catalytic and multiplier effect was underlined and the need for additional contributions to the PBF which could include *assessed contributions was called for*.
- To respond coherently to country-specific contexts, *strengthening partnerships* with regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society, including women and youth organizations on the ground was underlined .
- *Inclusion of women and youth in all stages of peace processes and peacebuilding programmatic interventions*, including by ensuring adequate, accessible and appropriate funding mechanisms, as they are primary actors in achieving and sustaining peace.
- *Proposals mentioned in Secretary-General's Report (A/76/668-S/2022/66), as well as his report on the "Our Common Agenda" were supported*, highlighting the urgency in seeking a breakthrough for a better future for people and the planet through increase in investments in prevention and peacebuilding.
- Commended the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), including in transition settings, as well as in providing advice to the Security Council.
- It was mentioned that *PBCs convening power and PBFs projects were at the center of the UN's future role in peace stability*, and revitalizing the prevention agenda.
- PBC to enhance partnerships with various international, regional, national and local actors, mobilizing political commitment and resources and promoting inclusivity of peacebuilding activities.
- *Aligning peacebuilding efforts with development work* was called for as the basis for greater alignment of the whole UN system and host countries, opening much larger financing streams.
- Need for an *effective peacebuilding architecture that is responsive to varying climate-related security risks* which are compounding and exacerbating existing security challenges was highlighted.
- *Benefits of assessed contributions* towards adequate, sustainable and predictable financing for peacebuilding was affirmed. While calling for the need to expand the donor base it was stressed that *voluntary contributions are not enough*.
- *Strong support was expressed for the Secretary-General's recommendation to allocate \$100 million of assessed contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund*, while also calling for the *consideration of all financing options through innovative means*. Fifth Committee to consider the modalities of the assessed contributions.

- It was emphasized that the *peacebuilding process must be aligned with the principles of national ownership*.
- *Openness to the use of assessed funding was highlighted, provided that such funding is used for core operating costs of the UN.*
- Oversight of the fund by the Advisory Group of the Peacebuilding Fund was questioned.
- It was also mentioned that PBF supported projects many a time do not pay adequate attention to sustainable development and underlined the importance of matching resource allocation to specific needs with greater precision and avoid duplication with the work and efforts of several UN special political missions and peacekeeping operations.
- The lack of effective participation of Member States in the governance of the PBF was highlighted and that assessed contribution was not the ideal way forward.
- Contributions that peacekeeping operations and special political missions make to peacebuilding was highlighted and it was emphasized for the need to enhance programmatic funding for peacekeeping operations in support of peacebuilding priorities.
- *An action-oriented outcome of the High-level Meeting* as stated by the twin resolutions was called for *through a process of intergovernmental negotiations by appointing co-facilitators*.