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Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/201](#) and Security Council resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#) on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In those resolutions, the Assembly and the Council requested a detailed report in 2024 on continued implementation of the resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in advance of the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The report reflects submissions from Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders and conclusions from a broad and inclusive preparatory peacebuilding architecture review process guided by the Peacebuilding Commission as well as regional and thematic consultations held around the world. It is also informed by the letter sent to the Secretary-General and Member States by the independent eminent persons appointed by the Secretary-General, containing their reflections on the implementation of the resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture.

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I. Introduction

1. The world is characterized by a surge in conflicts, a growing climate crisis, social injustice and rising economic disparities, all of which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and marginalized. Rapidly developing technologies are exposing the insufficiency of existing global governance frameworks. The emergence of powerful communication tools that can spread content, including hate speech and misinformation and disinformation, instantly, at massive scale, heralds a different new reality.

2. Conflicts are increasingly multilayered and more deadly. Some 2 billion people, one quarter of humanity, live in places affected by conflict (see [S/PV.9250](#)). By the end of 2023, 363 million people needed humanitarian assistance, a 33 per cent increase from 2022.¹ Conflicts are also more enmeshed in global and regional dynamics, which makes them harder to resolve. Member States are espousing perilously different perspectives on where the threats to peace come from and how they are best addressed. International law, including international humanitarian law, crucial to preventing harm and maintaining global order and human dignity, is under attack.² The ensuing loss of trust has made international cooperation more difficult, with a profound impact on efforts to prevent conflict and build and sustain peace.

3. Conflicts are increasingly playing out against a backdrop of geopolitical polarization and growing militarization. They are exacerbated, in many contexts, by the proliferation of non-State armed groups connected to criminal and terrorist networks, the regionalization of violence, and the surge in violent extremism conducive to terrorism. They exacerbate existing conditions and create new ones, leading to unsafe and irregular migration patterns, trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. Numerous conflicts entail complex cross-border situations, involving armed and/or terrorist groups, narcotics smuggling, small arms proliferation, explosive ordnance and competition over natural resources. Civilians and humanitarian workers are increasingly targeted,³ deepening the impact of conflicts on communities and compromising the delivery of life-saving aid and essential services.

4. Human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – are at the heart of prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Their full realization protects against marginalization, discrimination and exclusion. In turn, a lack of progress in achieving human rights and their violation are early indicators of deteriorating situations and the potential emergence of violence. Human rights, in their fullest conception, can serve as a practical problem-solving tool to support efforts in prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace at all stages. The increasing pressures on civic space across the globe undermine and constrain the environment required for advancing rights, political dialogue, reconciliation and inclusive and credible elections and political processes. Similarly, Governments' reduced ability to invest in upholding economic and social rights, due in part to debt distress and other fiscal pressures, puts their efforts to sustain peace, including through the advancement of sustainable development, at serious risk.

5. Women and young people continue to face entrenched and systemic barriers to participation in peace and political processes, and women's and youth organizations

¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Annual Report 2023* (2024).

² Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights* (London, 2024).

³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Global Humanitarian Overview 2025 (Geneva concept note)", 11 November 2024. Available at <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2025-geneva-concept-note>.

struggle to find resources. Threats and violence against women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders are on the rise (see [A/78/131](#)). Concerted efforts are required to stop gender-based violence, which is both a consequence and a driver of conflict, particularly when sexual violence is employed as a tactic of war and political repression. Over two decades into the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in building and sustaining peace should be the norm and not an afterthought (see [S/2024/671](#)). The inclusion of young people in peace and security is still lagging behind, despite increased efforts, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on youth and peace and security ([S/2024/207](#)). In addition, the evolving nature, complexity and intensification of armed conflict, as well as the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, led to a shocking increase in grave violations in 2023 (see [A/78/842-S/2024/384](#)).

6. The effects of climate change, disasters, environmental degradation and natural resource scarcity, particularly land and water, are exacerbating insecurity and instability worldwide. The fast-changing climate and the increasing frequency and intensity of disasters are affecting lives and livelihoods, often in regions already grappling with conflict. By the end of 2023, almost three in four forcibly displaced persons were living in countries with high-to-extreme exposure to climate-related hazards.⁴ This intersection of climate vulnerability and conflict is creating a compounding crisis, intensifying the challenges for affected populations.

7. Forced displacement is a consequence of the failure to uphold peace and security. The number of people forced to flee, both within their own countries and across borders, closely correlates with the frequency, extent, duration and intensity of conflicts, as measured by conflict-related fatalities. By mid-2024, the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide had risen to approximately 122.6 million.⁵ In 2023, nearly 282 million individuals experienced acute food insecurity across 59 countries and territories facing food crises.⁶

8. Unsustainable debt burdens are affecting developing countries, which are facing a financing gap estimated to be up to \$4 trillion annually to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.⁷ Related financial shocks continue to increase risks of socioeconomic unrest. Meanwhile, military expenditures reached a record \$2.44 trillion globally in 2023, an increase of 6.8 per cent in real terms from 2022, while humanitarian needs are at an all-time high, amounting to \$56.7 billion in 2023.⁸

9. Amid these challenges, a transition is under way to a new global order, with multipolarity as one of its defining traits, and new alliances and groupings are being formed. The adoption of the Pact for the Future in September 2024 is an important step to strengthen multilateralism and international cooperation. The emphasis that the Pact has placed on dialogue and diplomacy, sustainable development, prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace through addressing the root causes of conflict and based on respect for international law opens pathways to new possibilities to confront the multifaceted challenges that we face today.

⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2023* (Copenhagen, 2024).

⁵ See <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics>.

⁶ Food Security Information Network and Global Network against Food Crises, *Global Report on Food Crises 2024* (Rome, 2024).

⁷ *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2024: Financing for Development at a Crossroads* (United Nations publication, 2024).

⁸ Nan Tian and others, "Trends in world military expenditure, 2023", fact sheet, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, April 2024. Available at https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf.

II. Prevention and peacebuilding: shifting the paradigm to universality and action at the national level

10. From his first day in office, the Secretary-General has called upon Member States to prioritize prevention. The evidence is clear that prevention saves lives, reduces human suffering and safeguards development gains and pathways and is highly cost-effective.⁹ However, it remains severely underprioritized and underresourced. Effective prevention approaches are comprehensive ones that include robust national capacities, infrastructures for peace, and global and regional partnerships. Such approaches must be underpinned by sustainable resources and, critically, national ownership and leadership, all while being guided by a strong commitment to human rights to effectively address the root causes of crises.

11. In his policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace (A/77/CRP.1/Add.8), the Secretary-General proposed a paradigm shift in approaching prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, grounded on two interlinked principles: universality and national ownership. This responds to the reality that instability, violence and the potential for conflict are not restricted to only a few States: risks, while differentiated, exist in developed, middle-income and developing States alike, and today's threats to peace and security unequivocally require universal action and mitigation by all States. This paradigm shift entails treating prevention as a priority for all States as part of national agendas, as opposed to exceptionally intervening only when the prospects of a crisis are all too evident.

12. Member States have the primary responsibility to prevent conflict and build and sustain peace. As sovereign entities, States have the prerogative to define the legal, institutional and strategic frameworks for dealing with threats and advancing peacebuilding efforts. Decades of practice have demonstrated that, to be successful, action in prevention and peacebuilding must be led and owned by national actors. In turn, the fear of external interference has frequently been a significant inhibitor of Member States being open to early international action to warn of or assist in addressing the drivers of conflict before a situation escalates. A clear signal of a definitive shift in focus from the international to the national level – to national ownership, national leadership and nationally defined priorities – would help to assuage such concerns and build trust, creating space for Member States to seek support from the international community when appropriate and considered useful.

13. A focus on building national capacities and infrastructures for peace, including community-driven approaches, by all Member States through partnerships, education and the sharing of good practices and experiences would be an enabling factor in this endeavour. Local “agents for peace” can be critical to these efforts by acting as bridges between international peacebuilding actors, national structures and local communities. Priorities should be locally determined to ensure more sustainable results and continued buy-in.

14. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides an effective blueprint for advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies, promoting social justice and addressing challenges that are universal in nature. Many countries have successfully managed high-risk conflicts and avoided a descent into violence. This is the basis for the proposal in the policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace for all countries to develop, on a voluntary basis, their nationally owned and led prevention and sustaining peace strategies.

⁹ United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2018).

15. These strategies should tackle context-specific factors and be finely adapted to local realities and dynamics. The breadth of experience that exists around the world also means that Member States can gain from exchanges with others that have faced similar peacebuilding challenges, particularly through South-South cooperation and the sharing of technical as well as political expertise. Member States should also have an avenue through which they can seek the support of the international community for their nationally led and owned efforts in this area, which, among other things, should have a focus on building their own capacities for prevention, early warning and peacebuilding.

16. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches grounded in sustainable development that leaves no one behind would make national prevention strategies more effective. They should be gender- and age- sensitive, inclusive of young people and older persons, persons with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants and create safe spaces for all actors to contribute. Prevention and sustaining peace are whole-of-society endeavours in which women lead together with men. The United Nations, if so requested, stands ready to provide support for the development and implementation of these strategies, based on its long-standing work in support of national prevention capacities and peacebuilding programmes.

17. In today's interconnected world, national-level action alone is often insufficient to address the drivers of conflict and violence. In the face of growing competition at the global level and threats that are increasingly transnational, we need regional frameworks and organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, that promote trust-building, transparency and détente. For this reason, the Secretary-General has also proposed that groups of Member States and regional and subregional organizations develop prevention strategies with cross-regional dimensions to address transboundary threats, collectively harvesting and building on the wealth of national-level knowledge and expertise in a manner that can enhance common security.

18. Building a common empirical base shared by all States would be an important step towards building confidence and enhancing trust. The demand for impartial and credible data sources will continue to increase as global politics become more fragmented and as data and artificial intelligence capabilities become more concentrated among a few actors. The United Nations has made significant progress in utilizing advanced analytics to implement its peace and security mandate. In addition, efforts have been made to strengthen multidimensional risk assessments that integrate disaster and conflict risk to bring the expertise of climate and disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention actors together, for a more targeted and effective approach to prevention, resilience and long-term development.

