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Sixteenth session

Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 1 February 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt)
later: Ms. Fatima (Bangladesh)

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

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/16/OC/1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fifteenth session (PBC/15/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 sixteenth session.

5. *Bangladesh was elected Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2022.*

6. **The Chair** said that the Group of African States had endorsed Egypt for the position of Vice-Chair of the Commission for its sixteenth session.

7. *Egypt was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2022.*

8. **The Chair** said that the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had endorsed the Dominican Republic for the position of Vice-Chair of the Commission for its sixteenth session.

9. *The Dominican Republic was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation for a term ending on 31 December 2022.*

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 2022.*

Statement by the outgoing Chair

11. **The Chair** said that, over the course of 2021, the Commission had held 29 meetings and had engaged in support of 23 country- and region-specific contexts, the highest number since its inception, including new engagements with the situation in the Gulf of Guinea and the transition in Chad. It had produced 66 outcome documents and had participated in 11 non-United Nations forums, solidifying the trend of increased engagement with partners outside the United Nations

system. In addition, the Commission had provided advice to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council a total of eight, four and three times respectively.

12. The Commission had made concerted efforts to promote the women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda, including by adopting action plans on both agendas and encouraging the participation of women and youth peacebuilders in the Commission's meetings.

13. As financing for peacebuilding remained a critical challenge, the Commission had been working to advance the discussion on exploring a variety of financing options proposed by the Secretary-General since 2018. That work had culminated in the Commission's annual session on financing for peacebuilding, at which the need for additional financing, including through assessed contributions, had been acknowledged. Member States should therefore consider funding through assessed contributions ahead of the forthcoming high-level General Assembly meeting on financing for peacebuilding.

14. Egypt had assumed the Chair of the Commission against the backdrop of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. During his country's tenure as Chair, the Commission had continued to consider the impact of COVID-19 on national peacebuilding objectives, in addition to strengthening its collaboration with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with a focus on pandemic recovery.

15. The Commission was well placed to foster global solidarity in response to the complex crises of the twenty-first century and to enhance effective multilateralism. It continued to play a crucial role in enhancing effective multilateralism, guided by the report of the Secretary-General, *Our Common Agenda*.

Statements by the outgoing Vice-Chair

16. **Mr. Mlynár** (Slovakia) said that the Commission's activity over the previous year, including its adoption of 66 outcome documents, attested to its emerging role as advisory body to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. That role must continue to be strengthened and enhanced, with the support of Security Council members in particular.

17. Despite the challenges posed by the use of virtual platforms to conduct most of the Commission's activities in 2021, virtual technology had enabled the Commission to increase its engagement with civil society, the governmental representatives of relevant countries and other key stakeholders.

18. The priorities of Slovakia, in its capacity as Vice-Chair, had included people, participation and partnerships; coherence, coordination and complementarity; and security sector governance and reform. The meeting on security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, held in December 2021, had been an important contribution to the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda. The Commission should continue to engage with the youth and peace and security agenda, in the context of the Secretary-General's report, *Our Common Agenda*.

19. *Ms. Fatima (Bangladesh) took the Chair.*

Statement by the incoming Chair

20. **The Chair** said that her overarching goal as Chair of the Commission would be to ensure timely engagement with and adequate support to the countries under its consideration, expanding demand-driven focus and further advancing the Commission's advisory, bridging and convening roles, with the support of members and other partners. Against the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic-related constraints on existing peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries and related rises in poverty, inequality and digital divides, the twin resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture assumed greater relevance, with their emphasis on the need to integrate peacebuilding and sustaining peace into global efforts to build back better. In the coming session, the Commission would focus on promoting global solidarity to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on development and peacebuilding, including through close collaboration with the Economic and Social Council within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

21. She would work closely with the Commission to provide substantive inputs to the General Assembly in support of an action-oriented outcome of the high-level General Assembly meeting on financing for peacebuilding, which would be held later that year. As the leading contributor of troops and police to United Nations peace operations, Bangladesh considered it vital to leverage the positive footprint of peacekeepers, who played a crucial role in assisting host countries to develop critical peacebuilding capacities, support other peacebuilding actors and help build the capacity of national institutions during transitions.

