

Joint Meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission

“Peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development: Towards coherence and impact on the ground”

Friday, 2 December 2022

Informal Summary

On 2 December 2022, the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), H.E. Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith, co-chaired the annual joint meeting of the ECOSOC and the PBC on “Peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development: Towards coherence and impact on the ground”. The meeting focused on how the Agencies, Funds and Programmes (AFPs) respond to multidimensional challenges and are contributing to peacebuilding and sustaining peace and promoting long term development in conflict-affected contexts, as well as how coherence and impact can be further enhanced on the ground. Building on the work of the AFPs in the area of peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development, the joint ECOSOC and PBC meeting aimed to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in conflict-affected contexts through UN coherence guided by national ownership and priorities.

Representatives of Member States, United Nations (UN), and other stakeholders attended the meeting. The opening remarks by the ECOSOC President were followed by in person and virtual briefings by United Nations Development Program (UNDP), International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN-Women, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Program (WFP), The Chair of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti and the President of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board as well as the representatives of the Justice Call and Fund for Congolese Women participated as respondents. The meeting was concluded by the Chair of the PBC.

In her opening remarks, **the President of the ECOSOC, H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva**, noted that multiple crises and conflicts have increased food insecurity, forced displacement, and exacerbated inequalities and humanitarian needs. She emphasized that improved cooperation of humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) interventions lead to better results, and united efforts in HDP objectives can play a critical role in reducing risks and building resilience. Thus, identifying opportunities to promote early recovery, reconstruction, and stabilization, will enable countries to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strengthen resilience against future shocks. She urged strengthened efforts to addressing root causes of conflict, focusing on enhancing interoperability between UN entities and data-sharing to help build synergies. She also underscored the critical role of development financing’s abilities to prevent conflicts and support durable peace, while noting the importance of funding partners to enable pooling of funds and scale up humanitarian and development funding to achieve integrated support.

Assistant Secretary General and Director of Crisis Bureau of UNDP, Ms. Asako Okai, stressed that the trends of backsliding global Human Development, intensifying conflicts, and protracted cycles of fragility need to be stopped and reversed. She offered three considerations on how to achieve this objective: 1) enhancing integrated action, for which UNDP seeks to further drive system-wide cross-pillar collaboration, especially in terms of the HDP nexus approach. As conflicts are increasingly rooted in multidimensional development deficit, UNDP deploys a full-spectrum approach to help countries anticipate, prevent, respond to, and recover from crisis; 2) re-imagining a resourcing model that incentivizes preventive, holistic, and coordinated engagement, utilizing creative ways of engaging more diverse actors; and 3) strengthening multilateralism, in which Member States must lead to transform the environment in which they operate to promote human security. Further, she urged to utilize data and digital solutions as tools for inclusion to maximize the use of dialogue as an instrument for peace.

Special Representative of the IMF to the United Nations, Mr. Robert Powell, warned about the global ripple effects caused by multiple intersecting crises. He informed about the IMF's new Strategy for engagement with 40 fragile and conflict-affected countries. He acknowledged macroeconomic policies facing a unique set of challenges in fragile states, as fragility and conflict are linked to trends such as climate change, food insecurity and persistent gender inequalities. Thus, IMF is supporting the countries exit from fragility and to achieve macroeconomic stability, enhance resilience, strengthen governance, and promote inclusive growth. The new Strategy emphasizes the role of partnerships with humanitarian, development, peace and security actors, including AFPs. He also informed about the Country Engagement Strategies, which are a crucial for identifying the key drivers of fragility and conflict, as well as leveraging analyses and expertise to better tailor engagement.

UN-Women Deputy Executive Director for Policy, Programme, Civil Society and Intergovernmental Support and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ms. Åsa Regnér, stressed that the inclusion of women in decision-making and crisis-response expands the reach and impact to achieving sustainable peace and development for all. Importantly, the inclusion of women in all stages of peacebuilding programming will ensure women peacebuilders as equal partners and not only as beneficiaries. Thus, gender analysis should inform policies, programming, and budget allocations. She also highlighted the following: 1) the imperative to invest in creating safe and enabling environments for women human rights defenders; 2) the need for increased investments to support gender-responsive peacebuilding, and women-led and women's rights organizations in fragile and conflict-affected countries; and 3) the need to promote women's participation everywhere where underrepresented through temporary special measures, in alignment with the New Agenda for Peace.

In a recorded message, **Director-General of IOM, Mr. António Vitorino**, acknowledged multidimensional crises causing increased displacement, demonstrating the link between human mobility, development, and conflict, which IOM explores through research and innovative pilot projects. Thus, IOM's data is being used to analyze conflict patterns, prevent violence and to enable long-term development. He underlined IOM's peacebuilding and stabilization efforts being community-driven, participatory, and empowering, and highlighted the community-based

planning approach as a basis to build inclusive bottom-up local development plans. He concluded that inter-agency collaboration with relevant partners is critical, therefore IOM supports the RC/HC system in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Iraq for operationalizing durable solutions for internally displaced persons, which exemplifies IOM's commitment to enhance the coherence of the UN.

