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Fifteenth session

Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 3 February 2021, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Rae (Canada)
later: Mr. Edrees (Egypt)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/15/OC/1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fourteenth session (PBC/14/OC/L.1)

2. **The Chair** said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Commission agreed to adopt the draft report using a no-objection procedure to begin after the current meeting.

3. *It was so decided.*

Election of officers

4. **The Chair** said that, in view of prior consultations among regional groups and members of the Organizational Committee, it was his understanding that the Committee was prepared to elect the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for its fifteenth session.

5. *Egypt was elected Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2021.*

6. **The Chair** said that the Group of Western European and other States had endorsed Canada for the position of Vice-Chair of the Commission for its fifteenth session.

7. *Canada was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2021.*

8. **The Chair** said that the Group of Eastern European States had endorsed Slovakia for the position of Vice-Chair of the Commission for its fifteenth session.

9. *Slovakia was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2021.*

10. *Brazil was re-elected as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration; Morocco was re-elected as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration; Sweden was re-elected as Chair of the Liberia configuration; and Switzerland was re-elected as Chair of the Burundi configuration for a term ending on 31 December 2021.*

Statement by the outgoing Chair

11. **The Chair** said that, over the course of 2020, which had been an unprecedented year, the Commission had held a record 37 meetings and had engaged in support of 15 country- and region-specific contexts, including new engagements with the Central African region, the Pacific islands and Somalia. It had developed substantive recommendations for the 2020 review of the

United Nations peacebuilding architecture and had provided advice to the Security Council a record 12 times. Nearly all that work had been carried out on virtual platforms, and the Commission had been the first United Nations body to adapt its working methods in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

12. In the past year, the Commission had demonstrated that it was a flexible, demand-driven platform that enabled honest discussions among partners about the challenges and risks to peace. As more countries began to see the value offered by the Commission, demand for its engagement would only continue to rise, and its members would need to determine how to manage growth while continuing to ensure deep and sustained engagement.

13. The COVID-19 pandemic had laid bare the fragility of the peacebuilding successes of the United Nations. Even after decades of international peacebuilding support, many countries were only one or two shocks away from falling into deep crisis. While working to build back better from the pandemic, the Commission must ensure conflict-sensitive responses and strengthen partnerships with international financial institutions.

14. In every country in which the Commission had engaged, the impact of the pandemic had been most severely felt by the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society, in particular women and girls. Notwithstanding the record number of women peacebuilders who had given briefings to the Commission in 2020, more must be done to put inclusivity at the heart of international peacebuilding efforts. The gender action plan developed by the Commission provided a road map to strengthen the Commission's work in that area.

15. The Commission had a responsibility to ensure that conflict-affected countries and the most vulnerable members of their societies did not fall further behind as a result of inadequate, ineffective or inequitable responses to the pandemic. The only way to respond to the crisis was through strengthened partnerships and financing. Canada had been proud to co-chair the replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund, held in January 2021, and would continue to advocate more predictable and sustained funding for peacebuilding. He looked forward to working with all members of the Commission to develop action-oriented inputs for the high-level meeting on peacebuilding financing to be held in 2022.

16. The use of virtual technology had enabled the Commission to have more contact with people on the

ground than ever before and to connect cheaply with people whose voices would not normally have been heard. The Commission should continue to listen to, learn from and amplify the voices and work of local peacebuilders.

Statements by the outgoing Vice-Chairs

17. **Mr. Kimihiro** (Japan) said that, in the past year, the Commission had acted swiftly and leveraged its flexible working methods to tackle the challenges faced by countries and regions affected by conflict and fragility, mobilizing support to help them to cope with the human security crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. Important thematic and cross-cutting discussions had helped the Commission to strengthen partnerships, share information and lessons learned, and compile expertise and knowledge.

18. In terms of the role of the Commission going forward, the Chair had, in his letter dated 2 July 2020 to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council ([A/74/935-S/2020/645](#)), underlined the need to explore innovative financing options and identify untapped resources. He had also emphasized the importance of establishing partnerships for effective peacebuilding, including with international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, civil society and the private sector, and of building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at the national and local levels in order to gain people's trust and enable countries to address challenges on their own.

19. In addition, by promoting geographically diverse engagement, the Commission could help to mobilize efforts to address regional challenges and facilitate mutual learning across regions. Ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of individuals in vulnerable situations was the ultimate objective of the Commission's work. The participation of all segments of society, especially women, young people and marginalized people, in the Commission's discussions should be encouraged. The Commission should engage with people and listen to their views by taking advantage of advances in technology.