19. To strengthen efforts to measure impact, the Peacebuilding Impact Hub¹⁰ was established as a collaborative platform that brings together United Nations entities, Governments, international financial institutions, research institutions and civil society. The Hub fosters collective efforts to generate and enhance evidence on the impact of peacebuilding efforts in order to provide operational, political and strategic insights for peacebuilding practitioners and decision makers. Establishing relevant safeguards to ensure information integrity in these approaches will be a related priority. It is important to ensure that the sustaining peace marker is applied in all United Nations programmatic activities at the country level, as reported in the global

¹⁰ See <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/impact-hub>.

online planning, monitoring and reporting platform of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.¹¹

III. Towards a stronger Peacebuilding Commission

20. Since its establishment in 2005, the Peacebuilding Commission has embraced a demand-driven approach centred on national ownership, enabling over 20 Member States to share their peacebuilding experiences and challenges. The Commission has actively supported these countries by mobilizing political, technical and financial assistance tailored to their specific peacebuilding priorities. In addition, it has addressed regional contexts and thematic issues, such as women and peace and security, youth and peace and security, and financing for peacebuilding, while continually strengthening its collaboration with the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund. In this context, in November 2023, the meeting between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group underscored the importance of enhancing synergies, fostering regular exchanges, sharing advice and integrating lessons from the Fund into the Commission's initiatives.

21. The Peacebuilding Commission, through its gender strategy (2016) and action plan (2021), is well positioned to lead in implementing women and peace and security commitments. Over the years, it has increased the participation of women civil society representatives, engaged with local actors during country visits and provided advice to the Security Council on related issues. The upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of Council resolution 1325 (2000) in 2025, alongside the momentum generated by the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, presents significant opportunities to advance concerted action on this critical agenda. Moreover, the Commission's strategic action plan on youth and peacebuilding provides an opportunity to systematize support for greater youth engagement in peacebuilding action, with the tenth anniversary of Council resolution 2250 (2015) in 2025.

22. The Peacebuilding Commission continues to promote South-South and triangular cooperation, facilitating exchanges of good practices on issues such as transitional justice strategies (during its engagement with Colombia, the Gambia and Timor-Leste) and approaches to Indigenous Peoples and reconciliation (during its engagement with Canada, Colombia and Norway). These interactions highlight commonalities in peacebuilding experiences across diverse country contexts. In addition, the Commission engages in multi-country initiatives that enable comparative reviews of national strategies: in March 2024, Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste shared approaches to addressing root causes of violence. The 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture will provide an opportunity to consider the adjustments that need to be made to the Commission's methods of work, composition and support capacities to increase its effectiveness in supporting Member States in implementing national prevention and peacebuilding strategies at their request.

23. With its focus on national ownership and mandate to convene all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations to improve coordination, to develop and share good practices in peacebuilding and to bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace, the Peacebuilding Commission can enhance its role as a "trust forum" and space for Member States to address issues that lie between peace and development, such as the links between inequalities, poverty, violence and conflict; the significance of the 2030 Agenda for peacebuilding and sustaining peace; the role of achieving durable solutions to forced displacement in securing lasting peace; and the linkages between development, climate and environmental change, disaster risk

¹¹ See <https://help.uninfo.org/un-info/getting-started/welcome-to-un-info>.

reduction, and peace and security. In addition, the Commission's mandate envisages a role in mobilizing political and financial support for the implementation of national strategies to sustain peace.

24. The Peacebuilding Commission is well placed to bring together a wide range of actors in addition to Member States, from international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations to civil society, the private sector, trade unions and other stakeholders. Moving forward, the Commission could build on the significant record of interactions with Member States that have shared their experience in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture provides a timely opportunity for Member States to enshrine a more institutionalized approach to this convening role and define the modalities, including the requisite Secretariat support and stronger engagement from the Commission's membership.

25. As the Peacebuilding Commission has improved its advisory role to the Security Council, there could be more frequent requests for advice, which can contribute to more strategic and complementary use of the Commission and bring broader peacebuilding perspectives to Council deliberations. This would be important with regard to transitions of United Nations missions. Enhanced communication between the Commission and United Nations country teams, special political missions and peacekeeping operations in specific countries could contribute to the Commission's advice to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The Commission could further consider setting up an independent panel of geographically diverse peacebuilding experts to enrich the advice that it provides to the Security Council.

26. Strengthening partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and other relevant actors has been a priority for the Peacebuilding Commission. One example is the stronger collaboration that the Commission has established with the African Union, including by granting a standing invitation to the African Union to participate in all its meetings. The annual meetings between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Commission provide a useful model for fostering cooperation and alignment in peacebuilding efforts with other regional and subregional organizations. Collaboration with international financial institutions has been a central objective of the Commission since its establishment, with the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund invited to all its meetings.

27. The Peacebuilding Commission continues to face challenges, and there is limited Secretariat capacity to support its work and ensure sustained and effective follow-up to its engagements. The present report reiterates the Secretary-General's call in his report on *Our Common Agenda* to dedicate more resources in support of the Commission. The Pact for the Future details Member States' commitment to strengthening the Commission to bring a more strategic approach and greater coherence and impact to national and international efforts to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The support of the United Nations system is needed to meet increasing demand and the ambition of a strengthened Peacebuilding Commission.

IV. Interdependence and complementarity of peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

28. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is lagging severely behind, as underscored in the *Sustainable Development Report 2024*. The global risk landscape makes peacebuilding and sustaining peace and achieving the 2030 Agenda highly

interdependent. The challenges facing peacebuilding and development are inextricably intertwined, and strengthening linkages between the two could advance both agendas. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, in 2025, provides an opportunity to further reinforce these linkages.

