

**Checklist for Deputy Head of PBSO Ms. Awa Dabo's participation in the 2022 Operational Activities for Development Segment of the United Nations ECOSOC Session 6 - Informal Session B - Dialogue with resident coordinators and UN Country Teams: addressing root causes of conflict and of humanitarian crises to achieve sustainable development ECOSOC Chamber, 19 May 2022, 9:00-11:20 AM**

*Note: The panellists are requested to engage in a dialogue on the question, rather than make a presentation.*

**What are good practices of partnerships across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities and how can these be replicated further? What challenges remain and how can they be overcome? How is the UN partnering with IFIs to ensure humanitarian and peace actions address root causes of violence/conflict with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at its core? (4 minutes)**

- **Firstly Mr. Moderator, let me start by stating the obvious, which is prevention, peace building and sustaining peace, are central tenets in the three pillars of the UN's work, within humanitarian, development, and peace contexts. Prevention, peace building and sustaining peace are at the heart of the UN's response to conflict.**
- In this regard, let me also state that PBSO's **strategic hinge role** is essential in bringing together UN system-wide coherence to responding to conflict. This connectivity of the hinge role **allows for coherence in analysis, planning, programming and delivery - amongst the diverse UN actors** - to support national priorities, and in partnership with our key non-UN actors. Leveraging its support to the PBC, its management of the PBF and through its thought leadership on sustaining peace and peace building as well as its strategic partnerships, PBSO is well placed to facilitate a comprehensive response to peace building challenges. And there lies our first challenge, which is to strengthen our hinge role, to operationalize this "hinge" for stronger and more marked results on the ground. And we at PBSO are up to this challenge, embarking on a process to strengthen the operationalisation of our "hinge role", riding on the tremendous successes of our work with the PBC, the PBF and on policy and partnerships, but also taking into account the evolving world realities including the re-energized call for a more integrated, coordinated and effective UN.

- Mr. Moderator, picking up on your question about challenges and opportunities, let me raise a few others. **A first obvious challenge is the need to better understand the root causes and drivers of conflict, to identify the enabling actions needed to resolve often long seated conflicts, and to ensure that solutions are long lasting with little or no likelihood of a relapse into crisis.** Well, a quick scan of the world we live in today would tell us that this is no means, an easy task. In many regions and countries, we continue to see the eroding of democratic and peacebuilding gains, and a relapse into crisis, or a teetering towards crisis. An effective response to crisis requires the depth and breath of understanding of the genesis of a crisis (historical, geopolitical, socio-economic, etc), that most crisis actors often struggle to find. The UN's CCA and cooperation frameworks are of course excellent tools with which we can not only develop strong analysis to better understand root causes, and incorporate a prevention lens, we also have our humanitarian needs overviews, as well as our humanitarian response plans to do the same thing. **The challenge** is the availability of time (in the face of urgent and competing priorities and the need to act NOW); the challenge is the availability of strong enough analysis, and within it, the understanding of the crisis, knowledge that is often scattered amongst the multiple UN and non-UN actors that operate in these contexts; the challenge is the adequacy financial resources and human capacity to ensure that the job is done well. Whilst we continue to advocate for more resources for peacebuilding, we at the UN keep working towards bolstering complementarity amongst the different funding sources. These include the global pooled funds such as PBF, CERF, and the Joint SDG Fund – all of which go a long way in working to address root causes of risks and vulnerabilities, and to strengthen national capacities to deliver for more resilient, inclusive, and peaceful societies.
- Let me skip to an opportunity and in this, I'd like to highlight what we all know, which is the importance of the Peace Building Commission as **a platform for enhanced coherence and cross-pillar collaboration, an effective tool** for the points I just raised. Today, at the PBC - SRSRs, DSRs and Special Envoys, make up nearly one third of all UN briefers. The percentage of senior UN briefers has increased from 3.6 per cent in 2020, to 17.6 per cent in 2021- indicating that the Commission is an increasingly important platform for development-focused discussions, within conflict-affected countries and regions. **These more frequent briefings from UN officials have helped to enhance the understanding of the important role of CCAs and UN cooperation frameworks, and how they can support national peacebuilding priorities.** Allowing for more diverse participation at the PBC with briefers from civil society, private sector and IFIs, encourages a richness of the discussions, and certainly a more holistic understanding of issues, as well as the elements needed to respond to them. PBSO sees great value in the PBC, and we are working hard with the PBC in support of its programme of work, as well as continued discussions on creative and more innovative ways, to better support the relevant national and regional contexts.