20. **Mr. Fernandez De Soto Valderrama** (Colombia) said that, although 2020 had been an extraordinary year, the Commission had remained fully committed to its programme of work, which had been adapted to the difficult circumstances. As one of the Vice-Chairs, he had supported the efforts of the Chair to continue the Commission's work on a virtual platform, in accordance with the priorities set by the Commission. The draft annual report clearly reflected the ways in which the

Commission had fulfilled its objectives and tackled its challenges. One of the many achievements of the Commission over the past year had been the adoption of the twin resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (General Assembly resolution [75/201](#) and Security Council resolution [2558 \(2020\)](#)), which had been an important step towards enabling the various bodies of the system to work in a coordinated manner to achieve the best possible results.

21. The year 2020 had underscored the need for countries to work together towards common goals, which included not only combating the pandemic as the immediate priority, but also achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, eradicating poverty, ensuring education and overcoming conflict. The Commission should continue to seek synergies to build peace in different regions of the world. Through its work in the Commission, Colombia had shared lessons learned from the pandemic and, in turn, had helped move in its own peacebuilding process forward. Multilateral cooperation and international solidarity were needed more than ever.

22. *Mr. Edrees (Egypt) took the Chair.*

Statement by the incoming Chair

23. **The Chair** said that he was taking the Chair following the successful conclusion of the third five-year comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, which must continue to be implemented, with due attention to the impact made both at Headquarters and at the field level. During his term, he would endeavour to explore ways of strengthening the Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles, with a particular focus on encouraging all peacebuilding actors to give priority to creating impact in support of national peacebuilding objectives. He would also endeavour to further develop and streamline the Commission's programme of work and working methods. As an African Chair, he was fully committed to ensuring that the support of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture for building and sustaining peace in Africa would continue to receive due attention.

24. As the world continued to struggle with the destabilizing socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission was best placed to mobilize support for recovery efforts in countries affected by conflicts. Ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing was the most critical challenge facing the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The Commission had a key role to play in convening

relevant stakeholders and generating inputs for the forthcoming high-level meeting of the General Assembly on peacebuilding financing.

25. The Commission's advisory role to the Security Council should continue to be advanced to enable it to provide timely and meaningful advice and briefings to the Council, in particular during mandate renewals and transitions. Regarding the Commission's advisory role to the General Assembly, the Commission had an opportunity, under General Assembly resolution 74/302, to provide practical advice to the Assembly on collaboration between the United Nations system and the African Union in support of the Union's evolving ownership of its post-conflict reconstruction and development.

26. Egypt was keen to promote and expand the Commission's partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions, with a view to ensuring more efficiency and coherence in support of peacebuilding efforts. Enhancing the coherence and overall performance of the United Nations system in peacebuilding remained a priority.

27. The joint annual meeting of the Commission and the Economic and Social Council should be used to advance United Nations system-wide coherence in support of peacebuilding and to explore the practical and context-specific links between peacebuilding and sustainable development objectives in countries and regions supported by the Commission. The Commission's discussions should be context-, country- and/or region-specific for its contributions to become more impact driven.

Statement by the Assistant-Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support

28. **Mr. Fernandez-Taranco** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support), speaking via video link, said that, in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada had demonstrated its strong leadership by organizing meetings of the Commission on a virtual platform, taking advantage of the Commission's flexible working methods. As a result, the Commission's programme of work for 2020 had been very substantive, with 37 ambassadorial-level meetings, 25 of which had focused on 15 different country- and region-specific contexts. The Commission had held meetings for the first time on the Central African region and the Pacific islands. It had renewed its engagement in support of peacebuilding in Somalia and the Great Lakes region, and had ensured continuous support for national and regional peacebuilding efforts in West

Africa and the Sahel, including robust support for peacebuilding efforts in Burkina Faso and the Gambia. The Chairs of the four country-specific configurations had continued to work tirelessly to advance peacebuilding priorities in their areas of purview.

29. The cross-cutting and thematic issues of the women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda had figured prominently in the Commission's programme of work for 2020. Civil society representatives (who had participated in the Commission's meetings in record numbers), regional and subregional organizations, and international financial institutions, including the World Bank, had actively participated in the Commission's work, making important contributions.