29. Sustainable development, underpinned by good, inclusive governance, the rule of law, human rights and environmental conservation, is a significant factor in preventing conflicts and maintaining peace and security. It offers a structural prevention approach by addressing the root and underlying causes of grievances and violence and can serve as an effective exit strategy from the recurrent and interconnected cycles of conflict and crisis. Fragility and crisis are often linked to a lack of economic security and of decent work opportunities, coupled with weak or absent State governance that fails to provide equitable access to basic services or fundamental justice. This leads to a weakened social contract and reduced social trust.

30. Understanding the 2030 Agenda through the lens of Sustainable Development Goal 16 requires increased focus on structural prevention and a risk-informed approach to peace and security and sustainable development. Without identifying and addressing the underlying drivers of violence and instability, development will not take root or be sustained, nor can sustained peace be assured without sustainable and equitable development. It is important to anticipate risks and take preventive action to reduce fragility, including through multi-hazard early warning systems and a multisectoral approach that addresses natural and human-made hazards, including environmental, technological and biological. At the international level, this would allow countries to stabilize and protect hard-won peacebuilding and development gains, mitigate risks of relapse or recurrence, and build institutional and community resilience to sustain peaceful and risk-informed development pathways. Strengthening investments in strategic foresight and multidimensional risk analysis is crucial to better anticipate, prevent and manage systemic risks. The provision of technical support to Member States that wish to pursue national prevention strategies and strengthen their domestic and regional infrastructures for peace and governance institutions continues to be a priority for the United Nations system.

31. The climate and environmental crisis and its disproportionate impacts, particularly on the most vulnerable groups, increasingly intersect with drivers of conflict and the overlapping impacts of natural disasters and other crises. Conflict-sensitive and peace-responsive climate and environmental action, as well as disaster risk reduction, also offers important opportunities to foster stability and deliver peace and development outcomes. This underscores the importance of providing financial resources, data, technology transfer and capacity-building support, particularly for developing countries that are on the front line of climate change impacts to enable effective mitigation and adaptation measures. Climate change, disasters and environmental degradation are significant factors in the forced displacement of populations, intensifying migratory pressures and potentially fuelling conflicts,¹² particularly when displaced groups and host communities face competition for dwindling natural resources.¹³

32. Understanding the gender dimensions of climate-related security risks is essential not only to avoid exacerbating vulnerabilities but also to identify opportunities for promoting gender equality, enhancing climate resilience and sustaining peace. There is potential to expand the involvement of local communities and civil society, including local women's organizations, and ensure the full, equal

¹² UNCHR, *Global Trends*.

¹³ UNCHR, "How climate change impacts refugees and displaced communities", 12 November 2024. Available at <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/how-climate-change-impacts-refugees-and-displaced-communities/>.

and meaningful participation and leadership of women in climate action and peacebuilding.

33. Today, there are more young people in the world than at any other moment in history, with over 1.2 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24.¹⁴ In some regions, young people represent most of the population, such as in Africa, where 60 per cent of the population is under 25.¹⁵ Promoting the meaningful inclusion of young people in peacebuilding, including those most directly affected by violent conflict, is essential to creating sustainable peace outcomes that promote a culture of prevention with intergenerational bonds and aspirations. When provided with the appropriate knowledge, skills and opportunities, young people can be agents of change and significantly contribute to preventing conflict and promoting sustainable peace. Young people are often at the forefront of local-level peace initiatives and dialogues across communities. National action plans on youth and peace and security can play a key role in building trust between young people and institutions and integrating young people's needs into national development plans and strategies. Financing youth-led initiatives is equally important. In 2022 and 2023, Peacebuilding Fund support in these areas increased by 34 per cent compared with the 2020–2021 period, with projects implemented by United Nations country teams in more than 30 countries.

34. Civil society engagement in peacebuilding policy and programming is crucial to an effective peacebuilding architecture. It is important to have a local context approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, greater engagement with civil society organizations, and longer-term and more flexible funding mechanisms to strengthen the capacities of local communities to support national peacebuilding efforts. In 2023, the annual dialogue on peacebuilding between civil society organizations and the United Nations was launched to discuss the challenges and opportunities for collaboration on peacebuilding. Further support is needed to continue building a platform to facilitate contributions from civil society to the United Nations peacebuilding policy and programming. In May 2024, the United Nations Civil Society Conference was held in Nairobi, resulting in the creation of the “ImPACT coalition on peacebuilding” with over 140 civil society organizations.

35. The number of forcibly displaced persons is projected to exceed 120 million by the end of 2024, constituting about 1.5 per cent of the global population.¹⁶ Millions of people have remained trapped in protracted displacement for years, some even for decades. Effectively addressing and resolving issues of displacement and statelessness, including through the provision of protection and durable solutions, are critical to reducing humanitarian needs and preventing the emergence of new grievances and inequalities. Supporting countries in strengthening access to essential services for displaced and host communities and in developing more universal, comprehensive and inclusive social protection systems is crucial. In addition, supporting local economies, fostering societal resilience and restoring trust and good governance are important contributions to building sustainable peace, stability and long-term development.

36. Integrated approaches to sustainable development and using human rights as a problem-solving measure to address contemporary development challenges represent a way forward. The promotion of coherence between humanitarian and development assistance and peace and security efforts, with a human rights lens, is essential for a

¹⁴ *World Youth Report* (United Nations publication, 2020).