22. The Commission would prioritize responding to growing requests for support from countries, as its relevance rested on a timely and coordinated response. It was committed to ensuring meaningful follow-up to its engagement in regional peacebuilding initiatives,

such as the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. Moreover, strengthening the Commission's liaison with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council would be necessary to consolidate the Commission's advisory role with those bodies.

23. Bangladesh was keen to leverage the Commission's bridging and convening roles to foster broader partnership in support of nationally led peacebuilding efforts, including through stronger partnership with regional and subregional organizations and international and regional financial institutions. South-South and triangular cooperation could serve to mobilize critical resources and create platforms for sharing ideas and good practices. Engagement with civil society and the private sector on peacebuilding and sustaining peace had increased in recent years; creating more opportunities for such engagement would remain a priority.

24. In view of the need to build system-wide coherence, a priority underscored in the twin resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, the Commission would focus on a more coherent and effective delivery of peacebuilding goals by United Nations country teams and United Nations funds and programmes in support of national peacebuilding priorities. Interlinkages between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund should be strengthened in order to implement peacebuilding projects on the ground effectively, and the Commission would work to mobilize the United Nations system and other relevant actors to build the capacity of national and local institutions in countries under the Commission's consideration, in line with their national priorities. She would support enhancing the hinge role of the Peacebuilding Support Office for effective interface among the various sectors.

25. The women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda served to strengthen the Commission's work and promote inclusive approaches to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The devastating impact of the pandemic on women and youth would require the Commission to devote greater attention to both agendas. The Commission's gender strategy and action plan and its action plan for youth and peacebuilding laid out ambitious goals for empowering women and youth. The aim would be to promote more structured engagement among United Nations agencies and Governments for effective implementation of both frameworks on the ground.

26. In the coming session, the Commission looked forward to further engagement with the Secretary-General to contribute to the ongoing discussions on the proposals set out in his report, *Our Common Agenda*, with regard to peacebuilding and sustaining peace within the broader ambit of a new agenda for peace.

27. Lastly, she intended to consult with Commission members and representatives of countries engaging with the Commission before finalizing the work plan for 2022, in order to devise a well-developed and suitably flexible programme of work.

28. **Ms. Dabo** (Director and Officer-in-Charge, Peacebuilding Support Office, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) said that the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would continue supporting the Commission's collaborative approach, whose success hinged on the relationships of trust developed over the years between Commission members and the countries that engaged with the Commission. Looking ahead to 2022, increasing extremist militant attacks and political instability risked reversing gains that the Commission had been supporting for years, hence the need for recalibrated action and more effective support. At the same time, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated inequality and increased polarization in most countries with which the Commission engaged. The erosion of social cohesion was the global risk that had intensified the most since the start of the pandemic.

29. In the wake of the devastation wrought by the pandemic, there was a clear opportunity to rebuild society and systems that were fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable. Eager to build on the good practices and lessons learned, including from the positive examples shared with the Commission by grass-roots women- and youth-led organizations in 2021, the Peacebuilding Support Office had identified seven interconnected areas for follow-up by the Commission.

30. First, a greater focus on impact would be needed, bringing more action-oriented analysis to the Commission's attention in addition to ensuring commensurate attention from the Commission's representatives at the highest level. Continuous focus on results on the ground was key to expanding the Commission's work in more settings; that expansion would, in turn, allow the Commission to pursue cross-cutting issues of security, climate change, gender, health, development and human rights that the Secretary-General had highlighted in his report, *Our Common Agenda*.

31. Secondly, the promising emphasis on inclusivity in the Commission's work, as evidenced by the increased participation of civil society and private sector representatives, including women and youth peacebuilders, should continue.