30. Synergies between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund had been strengthened. Better use had been made of the Commission's policy discussions to inform decisions on the Fund's activities in a fully transparent manner, without compromising the Fund's independence. The recent high-level replenishment conference for the Fund had sent a strong signal of support for multilateral peacebuilding, with \$439 million mobilized in commitments and pledges for the Fund's strategy for 2020–2024, a 25 per cent increase over the contributions received in the previous three years. A total of 39 Member States had made pledges or commitments; most of the top donors had increased their commitments; and several smaller donors had announced significant increases. Although there had been no breakthrough in new major contributions, it had been remarkable that the recipient countries Burkina Faso, the Gambia, the Philippines and Sierra Leone had joined the group of donors. A total of 15 Commission members were currently contributing to the Fund, up from 11 in 2019.

31. The year 2020 had seen the successful completion of the third review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. In the twin resolutions adopted at its outcome, he particularly welcomed the focus on the critical importance of coherence; the decision to convene a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on financing during the seventy-sixth session; and the request for the Secretary-General to regularly report to Member States on the work of the United Nations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and on the impact of relevant United Nations reforms. The reforms had resulted in more active interdepartmental collaboration and stronger synergies with the regional divisions of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, which had allowed the Commission to receive richer and more up-to-date analyses and briefings.

32. The priorities of Egypt for 2021 confirmed that the Commission would continue to pursue an ambitious programme to support conflict-affected countries. He welcomed the decision to carry forward a number of priorities from previous years, such as peacebuilding financing, while also continuing to expand and strengthen the role of the Commission, including its advisory role to the Security Council.

Statements by the incoming Vice-Chairs

33. **Mr. Mlynár** (Slovakia) said that, at a time when the multifaceted crises arising from the COVID-19 pandemic were having a significant impact on conflict-affected countries, the role of the Commission was even more important in fostering unity and solidarity among Member States, the United Nations system and relevant actors to maintain support for peacebuilding. While the pandemic had made the Commission's work even more challenging, it also provided an opportunity to reflect on the Commission's work, priorities and practices and to make improvements for the future.

34. The Commission should maintain its people-centred approach. In its capacity as Vice-Chair, Slovakia was committed to mobilizing more effective support for efforts to build and sustain peace. The priorities of Slovakia in contributing to the fulfilment of the Commission's mandate were grouped as follows: coherence, coordination and complementarity; and participation, partnership and people. Slovakia also placed special emphasis on the issue of security sector governance and reform, which was central to efforts to build and sustain peace. Other important work lay ahead on thematic and cross-cutting issues, in particular the women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda.

35. **The Chair** invited the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to share their plans and priorities for 2021.

36. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco), speaking as the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration, said that, thanks to the commitment and flexibility of its former Chair, the Commission had been able to successfully transition to a virtual working environment, demonstrating that it was possible to deliver on mandates in such conditions. The peacebuilding expertise brought by Egypt as the newly elected Chair was a major asset for the Commission at a time when the recommendations of the recent review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture needed to be implemented. The recent experience of Egypt in the Security Council, its status as a major troop- and police-contributing country and its active role in the

Commission and partner organizations would also be of benefit to the Commission. His delegation fully supported the ambitious road map and the comprehensive priorities set out by the Chair.

37. A grave political crisis had taken hold in the Central African Republic, where a new coalition of armed groups, which had initially been established with the aim of preventing the presidential elections, had sought to discredit the outcome thereof and obstruct the transition. Serious violations had been committed against civilians, blue helmets and humanitarian workers, and the peace agreement of 2019 was under threat. On the eve of the presidential elections, the configuration had issued a statement calling for respect for the peace agreement and for the holding of free and transparent elections, and firmly condemning all attacks committed by the rebel groups. A letter of congratulations, which had been approved by the members of the configuration, had been sent to the President of the Central African Republic, covering key elements for the re-establishment of stability in the country. In January 2021, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) had given a briefing to the configuration on recent events in the country and the Chair of the National Electoral Authority had provided information about the forthcoming legislative and local elections.

38. The configuration must do everything in its power to support the Government of the Central African Republic and all partners to limit the impact of the instability arising from the COVID-19 pandemic on the peace dividends that had just begun to be seen in the country. Over the past year, the configuration had been working to support political processes, including by calling for financing of the United Nations Development Programme basket fund, to strengthen the rule of law and to revive the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan. Its current priorities were: safeguarding achievements, with particular attention to the political process; combating impunity, in particular through the launch of proceedings of the Special Criminal Court and support for the establishment of the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation; and reviving the economy. The configuration was also closely following the preparations for the forthcoming legislative elections, scheduled for June. Unfortunately, the other political parties, namely, the armed groups, had decided to withdraw from those elections, bringing further uncertainty to the political situation in the country. Particular attention would be given to the participation of women and to the strengthening of

partnerships of the Commission with other institutions, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

39. **Mr. Costa Filho** (Brazil), speaking as the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, said that, following the recent closure of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, the configuration was beginning a new phase of work with a reconfigured United Nations presence. The institutional changes should not hinder the configuration from ensuring adequate and timely support for the country's peacebuilding priorities.