¹⁵ World Economic Forum, “How Africa’s youth will drive global growth”, 16 August 2023. Available at <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/08/africa-youth-global-growth-digital-economy/>.

¹⁶ UNHCR, *Global Trends*.

more effective and holistic approach to prevention and peacebuilding. Promoting and protecting human rights addresses the root causes of inequality and exclusion and contributes towards more just, equitable, inclusive and responsive governance structures and systems fostering long-term societal resilience and stability.

37. Good, effective and inclusive governance and the strengthening of social cohesion represent pathways away from violent conflict and vulnerability towards sustainable peace. Strong, just and inclusive institutions create the conditions for transforming underlying historical, economic and social inequalities and provide pathways to sustainable peace and development to realize a sustainable social contract. Horizontal inequality and exclusion make armed conflict more likely. Inclusive decision-making processes give voice and basic freedoms to people to pursue the goals and aspirations that they value and to seek redress when faced with injustice. Inclusive governance is intended to enhance citizen empowerment and agency and to strengthen human rights protection of marginalized groups. Ensuring inclusive representation of diverse identity groups helps to address grievances rooted in systematic discrimination. Furthermore, inclusive arrangements that give voice and access to power to various groups can defuse tensions and create space for dialogue. This point has been underlined powerfully through the annual Global Forums against Racism and Discrimination.

38. Addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as mine action, can be vital for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Effective disarmament not only protects lives but is also fundamental to economic revitalization, agricultural livelihoods and food security, social cohesion, confidence-building, reconciliation and community resilience. It can also facilitate the safe return of displaced populations and contribute to the conditions for sustainable peace and development in regions where the proliferation of weapons and explosive devices threatens not only people's lives but also their livelihoods and natural environments.

39. Health, well-being and peace outcomes are indivisibly interlinked. Armed conflict can directly affect health systems and obstruct the delivery of effective and equitable healthcare. It can lead to the collapse of medical supply chains, an exodus of healthcare workers, attacks on healthcare and upsurges in disease outbreaks and food insecurity. Conversely, pandemics, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, have significant impacts on peacebuilding efforts, often exacerbating existing challenges and creating new ones. Violence and conflict have significant negative impacts on good health and well-being, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for women and girls. The importance of integrating mental health and psychosocial support in conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives is increasingly being recognized, including to address intergenerational traumas that can otherwise hamper national dialogue and reconciliation efforts.

V. Impact of United Nations reforms on the systematic implementation of peacebuilding and sustaining peace resolutions

40. The rapidly shifting global landscape prompted the Secretary-General in 2017 to lead a series of interrelated reforms, including the repositioning of the United Nations development system, restructuring of the peace and security pillar and reform of the management pillar. Through the reforms, the United Nations system has become better positioned to build stronger synergies across development, human rights, humanitarian, and peace and security initiatives in support of national policymaking and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, ensuring that the United Nations efforts across pillars more comprehensively address the root causes of crises

and contribute to reducing vulnerabilities, the risks of conflict and the drivers of humanitarian needs and providing solid foundations for sustainable development.

41. The restructuring of the peace and security pillar was designed to make the pillar more coherent, pragmatic, nimble and effective, capable of collaboration with partners across the United Nations system and outside it to prevent violent conflict. It brought together the core peace and security capacities around a single political-operational structure with regional responsibilities. The reform also facilitated the integration of peacebuilding across the pillar, enhancing links between various pillars, ensuring coherence of system-wide action and strengthening partnerships.

42. Through the 2018 repositioning of the United Nations development system, today, resident coordinators around the world steer the design and delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, which articulate a collective development offer in support of national development priorities. In mission settings, “triple-hatted” resident coordinators – those also serving as humanitarian coordinators and deputy special representatives of the Secretary-General – are central to the integration of humanitarian, human rights, development and political efforts, ensuring coherence between support for development and peace and security efforts. This enables peacekeeping operations and special political missions to effectively contribute towards sustainable peace and development outcomes, aligned with national needs and priorities. In complex settings, “double-hatted” resident coordinators also serve as humanitarian coordinators and lead the emergency response while also ensuring that United Nations activities are geared towards supporting countries to mitigate development losses, to guide early recovery initiatives and to advance government-led solutions to displacement situations.

43. Overall, in 2023, 89 per cent of host country Governments attested to close collaboration with the United Nations-led development and peacebuilding initiatives in support of national priorities.¹⁷ About 82 per cent of resident coordinators confirmed that United Nations country team members regularly reported stronger complementarity among development, humanitarian and peace activities, 10 percentage points higher than in 2021.

44. Operationalizing an integrated approach to peacebuilding and the 2030 Agenda in today’s complex risk landscape requires stronger collaborative approaches across humanitarian, human rights, development, and peace and security initiatives to tailor sustainable and holistic outcomes to multidimensional needs. It is important that the United Nations system continue to support efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, disasters, environmental degradation and natural resource scarcity, and health emergencies such as pandemics, as well as support efforts to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime, by including relevant joint analyses, planning and programming, such as the common country analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, which are developed in alignment with national plans and priorities.