- **My third point is on strategic, meaningful and effective partnerships**, specifically with IFIs such as the World Bank. Like most things, this is a challenge as well as an opportunity. **The UN and the World Bank have deepened their partnership** in crisis-affected situations in recent years, having collaborated in nearly 50 settings, including implementing actions to operationalize the **United Nations-World Bank Pathways for Peace report**. PBSO saw great opportunity in this partnership and took it forward with the establishment of the **Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding and Partnership Facility**. The HDPP Facility provides small grants in support of data analysis and assessments, and specialized capacities, to respond to crisis. The HDPP Facility has shown that the strategic use of a little bit of money can go a long way towards a more coherent UN dialogue with IFIs. This is essential in fleshing out our joint priorities. **Since 2020, the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding and Partnership Facility provided 29 grants in crisis-affected settings, for a total of \$3.8 million.**
- Similarly, the **IMF is also an increasingly valuable strategic partner** in efforts to better address fragility and conflict risks. The development by the IMF of a **fragile and conflict-affected States strategy**, promises to provide a strong basis to improve our collective support for inclusion and resilience, in the face of compounded risks.
- Generally, with regards to our work with IFIs, a challenge is finding a more consistent way in which the **UN can work with them**. Whilst not all IFIs are the same, as already indicated above, I think we can all agree that a joint and deep understanding of the contexts, through joint analysis and data, as provided by the HDPP Facility, is a good place to start. This analysis should include a shared understanding of drivers of fragility and conflict. With this as a basis, we are better placed to formulate joint practical actions, that are informed by the bigger picture, and that are less ad hoc in nature.
- And also on this point, let me add that **PBSO welcomes the increasing close collaboration between RCs and IFIs, to ensure common understanding, and to develop strategies to address root causes of instability, consolidate prevention efforts and strengthen resilience**. PBSO's HDP Partnership Facility can facilitate this collaboration.
- Finally, and again, on partnerships, and going beyond IFIs, to include UN and non-UN partners, we continue to work towards a strengthened HDP NEXUS. We see that there needs to be **greater incentives to integrate the nexus approach**, including by strengthening roles of HC/RCs/RCOs, by ring fencing sufficient financial resources to address Nexus specificities, by having accountability mechanisms for UNCTs, and by demonstrating the added value of the Nexus approach to our member states.

**What are examples of successful multi-year and unearmarked contributions to pooled funds and mechanisms that enhanced the predictability of long-term investment in cross-pillar work? (4 minutes)**

- On this, let me highlight the Peace building Fund which sits within PBSO. The General Assembly created the PBF as part of the Peacebuilding Architecture in 2005. **Since then, it has invested over \$1.6 billion across four focus areas.** The Fund has consistently received high marks from several stakeholders. Its average annual approvals have steadily grown through time, and voluntary contributions have increased consistently since 2016, amount to **\$178 million in 2021.** However, the Fund is not yet reaching the level of \$500 million annually called for by the Secretary-General and targeted by the Funding Compact. To achieve the target of the Fund's current Strategy 2020-24, contributions will need to rise further by roughly 35 per cent per year. To increase the predictability of the Fund's resources, the Secretary-General has proposed to the Fifth Committee that it should appropriate \$100 million in assessed funding to the PBF.
- **We understand that multi-year and unearmarked contributions to the PBF enhanced the predictability of long-term investment in cross-pillar work.** For the current strategy period of 2020-2024, 15 out of 46 donors have made multi-year commitments to the Fund, representing 74% of total funds committed and pledged for the current strategy period. With less than 50% of the \$1.5 billion target for the current strategy period secured to date, more multi-year commitments are required to support forward planning and flexibility of the Fund.
- Through multi-year and unearmarked contributions, amid deteriorating political and security conditions, and against the backdrop of the continuing pandemic, the PBF invested a record-high amount of \$195 million in 32 countries in 2021. Support to cross-border or regional programming of \$26.6 million, also a record high, signalling the growing recognition of the challenges of transboundary conflict factors to sustaining peace. Approval of \$51.1 million through the Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, also a record, resulted in the Fund's historic high of approving 47 per cent of its total investments in support of gender-responsive peacebuilding. Donors contributed or pledged \$178 million in 2021. The Fund's ability to meet growing peacebuilding demands, however, will require greater and sustained support.
- When the SG declares a country eligible to receive funds from the PBF, a period of five years is granted which permits the **PBF to provide longer-term support.**

- Since 2014, PBF has invested over \$40 million in Colombia mostly through the UN Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Post-Conflict in Colombia. With PBF funding, the UNCT has supported the Government in catalytic initiatives for meeting some of the commitments under the 2016 peace agreement, focusing on economic recovery and youth empowerment, social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants, transitional justice, and innovative financing through private sector investments in conflict-affected areas. In one flagship pilot project, innovative financing initiatives have been tested to leverage additional investments for peace. Following the Fund's initial \$3 million investment in relation to the reintegration of ex-combatants, an additional \$13.2 million in private sector investment has been leveraged to improve the socioeconomic conditions of 4,500 ex-combatants, victims and community members in conflict-affected areas.
- Fund investment in Mali helped to ensure the establishment and operation of much-needed legal infrastructure related to human rights and land-based conflict. Through a joint effort of OHCHR, UN-Women, UNDP and Interpeace, 46 land-related disputes in central Mali were resolved through mediation by newly established land commissions. The PBF also supported reducing social and political exclusion that leads to grievances and fuels conflict. Following an initiative of FAO, UNDP and UN-Women to support more youth-responsive local development plans, 83 per cent of young people in six communities in central Mali reported satisfaction with their improved socioeconomic conditions. At the policy level, a national youth policy was drafted and validated at a national youth conference through a partnership between the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Civic Education and Citizenry Construction, UNICEF and Search for Common Ground. The policy is aimed at fostering trust among national and local leaders, authorities and young people through a broader institutionalized approach.
- A General Assembly High-Level Meeting was convened on 27 April 2022 to discuss adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. Member States expressed strong support for peacebuilding as a core UN responsibility and recognized financing as a critical enabler, underscoring working across the nexus. Many called for action-oriented outcomes in considering all options, including voluntary, assessed and innovative sources and commitment towards spending more ODA on peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries and increasing support for local peacebuilders.
- In mid-April 2022, PBSO launched the Peacebuilding Funding Dashboard, which can be accessed through our website. The dashboard includes a number of HQ-based pooled funds and aims to increase transparency and coherence among them.