40. The Commission must continue to engage with local and international partners and identify ways to support nationally defined priorities in the areas of socioeconomic development and institutional strengthening. It should engage in dialogue with national stakeholders and groups in order to build peace from within countries, with the international community playing a supporting role.

41. In Guinea-Bissau, the Commission would remain an important platform for coordination and advocacy, bringing together all interested stakeholders to further the country's peacebuilding agenda, including the reforms outlined in the Conakry Agreement on the Implementation of the Economic Community of West African States Road Map for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The Commission's joint work would be even more relevant in mitigating the negative socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

42. **Ms. Eneström** (Sweden), speaking as the Chair of the Liberia configuration, said that the 2020 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture had highlighted the progress achieved and the remaining challenges in the sustaining peace agenda. The Commission should continue to make use of its flexible and advisory role to contribute to further advancing that agenda. The Commission must continue to call for good peacebuilding financing and long-term, flexible funding. Efforts to ensure the participation of women and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peacebuilding continued to be vital, as was the inclusion of young people and civil society organizations. Cross-cutting approaches needed to be developed in the areas of climate change, conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

43. Although Liberia had made solid progress towards sustainable peace, the situation remained fragile and had been further threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Working together with the Government of Liberia, the Permanent Mission of

Liberia to the United Nations in New York and the people of Liberia, the configuration intended to focus on the following overarching themes: national reconciliation efforts, under which it would be able to work on issues related to youth and peace and security; and the promotion of the empowerment of women and gender equality, including through advancing the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. As part of its efforts to consolidate democratic developments in Liberia, the configuration would support preparations for the holding of peaceful, transparent and inclusive presidential elections in 2023. Together with the Permanent Mission of Liberia, the configuration would continue to engage with civil society, local actors, international financial institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank, regional actors, including the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union, the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Liberia and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel.

44. Sweden stood ready to continue to support the Commission in building on previous gains, including with respect to the Commission's role as a key advisory body to the Security Council.

45. **Ms. Baeriswyl** (Switzerland), speaking as the Chair of the Burundi configuration, said that the configuration welcomed the continued engagement of the Government of Burundi with the Commission, the mobilization of resources for socioeconomic development and the strengthening of bilateral and multilateral relations. It would continue to bring together key stakeholders and to serve as a platform for exchanges and dialogue on the priorities of Burundi.

46. It was more crucial than ever to commit fully to peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts. The devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were compounding the risks threatening the gains made in peacebuilding and development in conflict-affected countries. In its resolution [75/201](#), the General Assembly had emphasized the need to integrate sustaining peace into efforts to build back better and the importance of a shared commitment to the implementation of a holistic approach that integrated the three pillars of the United Nations. As had been reaffirmed at the replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund, serious investment should be made in the human aspect of peacebuilding, and peacekeepers of all ages working in the field, especially women, deserved to be heard and supported.

47. **The Chair** said that he was determined to further strengthen the concept of “One Peacebuilding Commission” and therefore wished to organize quarterly meetings to take stock of the progress made and the challenges requiring collective action in support of the efforts of the Chairs of the country-specific configurations.

General discussion

48. **The Chair** said that the representatives of Burundi, the Gambia and Sierra Leone had asked to participate in the discussion of the item under consideration.

49. *At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Ngendankengera (Burundi), Mr. Jaiteh (Gambia) and Mr. Kabba (Sierra Leone) took a place at the Committee table.*

50. **Ms. Fatima** (Bangladesh) said that her delegation welcomed the balance struck by the Commission across country-specific, regional and thematic issues in its work. As one of the leading troop-contributing countries, Bangladesh recognized the contribution of peacekeepers to peacebuilding, including in transition contexts, where they laid the foundation for relevant stakeholders to build and sustain peace. National capacity-building through meaningful partnerships was of great importance in countries emerging from conflicts. The twin resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture would further strengthen the Commission’s role in advancing the work of the United Nations to prevent conflict and sustain peace across the three pillars.