45. The resident coordinator system constitutes one of the most powerful yet agile tools to support national sustainable development priorities in a coherent approach. The global network of peace and development advisers deployed through the United Nations Development Programme-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs joint programme supports national stakeholders on conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

46. Member States have a critical role to play in promoting humanitarian, human rights, development, and peace and security collaboration. A dedicated annual

¹⁷ Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of Governments, resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, various years.

peacebuilding week could further promote this approach and serve as a platform to raise the profile of peacebuilding and sustaining peace; provide an opportunity for policymakers, peacebuilders and organizations to discuss and develop strategies to strengthen peacebuilding; and enhance international cooperation and commitment to implementing the relevant peacebuilding and sustaining peace resolutions.

VI. Financing for peacebuilding

47. Member States have long recognized the existing gaps in financing for peacebuilding, as reflected in the Pact for the Future. In its resolution 76/305 on financing for peacebuilding, the General Assembly noted that additional resources were required to address the existing financing gaps and meet increasing requests for peacebuilding and sustaining peace support from Member States. While peace-related components in official development assistance (ODA) increased slightly in 2022,¹⁸ the share of peace ODA towards fragile contexts continued to decrease, from 11.01 per cent in 2021 to 9.95 per cent in 2022.¹⁹ Drawdowns of United Nations missions over the past five years also reduced overall capacity and funding for peacebuilding. This is compounded by the discontinuation of 50 per cent of the current peace and development adviser positions due to funding constraints.

48. Peacebuilding financing should evolve to match global good practice, including focusing on macroeconomic conditions and fiscal space in peacebuilding contexts. Financial resources must be accompanied by dedicated and strengthened human resources at all levels to work on conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming, partnerships, communications and advocacy. These human resources should be easily deployable, include a broad spectrum of expertise and experience and be able to operate across and within regions to provide technical accompaniment to national actors.

49. The new funding compact for United Nations support to the Sustainable Development Goals underscores the value of inter-agency pooled funds such as the Peacebuilding Fund, which provides strategic, predictable and flexible non-core funding that enables integrated and coordinated action of the United Nations development system with a peacebuilding lens. Such pooled funds are key instruments to enhance aid effectiveness, aligning a wide range of actors and reducing transaction costs for Member States and implementing partners.

Peacebuilding Fund

50. The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund continues to receive more demand than it can support. Almost five years into the current strategy period (2020–2026), voluntary commitments have reached only slightly over half of the targeted amount of \$1.5 billion, totalling \$789 million. The burden share among voluntary donors has improved slightly, as has the number of multi-year commitments. Total voluntary contributions, however, have continued to decline since the high of \$180 million in 2020. Despite these constraints, for the seventh year in a row, the Fund exceeded its internal target allocation of 30 per cent to gender equality. Its investments in spearheading women and youth engagement were larger than that of any other pooled fund in the United Nations system.

¹⁸ See <https://focus2030.org/Increase-of-Official-Development-Assistance-in-2022-1295>.

¹⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Peace and official development assistance", October 2023. Available at https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/peace-and-official-development-assistance_fcfcfbfc-en.html.

51. In its resolution 78/257, the General Assembly approved the Secretary-General's request for assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund of \$50 million per year starting in 2025. This will help to provide more predictable, adequate and sustained resources for United Nations peacebuilding support, even though voluntary contributions will remain the Fund's main funding source.

52. The number of Member States seeking United Nations support for peacebuilding and prevention has increased, and the range of issues has diversified. Rising areas of demand include addressing hate speech, misinformation and other divisive practices, especially during elections, as well as the intersection of climate change and disasters with conflict and the effects of heightened competition over natural resources; localization of peacebuilding efforts and community-driven approaches to the delivery of security as a public good; and durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons.

53. The Peacebuilding Fund continues to leverage the capacity of the whole United Nations development system, generating an important integrator effect in United Nations programming and improving United Nations peacebuilding coherence on the ground. In 2023, the Fund collaborated with 57 resident coordinators and country teams. As a key driver of integrated and coherent responses, the Fund prioritized not only joint programmes but also alignment of its support with the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, including any peacebuilding and prevention priorities, wherever possible. Continuing and deepening this approach is crucial to enhancing the Fund's catalytic effect and ensuring the sustainability of its investments.

Role of international financial institutions in peacebuilding

54. International financial institutions and multilateral development banks are critical "agents for peace", given their ability to bring large-scale financing to bear in support of nationally led strategies. It is also important to continue working towards international financial institutions that are more inclusive, equitable and representative and that better address the needs of developing countries. Well-placed concessional funds can help authorities to tackle structural drivers of conflict, reinforce the social contract and build resilience to external shocks. Partnership with international financial institutions, leveraging the Organization's complementary mandates and field networks, can help to facilitate conflict-sensitive engagement and maximize impact. Within the Peacebuilding Fund, the dedicated Partnership Facility has supported country-level collaboration, innovation and good practices with international financial institutions and multilateral development banks since its launch in 2019.

55. The recent monitoring report of the United Nations-World Bank Group Partnership in Crisis-Affected Situations demonstrates this maturing partnership, featuring examples from 58 prevention, peacebuilding and crisis contexts.²⁰ Of note, this operational partnership has allowed the World Bank to expand its reach in fragile and conflict-affected settings, with the United Nations implementing around \$8.6 billion in International Development Association financing between 2016 and July 2023.²¹ Since 2020, the United Nations and the World Bank have also significantly enriched their collaboration in support of national prevention and peacebuilding strategies, aligning data, analysis and financing to support national plans. The World Bank's Prevention and Resilience Allocation has shown itself to be

²⁰ World Bank, *United Nations-World Bank Group Partnership in Crisis-Affected Situations: 2022 UN-WBG Partnership Monitoring Report* (Washington, D.C., 2023).

