
20 May 2019, New York - Statement on behalf of the European Union by H.E. Mr. Silvio Gonzato, Deputy Head of the European Union Delegation to the UN, at the UN General Assembly Debate on the Annual Report of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretary General's Report on the Peacebuilding Fund
Madam President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

Thank you for having convened today’s debate on the Annual Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its twelfth session and on the Secretary General’s Report on the Peacebuilding Fund. This represents an excellent occasion to take stock of the achievements made in the past year.

Madam President,

Conflict prevention and peacebuilding are at the heart of the EU’s external action. The EU’s strategic vision is to support the multilateral system and join forces with our partners who believe in international cooperation to create a better world. For the EU, engaging on the basis of the respect of international law, international cooperation and partnership is a matter of both values and pragmatism: we are committed to working in a spirit of partnership through the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core.

The year 2018 marked an important milestone in promoting peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in reinforcing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the effectiveness of the UN Peace & Security Architecture as a whole. We are
encouraged by the progress achieved, including through the diversified activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, which continues to play a bridging role in integrating cross-pillar action at the UN, and therefore merits sustained support from the entire Membership.

We would like to see these efforts continue, as promulgated by the consensual resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Security Council last April, reconfirming the 2016 twin resolutions on the Peacebuilding Architecture of the UN. As expressed at the High Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, we reiterate our determination to further implement peacebuilding and sustaining peace, paving the way to the next review of the Peacebuilding Architecture in 2020.

The positive dynamics created by the implementation of the reform of the UN provides a better articulation of peace and security with the development and human rights pillars of the UN. In this context, we would like to underline the importance of making the most of the convening power of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as its advisory role to the General Assembly and the UNSC in all relevant aspects.

Madam President,

Building and sustaining peace is inextricably linked to inclusive development, resilience and respect for human rights. Peaceful and inclusive societies, good governance, rule of law, an independent judiciary, an accountable security apparatus and a functioning public sector are the best guarantors for sustainable peace and development. In our view, sustaining peace also requires that human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Our endeavours include the continued promotion of the role of women and youth in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, to secure durable results. In this regard we welcome the continued focus of the Peacebuilding Commission on the implementation of its own gender strategy to enhance the integration of gender perspectives in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

The link between inclusive peacebuilding and community-level engagement, especially with field-based civil society organizations needs further attention. Our action should adapt to this reality by jointly enhancing our understanding of complex conflict dynamics and adopting an integrated approach dealing with all phases of the conflict cycle.

We would also like to stress the need to work closely with key international and regional partners. In particular, the UN’s partnership with the World Bank is
especially important to ensure that each organization brings their comparative advantage to sustaining peace, also illustrated by the joint UN-WB study `Pathways for Peace`.

Madam President,

Turning now to the Annual Report of the PBC and the SG`s report on the Peacebuilding Fund before us today: both are comprehensive documents, illustrating the complexity of challenges in peacebuilding and financing for peacebuilding, but also the opportunities and the potential impact these activities can have in addressing situations where the PBC is engaged.

We appreciate the work of the Organizational Committee and the Peacebuilding Support Office in guiding the PBC’s work in pursuing its forward-looking agenda. We welcome the fact that the PBC has implemented the recommendations pertaining to the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and encourage the pursuit of several work streams proposed by the Annual Report:

i) strengthening the bridging role of the PBC among the principal organs and the relevant UN entities; ii) enhancing its collaboration with international financial institutions, regional organisations and the private sector; iii) diversifying its working methods to enhance its efficiency and flexibility in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace; iv) continuing to discuss ways to create stronger synergies between the PBC and the PBF.

The EU welcomes the increasingly wider focus of the PBC: the regional, cross-border and thematic issues brought to its attention demonstrate the added value of the PBC as an intergovernmental advisory body which can ensure that national, regional and international peacebuilding efforts are approached in a strategic and coherent fashion.

We commend the performance of the Country-specific Configurations over the past year, and the dedicated efforts of all Configuration Chairs. As a member of all Country-specific configurations of the PBC since their inception, the EU is trying to provide the best assistance possible for their success.

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has achieved significant results and continues to demonstrate its important catalytic role in mobilising resources for peacebuilding. But if we want to achieve the quantum leap advocated by the UNSG we need to provide further support and contribution to the PBF. The EU has financed many peacebuilding actions implemented by UN agencies. We nurture the ambition to become a solid partner of the PBF and are currently considering how our ongoing cooperation could be reinforced by a direct contribution to it.
Madam President,

Before concluding, I would like to extend my gratitude to the former Chair and current Vice-Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania, whom I would like to thank for his commitment and the excellent work done. We look forward to continue working hand in hand with the current Chair, Ambassador Guillermo Fernández de Soto, the Vice-Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Chairs of the Country Configurations, the PBC Members, as well as the Peacebuilding Support Office. We thank all stakeholders for their dedicated work and cooperation in promoting peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

I thank you.

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