51. While the replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund had succeeded in generating part of the funding requirements, the perennial challenge of peacebuilding financing needed a permanent solution, not quick fixes. The decision to hold a high-level meeting on peacebuilding financing during the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly was welcome. Consensus must be reached on identifying and reinforcing the means to secure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding.

52. As a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Bangladesh would endeavour to continue to act as a bridge between the Commission and the Movement.

53. **Ms. Brandt** (Netherlands) said that the Commission found itself, 15 years after its establishment, in an increasingly complex and interconnected world, and the COVID-19 pandemic had put further strain on peacebuilding efforts. The work of the Commission as a flexible, demand-driven platform

for coordination and advocacy was therefore more important than ever.

54. The Netherlands would be able to make a significant contribution to the work of the Commission because it shared the Commission’s commitment to prevention, an integrated approach to peacebuilding with a focus on country ownership, and the creation of impact through partnerships. On that basis, the Netherlands had been a steady supporter of the Peacebuilding Fund and of other programmes for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

55. The inclusion of local peacebuilders, in particular women and young people, in the Commission’s work was essential. More must be done to ensure sustainable and predictable financing of peacebuilding efforts. Access to inclusive and accountable justice was key to sustainable peace. In that regard, supporting community-based and informal justice or conflict resolution mechanisms could be as important as strengthening formal systems and mechanisms. Mental health and psychosocial support was indispensable for building lasting peace and should be an integral part of peacebuilding efforts in order to break cycles of conflict.

56. Her country would endeavour to put its recent experiences in the Security Council, its status as a member of the Economic and Social Council and its active participation in different boards to full use in support of collective efforts for peacebuilding.

57. **Mr. Kimani** (Kenya) said that his delegation would work with the Bureau and the countries engaging with the Commission to turn the priorities outlined by the Chair for 2021 into practical impact and to ensure that the Commission’s cooperation with the Security Council was vibrant and responsive. The Commission should make full use of its convening and advisory roles to provide to countries experiencing fragility and conflict a quicker, more secure path to competent governance, economic development with job creation, environmental sustainability and inclusive politics.

58. Too often, the solutions put forward when responding to an emerging crisis or endeavouring to end a protracted conflict lacked proper sequencing and transition measures. The Commission was uniquely positioned to facilitate deliberations that would lead to more comprehensive solutions. To that end, post-conflict reconstruction efforts should be combined to stimulate the domestic private sector and its ability to provide jobs for young people. Civic education efforts in support of peacebuilding should be partnered with environmental and sustainability initiatives, which in turn could be connected to the climate change and

mitigation agenda. International financial institutions and other investors should be centrally involved in such efforts to enable the Commission to generate practical and impactful outcomes. A Commission renowned for impact would attract fragile countries wishing to prevent a deterioration into violent conflict. The Commission would then become a key component of preventive mechanisms that respected national ownership and sovereignty.

59. In 2016, Kenya had given a briefing to the Security Council on the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, specifically, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. As a member of the Security Council, Kenya would insist on stronger links with the African Union. The combined effect of the Commission and the Council both expanding their engagement with the African Union would be solutions that were closer to the ground and more nuanced.

60. **Mr. Hitti** (Lebanon) said that his delegation welcomed the priorities laid out by the Chair, which would strengthen the peacebuilding agenda in helping conflict-ridden countries. His delegation looked forward to the adoption of the draft report of the Commission and welcomed the thematic and cross-cutting issues in the forward agenda. Lebanon would emphasize the importance of combating climate change and protecting the environment to advance peace and security.

61. **Mr. Sautter** (Germany) said that, as the informal coordinator between the Commission and the Security Council, Germany had been especially grateful to the former Chair for the close collaboration in attempting to bring the Commission closer to the Security Council. His country was highly committed to peacebuilding, both politically and financially. The issue of financing and the need for Member States to find new ways to secure reliable and predictable ways of financing for peacebuilding were focuses of his country. Germany had been the largest contributor to the Peacebuilding Fund in 2019 and 2020, and had renewed its commitment while co-hosting the replenishment conference. It had pledged 50 million euros for 2021 and 2022, marking the first time that it had secured a multi-year commitment, which would ensure more predictable financing of the Fund. It was encouraging that pledges of more than \$400 million had been secured for the period 2020–2024 and that new donors had made commitments to contribute to the Fund. Germany had announced that it would work together with Member States to organize a high-level event on innovative funding for peace.

