

**PBC Chair Remarks at 2021 HLPF Session (3 minutes)**

***“SDGs in Focus: How do we get on track for building more peaceful, equal and inclusive societies?”***

**8 July 2021, 9 AM – 12.15 PM**

Mr. President, Excellencies,

- I thank you for the kind invitation to address this year’s High-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in my capacity as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. I am sure that this is a step further in strengthening the PBC-ECOSOC relation.
- Persisting challenges from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including lack of universal access to vaccines, have compounded risks to hard-won peacebuilding gains and nationally-owned efforts towards building more peaceful, inclusive and responsive societies.
- The PBC engagement with countries and regions under its consideration has highlighted the disproportionate toll of the pandemic on conflict-affected countries. Only 18 per cent of conflict-affected countries are on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals targets.
- As the pandemic continues to rage, public service institutions in conflict-affected countries have been tested in their capacity to mount a coordinated response. Slow, ineffective, or unfairly distributed responses have fueled simmering discontent and distrust in the State, and undermined social cohesion and economic resilience. Renewing the social contract, strengthening the rule of law, democratic institutions, and re-building trust between people and governments has emerged as key to making progress on the SDGs.
- The PBC has been playing a vital role in mobilizing a concerted, multilateral response, which draws on all three pillars of the United Nations, to address the immediate challenges posed by the pandemic while ensuring sustained long-term technical and financial support for national and local priorities. It has provided recommendations and information to improve coordination and to develop and share good and innovative practices.
- For example, at a recent meeting on **Liberia** in which the national Minister of Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs, civil society representatives and other relevant multi-stakeholders participated, the PBC committed to continue to use its platform to rally coherent and strategic

international support for Liberia's priorities for achieving a cohesive society through decentralization, equitable service delivery, governance reforms, youth engagement, women's participation and ending sexual and gender-based violence.

- Similarly, at the meeting on **The Gambia**, as part of its sustained support for the country's transitional reforms, the PBC followed up on the negative impact of the COVID-19 affecting women disproportionately; the constitutional review process and Government's efforts to build consensus around the draft; the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission recommendations, and preparations for future elections. It called for strengthened UN/IFIs partnership and encouraged continuous support from the Peacebuilding Fund, contingent upon the Government's confirmed commitment to carry through the reforms with inclusivity and transparency.

Excellencies,

- The twin resolutions on the 2020 peacebuilding architecture review, lessons learned from PBC engagements and outcomes of MS-led discussions, including at the recent Aswan and Stockholm Forums, have reiterated the need to switch from a response-oriented system to a nationally-led prevention system. Alignment of external peacebuilding support with the national priorities, which should take into account views of all segments of the society, strengthened partnerships, particularly with regional and sub-regional organisations, IFIs and civil society, including within the framework of triangular and South-South cooperation, and adequate, predictable and sustained financing were viewed as pivotal to a robust recovery from the multiple and cascading crises.
- The decision to “convene a high-level meeting during the 76<sup>th</sup> General Assembly session to advance and consider options for ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding,” also provides a strong affirmation of Member States' commitment.
- Finally, strengthened ECOSOC-PBC cooperation and dialogue, such as this, will be critical to progress in addressing root causes of poverty and conflict, achieving the SDGs, and making an impact at the country level to build back better.

Thank you.