²¹ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/60cad99b8cb64068a60d756cb55e1dba-0410012024/original/IDA21-FAQs-5-23-2024.pdf>.

a powerful instrument, helping Governments to advance key investments in prevention while tracking national policy commitments.

56. The International Monetary Fund and multilateral development banks have also developed institutional approaches for addressing drivers of fragility and conflict in line with their mandates, in some cases consulting the Peacebuilding Commission. The African Development Bank has leveraged its Transition Support Facility, including a new prevention window, to support Governments in tackling fragility. Multilateral development banks have deepened their collaboration in conflict-affected settings through joint recovery and peacebuilding assessments and by partnering with the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system for delivery. Peacebuilding provides an opportunity for transformative action to address historical inequalities, with international financial institutions playing a critical role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, for example, in negotiations for support portfolios and lending. They can help to lay a foundation for equitable and sustainable development for future generations.

Innovative financing and private sector resource mobilization strategy

57. In its resolution [76/305](#), the General Assembly requested a strategy for resource mobilization from the private sector. Partnership with the private sector, especially local small and medium-sized enterprises, can generate new resources and pilot new and locally led peacebuilding approaches. The private sector can play a key role in employment generation, economic inclusion and equitable access to social services, all essential for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In some settings, however, the activities of the private sector can exacerbate the drivers of fragility and increase perceptions of inequitable development. This underscores the centrality of ensuring that the private sector does not exacerbate fragility, including through adherence to the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and by subscribing to the United Nations Global Compact in all engagements with the private sector.

58. The private sector resource mobilization strategy for peacebuilding, prepared in collaboration with the Global Compact Office and entities that are part of the Peacebuilding Strategy and Peacebuilding Contact Groups, addresses the issues highlighted above and is anchored on establishing a peace finance ecosystem. This requires applying conflict sensitivity to business operations and investment strategies, as well as having clear indicators regarding what type of private investments can be considered “peace positive”. It also seeks to identify and pool additional sources of capital through innovative instruments. Since 2022, the United Nations has been strategically engaging with “champions” of financing for peace, to pair the core expertise of peacebuilding organizations with the financing capabilities of institutional investors. Lastly, the United Nations seeks to increase incentives for joint public-private investments in peacebuilding by using catalytic funding from the Peacebuilding Fund to increase peace-positive partnerships between Member States and the private sector.

59. Strengthening the role of the private sector and employers and business member organizations as well as trade unions in peacebuilding will require de-risking capital and a new generation of partnerships, strategic communications and advocacy, as well as committed and strengthened human resources at all levels. This work will depend on increased support from Member States to develop this ecosystem, design and pilot projects, and encourage others to join, including multilateral development banks and development finance institution partners. The good practices of working with the private sector and its representation through employers and business member organizations need to be further systemized and evaluated.

United Nations mission transitions and drawdowns

60. Special political missions and multidimensional peacekeeping operations are vital multilateral tools contributing to prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and longer-term peacebuilding, to durably address the drivers of violence and conflict. The success of peacebuilding efforts frequently requires sustained political attention and support from the international community and regional and national actors. However, reduced trust between Member States has posed challenges for United Nations engagement. Accelerated drawdowns of missions can sometimes lead to instability and security vacuums, undermining the progress achieved in peacebuilding and governance while increasing protection challenges, exacerbating humanitarian needs and hindering long-term development.

61. The withdrawal or drawdown of a United Nations mission represents a critical transition period for a host country. It is a signal of significant progress towards peace and new opportunities for development but can also come with challenges that need to be addressed through sustained investment in peacebuilding and sustainable development. It is imperative to invest in and plan early for strengthened collective efforts to shape future transitions. This was expressed in Security Council resolution [2594 \(2021\)](#), in which transitions of United Nations peace operations were defined as “a strategic process which builds towards a reconfiguration of the strategy, footprint and capacity of the United Nations in a way that supports peacebuilding objectives and the development of sustainable peace ... and reinforces national ownership”. Sustaining political engagement during and after mission withdrawal is essential to support key peacebuilding priorities. Many of these residual peacebuilding priorities are highly political in nature.

62. National engagement is crucial for transition processes. For transitions to help to consolidate and sustain peace and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, their timing, modalities and outcomes must be determined and implemented jointly with national government actors as well as other national actors, including civil society networks and women’s organizations and coalitions. To ensure this, transition planning needs to be aligned with national development plans and strategies, while engaging a wide and diverse group of national actors. Strong focus must be placed on strengthening capacities in areas that special political missions and peacekeeping operations are responsible for delivering on and that will be transferred after mission withdrawal, and on setting up joint planning and coordination structures with national counterparts.

63. The available resourcing instruments for the United Nations, notably programmatic activities funded through peacekeeping assessed budgets and the Peacebuilding Fund, complement one another and facilitate coherence among a wide range of partners but are not sufficient to meet all peacebuilding needs. It is therefore important that realistic economic considerations be factored into transition planning processes and longer-term financing strategies. This includes tapping into the innovative financing modalities referenced above and forging partnerships with international financial institutions, which can help to maximize the effectiveness of available assistance.