62. **Mr. Murugasu** (France) said that the Commission had demonstrated that it brought real added value to the discussions of the Security Council, in particular on regional and cross-cutting issues. The briefings delivered by the Commission to the Council during meetings on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and on the role of women in the Great Lakes region had been particularly useful. His delegation welcomed the recommendations made by the Central African Republic configuration to the Council ahead of the renewal of the mandate of MINUSCA. The Burundi configuration should pursue constructive dialogue based on trust to continue to support the country following the political transition in 2020.

63. In 2021, the Commission should continue to promote the youth and peace and security agenda and the women and peace and security agenda. The link between climate change and conflict prevention and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on development and peacebuilding should be taken into account in the Commission's work. Continued efforts should be made to improve the functioning of the Commission. The meetings of the Commission could have even greater impact if statements were shortened and focused on proposals and questions. The Commission should continue to strengthen partnerships, in particular with the World Bank and regional organizations. The Commission's work should complement the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund. Financial support, in particular from the members of the Commission, was essential. France had quadrupled its contribution to the Fund, to \$4.5 million.

64. **Mr. Kvalheim** (Norway) said that his country continued to view the Commission as one of the most important multilateral tools for advancing and sustaining peace for vulnerable communities. As a member of both the Commission and the Security Council, Norway would place preventive diplomacy and sustainable peace at the heart of its efforts. It would endeavour to strengthen the role of the Commission as an advisory body to the Council and to ensure that a joined-up approach at Headquarters was effectively transformed into results on the ground. In both the Commission and the Council, Norway would focus on strengthening the conflict prevention and resolution efforts of the United Nations, enhancing the protection of civilians, promoting the participation and rights of women in peace processes, and highlighting the links between security and sustainable development, including security concerns related to climate change.

65. **Mr. Mohammad Aamir Khan** (Pakistan) said that the expanded scope of the country- and region-specific

engagements of the Commission, coupled with the thematic and cross-cutting issues, underlined the growing importance of the Commission's work. The Commission should continue to build on the momentum from the recent replenishment conference by leveraging its advisory and convening roles to promote conflict prevention and resolution as part of a comprehensive peacebuilding approach. It should also continue to promote coherence across the United Nations system to facilitate the development of integrated peacebuilding strategies. The outcomes of the Commission's meetings should be used in a strategic manner, with a view to supporting the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council.

66. As a founding member of the Commission and a leading troop-contributing country, Pakistan had witnessed the critical difference that effective peacebuilding could make to conflict situations. International peacebuilding could produce results only when it was connected with local and community efforts and priorities. An inclusive and participatory approach was the only way to build peaceful societies in which State institutions and the population enjoyed mutual trust.

67. While the Commission should continue to give priority to conflict-affected countries, greater attention should be given to situations where peacekeeping operations were being reconfigured. Effective use should be made of the Commission in addressing the peacebuilding capacities of United Nations country teams, especially during transitions. The Commission should continue to leverage its comparative advantage in both strategic and operational coordination, especially through country-specific meetings, which allowed host countries to promote their strategic priorities among international partners and were critical for strengthening national ownership of peacebuilding activities. Strong feedback loops among actors in the field, troop-contributing countries, the Commission and the Security Council could give policymakers a deeper understanding of the dynamics of conflicts, helping them to make informed policies and pragmatic decisions. The Commission should galvanize a targeted effort to advance innovative financing solutions for infrastructure development in countries facing conflict or fragility.

68. The enduring impact of the COVID-19 pandemic would be felt the most in the poorest countries. For the first time in more than 20 years, development was being reversed. The Commission could play a positive role in mitigating the rising threat by leveraging its convening role to generate political support to fund project preparation and financial feasibility studies for

infrastructure development, especially during post-conflict reconstruction. Its collaboration with the Economic and Social Council in the area of peacebuilding and development, with due consideration given to the socioeconomic implications of the pandemic in conflict-affected countries, would be of great help in that regard. The Commission should continue to strengthen its engagement with the Peacebuilding Fund, as a mutually reinforcing relationship built on coordination and complementarities would be of benefit to both entities.

69. **Mr. Cho Hyun** (Republic of Korea) said that the election of Egypt as Chair was symbolic, given the number of African countries on the Commission's agenda and the growing importance of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. With so many countries on the Commission's agenda affected by climate change, the Commission must give priority to that issue in its future deliberations. As a country that was firmly committed to supporting multilateral peacebuilding efforts, the Republic of Korea would incorporate the sustaining peace agenda into the 2021 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference, to be held in Seoul.

