



**ECOSOC**

United Nations Economic and Social Council

**TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES**

**Joint Meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)  
and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)  
on the Linkages between Climate Change and Challenges to  
Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace**

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**Closing Remarks**

**H.E. Ambassador Inga Rhonda King  
President of the Economic and Social Council**

**Tuesday, 13 November 2018, 10:00  
Conference Room 2**

Distinguished guests,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the conclusion of our joint meeting, I would like to thank our speakers for their invaluable contribution to today's discussion.

As it was repeatedly said, climate change is one of the greatest challenges we currently face.

[The Sahel is one of the regions most affected by climate change. We were reminded of the multiple challenges the region faces, including those related to security, humanitarian, development and good governance. This situation calls for accelerated efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063. Implementing the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) – which is largely aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - is part and parcels of this endeavour. I am grateful that the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, so eloquently briefed us on ongoing efforts to implement the Strategy, notably in the areas of agriculture and renewable energy, as well as of remaining challenges.

We also heard the perspectives and experiences of local communities affected by climate change from a young woman activist from Chad and the mayor of Dori, a town in north-eastern Burkina Faso. Involving local communities, particularly women and the youth who bear the brunt of the effects of climate change, is key in finding solutions. This is critical to support our efforts to address the drivers and root causes of conflict and create the conditions for long-term peace and sustainable development.]

We need to do more to address the impact of climate change and the other complex and multidimensional challenges facing the Sahel. The Permanent Representative of Canada asked a pertinent question: How do we get action on the ground? We need to do it through better cooperation and coordination. To support the countries in the region, we should seize the opportunity of the United Nations

development system reform to ensure that the new generation of United Nations country teams in the Sahel deliver concrete results in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. And we also need to ensure that these efforts are adequately funded.

[We heard today examples of successful conflict-sensitive mitigation and adaptation measures to address climate change and sustain peace. We also heard suggestions on how to enhance national, cross-border, sub-regional and regional cooperation to address climate change and build and sustain peace. We strongly value today's opportunity for sharing good practices and lessons learned and encourage Member States to continue the cross-fertilization of ideas in this area of work.]

The Economic and Social Council remains committed to working towards better integration between the policy and operational dimensions of sustaining peace and sustainable development, including in the Sahel region. The role of the Economic and Social Council working together with the Peacebuilding Commission remains critical. It can help in addressing the socio-economic and environmental drivers of conflict to achieve the SDGs, which is vital if we are serious in ensuring that no-one will be left behind. It is therefore important that we take a long-term perspective for our two bodies to work collaboratively and strengthen integrated approaches to enhance the peace and development nexus. Today's joint meeting, following last year's meeting, shows that the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission remain committed in keeping the focus on the Sahel region. We must continue to do so.

My distinguished colleague, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea asked me, as President of the ECOSOC, to respond to his assessment/recommendation that a Resolution on the Sahel might be a useful outcome of this initiative. I would like to say that it is less important what I think since I am here to facilitate what Member States think. So I wish to put that back to my distinguished colleague. It is entirely up to the Member States to table a Resolution if that is what we would like to see. It is not for me to answer but for you to decide.

A joint informal summary of this meeting will be prepared and made available on the websites of both the ECOSOC and PBC websites. It will also be circulated to the United Nations system for follow-up and action.

Thank you all for joining us today.