H.E. Mr. Richard Arbeiter, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, took the floor on behalf of H.E. Mr. Robert Rae, Chair of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, and underscored the importance for AFPs to work in synergy in support of peacebuilding and development. He noted the challenges the international community is still facing in Haiti. He underscored that future approaches must be Haitian-led, and analysis, policy and programmatic responses must be holistic and non-siloed. Thus, the UNCT's and BINUH's single window for engagement is critical for coordination and integrated action to achieve sustainable peace and long-term development. He underscored the need for an integrated approach to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), prioritizing a survivor-centered approach. The role of the international financial institutions (IFIs) in financing socio-economic development was also emphasized. He acknowledged the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, the UNDP Basket Fund and the UN Flash Appeal as opportunities for coordination, integration and enhanced collaboration in Haiti. He concluded with three reflections: 1) the need to centering gender and gender analysis in all actions; 2) the need to focus on human rights to achieve sustainable peace and development; and 3) the need for holistic prevention and peacebuilding support.

Executive Director of Justice Call, Mr. Khaled Emam, stated that the UN played an important role on youth inclusion and leadership in achieving the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda, but a constructive effort to operationalize commitments is yet to be seen. Youth participation in formal peace processes is limited due to continuous lack of trust in the peacebuilding capacities of youth, the absence of effective localization of the YPS Agenda, and limited systematic partnership mechanisms between local peacebuilders and international partners. He shared the following recommendations: 1) meaningful inclusion of youth in leadership roles in peace processes and AFP programming; 2) guarantees to protect young peacebuilders; and 3) providing accessible, equitable, and effective financing for young peacebuilders. Last, he encouraged the UN to invest more in youth-led peacebuilding solutions to enhance local impact, coherence, and sustainability.

Deputy Executive Director/Partnerships of UNICEF, Ms. Karin Hulshof, informed that in 2020 more than 450 million children were living in a conflict zone, bearing the brunt of the impacts as the most vulnerable. She underscored UNICEF's contribution to peacebuilding and prevention given the dual humanitarian and development mandate, decentralized presence, as well as being one of the largest operational UN agencies present before, during, and after conflict. She informed that UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025 integrates humanitarian and development programming, and peacebuilding as a cross-cutting priority. She emphasized UNICEF's comparative advantage in building and sustaining peace, focusing on the socio-economic side of social cohesion by ensuring equitable and inclusive delivery and effective management of basic social services. Last, she noted that UNICEF has developed conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding programming, but more can be done. In that regard, UNICEF was in the process of developing a new Global

Peacebuilding Framework to accelerate implementation, enhance peacebuilding programming across its core sectoral work, and enable to better track results.

Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA, Mr. Ib Petersen, informed that UNFPA supports sustainable peace by addressing root causes of conflict and enhancing social cohesion and trust in public institutions. He emphasized sustainable peace as a precondition for realizing universal access to family planning, reducing maternal mortality, and eliminating SGBV. Therefore, conflict-sensitivity and peacebuilding are integrated in UNFPA's Strategic Plan 2022-2025. He highlighted the need to prioritizing inclusion to build and sustain lasting peace. Further, he noted the PBSO's invaluable role in bringing together AFPs to the peacebuilding table, as well as the critical impact of the PBF investing in equality. He reiterated that by locally- and nationally-led efforts, breaking the silos, ensuring cooperation at all levels, as well as refocusing and increasing the efforts, there is a real opportunity to enhance impact across the HDP nexus. In this regard, repositioning of the development system is an opportunity for peacebuilding.

In a recorded message, **Executive Director of WFP, Mr. David M. Beasley**, warned about the fallout of global hunger crises everywhere. Due to an upsurge of conflict, the lingering pandemic, climate change and inflation, all further exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, 349 million people worldwide are headed for starvation, 200 million more than before the pandemic, with 150 million of them being children, and 49 million people in 49 countries on the brink of famine. He underscored the imperative to enhance joint efforts to tackle the root causes of conflict, recognizing the vicious cycle of food insecurity and armed conflict and instability. He acknowledged the impact of enhanced food security on calming tensions, strengthening communities, and creating social cohesion. He noted that the PBF is forging new partnerships in this area, including through joint programming, but scaling up resources is urgently needed. He called on ECOSOC, PBC, and Member States to work with WFP in the critically important endeavor of investing in peace.