VII. Recommendations

64. As outlined in my policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace and in line with the commitments made in the Pact for the Future, I call upon Member States to consider developing nationally led and owned prevention and peacebuilding strategies, with the support of the United Nations system, on request, and as appropriate and useful. Placing human rights at the heart of these strategies can help to guarantee inclusion

and protect against marginalization and discrimination and ensure that they positively contribute to sustainable development outcomes. These strategies can help to reinforce accountable and effective State institutions, promote the rule of law and strengthen social cohesion. This also requires reinforced investment in fostering a culture of peace. The critical role of civil society, women's organizations, trade unions, the private sector and young people in these processes, alongside national and local-level authorities, must be underscored.

65. I encourage Member States to consider developing prevention strategies with cross-border dimensions to address transboundary threats, building on the wealth of knowledge and expertise existing at the national level on effective conflict prevention measures. Collective reflection on transboundary threats and how to address them in order to enhance common security is particularly urgent in regions where long-standing security architectures are collapsing or where they have never been built. To be successful, these strategies should be genuinely inclusive and empower marginalized groups, young people and forcibly displaced people.

66. I call upon Member States to adopt new and targeted measures to increase women's full, equal and meaningful participation, including in conflict resolution, community security, access to justice, mine action, early warning, and climate mitigation and adaptation. I call upon Member States to allocate a minimum of 15 per cent of ODA to conflict-affected countries to advancing gender equality, including a minimum of 1 per cent of ODA to women's organizations, especially those working on the front line of humanitarian response and grass-roots groups mobilizing for peace.

67. I propose convening an annual peacebuilding week to raise the profile of peacebuilding and sustaining peace; provide an opportunity for policymakers, peacebuilders and organizations to discuss and develop strategies to strengthen peacebuilding; and enhance international cooperation and commitment to implementing the relevant peacebuilding and sustaining peace resolutions. I encourage the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to consider holding two annual joint meetings to deepen the linkages between peace and development and to promote the coherence and impact of peacebuilding and sustainable development efforts of the United Nations on the ground. The bodies could also consider setting up joint expert-level task forces to follow up on the implementation of the outcomes. I encourage the Commission and the Human Rights Council to explore closer synergies, including through the effective implementation of Human Rights Council resolution [45/31](#).

68. I strongly encourage Member States to strengthen the Peacebuilding Commission as a platform to support Member States' progress on their nationally owned and led peacebuilding, sustaining peace and prevention efforts, focusing on facilitating regular, evidence-based exchanges among Member States, the United Nations entities, civil society, international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations. Member States could voluntarily present their prevention and peacebuilding strategies to the Commission, while the Commission brings together different stakeholders that can provide support to such strategies, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

69. I call upon Member States to provide adequate resources to meet the increasing logistical and substantive requirements for a strengthened Peacebuilding Commission. A designated conference facility for the Commission could enable it to have more regular meetings with the requisite conferencing capacities. Member States should also consider establishing an independent group of experts on peacebuilding to support the Commission and to strengthen capacity for Secretariat support to the Commission. I encourage Member States to strengthen the capacity of the

Peacebuilding Impact Hub to ensure better availability and usage of disaggregated data and evidence to support national peacebuilding efforts. I also urge Member States to ensure that resident coordinator offices in post-transition configurations are adequately resourced to maintain the necessary capacities to ensure continuity of support for developing countries, across all country contexts, as reflected in my report to the General Assembly ([A/78/753](#)).

70. I recommend that Member States consider strengthening the capacity of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide advice on countries that are about to leave the agenda of the Security Council or on countries that may benefit from a broader peacebuilding perspective. The Commission could monitor the implementation of mission transition plans as they relate to peacebuilding, document lessons learned and best practices and ensure a timely response to shortfalls as they arise.

71. I encourage Member States to build a robust foundation for collective resilience to crises at the national and subnational levels, with an emphasis on shielding vulnerable groups from the most severe impacts of crises. Deliberate efforts are required to ensure that peacebuilding contributes to the fulfilment of all human rights. This includes enhanced collaboration between humanitarian, human rights, development, and peace and security actors in country contexts and support for Member States to conduct risk analysis and implement priority conflict prevention and peacebuilding, development and human rights outcomes that are tailored to multidimensional needs.

72. The positive response of the General Assembly to my request to provide assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund and in implementation of the resolution on financing for peacebuilding was an important step forward. Member States should increase the assessed funds to \$100 million per year as requested in my report ([A/72/707-S/2018/43](#)) and explore ways to commit unspent peacekeeping budget funds to the Peacebuilding Fund. Increased contributions are required from a wider range of Member States, given the strong demand for United Nations peacebuilding support. Member States should also restore and increase voluntary funding to the United Nations entities working on peacebuilding. Member States should also fully implement the funding compact for United Nations support to the Sustainable Development Goals.

73. I urge the implementation of a Sustainable Development Goal stimulus to scale up affordable long-term financing for development. A Sustainable Development Goal stimulus could support the scale-up of critical investments for peace. It is important that international financial institutions play their role as “agents for peace”, recognizing that prevention and peacebuilding are critical enablers of and have strong ties with the sustainable development agenda. I also call for a robust replenishment of the International Development Association. Innovative financing solutions for peacebuilding are also welcomed, and peace initiatives should be scaled up, replicated and sustained through a new generation of partnerships, including with the private sector.