70. **Mr. Fogarty** (United States of America) said that, despite the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 had been a record-setting year for the Commission in terms of the scope of its work and the results achieved. The Commission had contributed to the pandemic response by addressing the national and regional implications for peacebuilding. It had broadened its geographical focus to the Pacific islands and other parts of Africa, and had advised on election processes in six countries. By giving priority to diversity and inclusion, the Commission had ensured that it remained a viable platform for dialogue not only between Governments, but also with a diverse array of non-governmental partners. The Commission had focused on promoting gender-responsive peacebuilding, and the number of women peacebuilders giving briefings to the Commission had quadrupled in 2020.

71. Amid the extraordinary challenges of the past year and a packed programme of work, the Commission had not only fulfilled its critical advisory role but also delivered impactful results. It had carried out the months-long review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, which had culminated in the adoption of the twin resolutions. Through the recent replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund, Member States had raised \$439 million for years to come.

72. **Mr. Kabba** (Sierra Leone) said that his country had been proud to co-chair the replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund, which had been a significant step on a much longer path towards ensuring more sustained and predictable financing for peacebuilding efforts. His delegation commended Canada for its stewardship of the Sierra Leone configuration over the years and was grateful to the Commission for the successful holding of a formal exit ceremony to mark the conclusion of its engagement with Sierra Leone through a country-specific configuration.

73. As a country that had been a beneficiary of the advocacy and convening power of the Commission and of funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, Sierra Leone was particularly pleased with the progress made by the Commission in supporting countries in situations of conflict or transition. It welcomed the Commission's work in promoting gender issues, giving priority to the financing of peacebuilding activities and developing partnerships to build and sustain peace. The Commission should consider utilizing its convening role to facilitate a regional approach to peacebuilding. In that regard, it should begin to consider the Mano River Union countries. The Commission should continue to strengthen private sector engagement to determine where investments could be made to manage extractive industries and other key aspects of the economy.

74. Sierra Leone called upon the Commission for assistance in setting up a commission on peace and national cohesion and in other priority areas relating to human capital development, economic diversification, institutional resilience and governance, and COVID-19 response and recovery.

75. **Mr. Jaiteh** (Gambia) said that his delegation had learned important lessons from its engagement with the Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office and from the crucial support provided through the Peacebuilding Fund. The early mobilization and timely intervention of the United Nations and the Commission had made a critical difference to the support provided to the new Government of the Gambia. By responding to the specific needs of the Government, a platform for national ownership had been created. His Government remained a friend and partner of the Commission.

76. **Mr. Nze** (Nigeria) said that, in view of the challenges in West Africa and the Sahel, his delegation hoped to be able to contribute to thematic debates and to play a vital role in promoting peacebuilding activities, in particular in that region. It would encourage greater inclusion of young people in peacebuilding processes, so as to facilitate their transformation into agents of

peace and change in their societies. His delegation was confident that the Commission would support the peacebuilding efforts of women, in particular in communities affected by violent extremism. Ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing of peacebuilding efforts was essential to effective responses to conflicts. In that regard, his delegation acknowledged the important roles played by the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Partnerships among international, regional, national and civil society organizations and international financial institutions should be strengthened to bring greater coherence to peacebuilding efforts.

77. **Mr. Ngendankengera** (Burundi) said that the evaluation of the investments of the Peacebuilding Fund in Burundi would make 2021 an important year for Burundi, since more than six years had passed since the previous evaluation of the portfolio. A comprehensive and inclusive study of peacebuilding in the country was under way with the objective of analysing the challenges to peace and development and the priorities and opportunities from the point of view of the populations surveyed, taking into account previous studies and recent developments. To build on the successes of past investments, the Peacebuilding Fund should continue to invest in Burundi in order to contribute to the development of a culture of peace and the strengthening of the resilience of the people, especially young people.

78. His delegation wished to thank Switzerland as the Chair of the Burundi configuration for its firm commitment to putting an end to the country's prevailing security, political and socioeconomic situation. Burundi intended to continue to cooperate fully with the configuration. His delegation had no doubt that, through the configuration, the Commission would continue to support the efforts of the new Government, whose recognition of the importance of addressing the causes of conflict had been demonstrated by its inclusion of peace and reconciliation among its priorities. The United Nations and the international community should support the people of Burundi in their desire for positive change by capitalizing on the momentum from the recent elections.