The President of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board, H.E. Ms. Yoka Brandt, emphasized that the UN entities should strengthen each other and to better deliver on sustainable development and peace. She mentioned the DPPA-UNDP joint programme, designed to build national capacities for conflict prevention, as a successful example bringing the UN peace architecture and development system together. She underscored the need to ensuring inclusivity in all actions, including identifying inclusive participation opportunities in peace processes. She noted the issue of AFPs confronting a capability gap when peacekeeping missions draw down or close, placing sustainability and efficacy of peacebuilding efforts at risk. To mitigate this, adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing is key. She noted the declining core resources with a concern, which must be reversed. She highlighted improvements in cooperation among the AFPs, but encouraged to further increase synergies, as well as joint planning and implementation.

Executive Director of Fund for Congolese Women, Ms. Julienne Lusenge, noted that the support of the UN gives women the opportunity to have leadership roles. However, many challenges remain, such as short-term funding for projects, which is not sufficient to build sustainable peace. She stressed that full participation of women in peacebuilding is needed to address issues such as SGBV, persistent inequalities, and social disparities in communities. She noted that the lack of inclusion of women in planning processes for peacebuilding interventions remain problematic. She called for increased funding for organizations working on the ground, as

well as harmonization of donor reporting and programmes. She also called for improving local peace initiatives by strengthening support to women peace activists to serve as mediators at the local level, as well as participatory research and integration of the gender perspective in peacebuilding processes to eliminate degrading social norms and to adapt the specific needs of women.

Interventions from the floor

Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations and recommendations:

- They stressed that multidimensional crises demand multidimensional solutions and recognized the interlinkages between peace, security, development, and human rights, as well as noted the adverse impacts of climate change and food insecurity on sustainable peace and development.
- They underscored the critical work of the AFPs in prevention, peacebuilding and development. They called for systematic alignment and cooperation among the humanitarian, development and peace actors to leverage complementarity of actions and for a timely coordinated response. In this regard, they encouraged further coherence through analysis, strategic guidance, plans, and by strengthening the Resident Coordinator system. They also called for generating clearly articulated Peacebuilding and Development Strategy, that can provide a common frame of reference for peacebuilding agents as well as including language on building and sustaining peace in the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).
- They urged the AFPs, within their respective mandates, adapting and responding to local contexts while strengthening national ownership and leadership. Thus, they expressed that coherence and multilateralism should be guided by national ownership and priorities as well as active engagement of all actors across the society.
- They called for strategic assessment of the drivers and root causes of instability, highlighting the need to expanding the UN's preventive capacity in that regard while noting the lack of resources for prevention.
- They called for leveraging the concepts of climate resilient peacebuilding and conflict sensitive adaption optimally to advance prevention and the 2030 Agenda, particularly in conflict-prone countries.
- They called for increased sustainable, adequate, predictable and flexible financing, and that the funding streams should be well coordinated to support a holistic approach. They acknowledged the call of General Assembly resolution on Financing for Peacebuilding to mobilize predictable and sufficient financing to help effectively build and sustaining peace. They also noted the pivotal roles of the PBC and the PBF in financing in conflict-affected contexts for further impact and coherence on the ground. In that regard, they recommended Member States considering opportunities for cooperation with the PBC and the PBF during the deliberation of the governing bodies of the AFPs.

- They called for increased inclusion in peacebuilding, such as through strengthening the meaningful participation and leadership of women in line with the WPS Agenda. They encouraged the UN to include women as a requirement in all mediation, political and peace processes as leads or co-leads.
- They called for strengthening the active participation of youth in peacebuilding.
- They emphasized the need for broad system-wide partnerships and coordinated responses across the UN system, regional and subregional organizations, IFIs, and civil society. They encouraged further collaboration with IFIs, regional institutions, and private sector to bridge the funding gap for sustainable peace and development.
- They noted the PBC's unique potential within its mandate to advise and coordinate relevant actors within and outside the UN. They also recognized the increasing relevance of the PBC to help generate political and financial support to peace and development objectives and urged to further promote the PBC and communicate its impact and value.
- ECOSOC was called on to more actively request the PBC to provide advice to get a better view of changing circumstances and needs on the ground and take advantage of the PBC as a platform to discuss how the UN country team can be strengthened. They also encouraged the ECOSOC to enhance partnerships.

In his closing remarks, **the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, H.E. Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith**, emphasized that the UN system must work collectively to support Member States' efforts in a coordinated and coherent manner to build and sustain peace. He noted the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework as an effective point of convergence in moving beyond siloed approaches to coordinate actions among peace, development and humanitarian actors. He also underlined the importance of partnerships with IFIs in facilitating coordinated and coherent support to achieve nationally determined peacebuilding goals. Furthermore, he underscored that adequate, predictable, and sustained peacebuilding funding has remained a major challenge, and called for increased investments to support climate-resilient peacebuilding and conflict-sensitive adaptation measures. In this regard, he highlighted the role of the PBF serving as a critical instrument to finance nationally-owned conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.