79. **Ms. Jacobs** (United Kingdom) said that 2020 had been the first year in which more stakeholders from outside than within the United Nations had given briefings to the Commission, which reflected the broadening engagement of the Commission with national leaders, civil society, regional organizations and international financial institutions. Progress had been made on the inclusion of women peacebuilders in

the Commission's discussions and on the implementation of the Commission's gender strategy. Momentum had been increasing to address financing, most recently through the replenishment conference for the Peacebuilding Fund. As Co-Chair with Sweden of the Friends of the Peacebuilding Fund, the United Kingdom had been particularly encouraged to see new countries, including previous recipients of support from the Fund, contributing to the Fund.

80. Sierra Leone had moved into a new relationship with the Commission, which was a milestone that the United Kingdom, as a close partner of Sierra Leone, warmly welcomed. Her delegation also welcomed the broader array of countries – from Burkina Faso to the Pacific islands – seeking support from the Commission. The Commission's convening role within and beyond the United Nations served an important function. Her delegation wished to thank Germany for its work as the informal coordinator between the Commission and the Security Council and looked forward to working with Kenya as the new coordinator.

81. As the global pandemic continued, 2021 was already shaping up to be a challenging year. Nevertheless, her delegation was committed to maximizing the impact of the Commission for countries grappling with peacebuilding challenges.

82. **Mr. Srivihok** (Thailand) said that 17 years had passed since the former Prime Minister of Thailand and Chair of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, Anand Panyarachun, had proposed setting up the Commission as part of a more effective United Nations for the twenty-first century. In the light of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and the paradigm shift towards sustaining peace, the Commission was even more relevant. His delegation would strive to further advance the Commission's agenda and to make contributions that cut across all three pillars of the United Nations, including in the areas of sustainable peace, South-South and triangular cooperation in peacebuilding and sustainable development, and the promotion of the roles of peacekeepers as early peacebuilders and of the sufficiency economy philosophy in support of peacebuilding efforts.

83. **Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) said that her delegation looked forward to helping to improve collaboration between the Commission and the Security Council, especially ahead of mandate renewals. The bridging role of the Commission was a crucial element of a "whole-of-system" approach that could enhance the ability of the United Nations to address all root causes of conflict and factors of instability, including climate-

related risks, in order to meaningfully confront major challenges. In the draft report of the Commission for 2020, the unique relevance of the Commission's work had been highlighted, with emphasis on the benefits of an all-inclusive approach, the continuing expansion of its engagement and the importance of national ownership and leadership. Importance must continue to be placed on the role of meaningful partnerships and predictable, sustainable financing to support long-term strategic priorities. Her delegation stood ready to contribute to improving the convening and advisory capacities of the Commission to advance the holistic understanding that the United Nations had of contemporary challenges.

84. **Ms. Huang** Lijin (China) said that, since the inception of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in 2006, the Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office had closely collaborated to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and had coordinated international support for post-conflict reconstruction, with positive results achieved. The Commission and its country configurations should leverage their strengths, respect country ownership, promote partnerships, provide even more valuable advice to the Council and help countries to strengthen capacity-building, consolidate peace dividends and achieve lasting peace and sustainable development.

85. **Ms. Joyini** (South Africa) said that her delegation would continue to support and promote the work of the Commission, including its role as an advisory body to the main United Nations organs, the financing of peacebuilding efforts, national ownership, partnerships and an inclusive approach to peacebuilding efforts with the involvement of women and young people. Her delegation looked forward to actively and effectively contributing to the implementation of resolutions on building and sustaining peace and to promoting greater coherence among peacebuilding efforts. It was vital to ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic did not reverse the gains made in sustaining and building peace. Peacemaking must be inclusive and involve all sectors of society, including those often marginalized.

86. Congratulating Egypt as the new Chair, she noted that South Africa and Egypt shared a deep commitment to the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations to build and sustain peace. Congratulating Slovakia as the new Vice-Chair, she noted that South Africa and Slovakia were Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform, which was an integral aspect of peacebuilding that should be advanced in countries emerging from conflict.

87. **Mr. Edlie** (Ethiopia) said that his country had played a leading role in peacekeeping and more than 8,000 Ethiopian troops were currently serving in some of the most challenging places in the world. Working with, and receiving support from, the Commission was therefore vital for Ethiopia. To address the issue of financing of peacebuilding, efforts should be made to garner more financial support and to ensure that pledges met actual demands.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.