32. Thirdly, sustained attention on Organization-wide coherence was paramount. The Peacebuilding Support Office would continue to bring cross-pillar analysis to the Commission's attention, with a focus on special representatives of the Secretary-General, resident coordinators and other voices from the field that were leading United Nations peacebuilding efforts. The Office would continue its practice of updating the Commission on the Peacebuilding Fund portfolio, assessments and evaluation, as synergy with the Fund had proven successful in enhancing United Nations coherence.

33. Fourthly, it would be necessary to develop more effective partnerships with regional organizations and international financial institutions, building on suggestions made during past consultative meetings of the Commission with the African Union Peace and Security Council and on the United Nations system's successful initiatives, such as those supported by the United Nations-World Bank Humanitarian, Development, Peacebuilding and Partnership Facility.

34. Fifthly, more effective advocacy was needed for financing for peacebuilding. Ahead of the forthcoming negotiations regarding the Commission's advice to the General Assembly on financing for peacebuilding, the Peacebuilding Support Office would continue to support efforts to ensure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding.

35. Sixthly, the Commission's bridging and advisory role must continue to be enhanced. The Peacebuilding Support Office would continue to support the Commission's initiative to improve the quality and timeliness of its submissions to other intergovernmental bodies and peacebuilding forums, including more regular advice to the Security Council on mission mandate renewals. She welcomed ongoing discussion among Member States on ways of sharing that responsibility with the Office.

36. Lastly, greater emphasis on accountability would be required. The Peacebuilding Support Office would continue to help the Commission keep track of its results and good practices; that approach had informed the development of action plans to guide the Commission's work in support of women and youth peacebuilders. It would continue to bring data and evidence-based progress reports to the Commission's attention on a regular basis.

Statement by the incoming Vice-Chair

37. **Mr. Blanco Conde** (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation's priorities as Vice-Chair included strengthening the role of young people in peacebuilding and tackling such unconventional threats to peace and human rights as food insecurity, climate change, social exclusion and the impact of COVID-19. The Dominican Republic would continue to support efforts to strengthen the Commission and the peacebuilding architecture, including by securing adequate and predictable funding, to enhance its advisory role to other United Nations organs on the basis of objectivity and non-politicization and to consolidate the Commission as an open and impartial forum to support vulnerable Member States on their path to development and stability.

38. **The Chair** invited the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to share their plans and priorities for 2022.

39. **Ms. Baeriswyl** (Switzerland), speaking as the Chair of the Burundi configuration, said that the configuration's focus in 2021 had been on mobilizing continued and coherent international support for peacebuilding and development in Burundi, on exploring ways in which national donors, the United Nations and the World Bank could meet the needs of the country's most economically vulnerable people and on calling for meaningful, diversified and effective youth engagement in building a lasting peace. The Government of Burundi had achieved progress in developing its domestic and foreign policy, including by adopting the new National Programme on Peace Capitalization, Social Stability and Promotion of Economic Growth.

40. She looked forward to continued engagement and hoped that, on a future visit, the configuration would have the opportunity to draw up a road map on mobilizing donors around shared priorities for peacebuilding in Burundi. She also welcomed the peacebuilding reforms launched by the Secretary-General in the new agenda for peace set out in his report, *Our Common Agenda*, as well as his recommendations on sustainable, predictable and sufficient funding for peacebuilding. As a member of the Group of Friends of Peacebuilding and a candidate for Security Council membership for 2023–2024, Switzerland would continue to support the work of the Commission and a holistic approach to peacebuilding.

41. **Ms. Eneström** (Sweden), speaking as the Chair of the Liberia configuration, said that the demand for peacebuilding support was greater than ever. The Secretary-General's report, *Our Common Agenda*, placed renewed emphasis on the importance of

prevention. As violent conflicts grew more complex, there was a need to base prevention and peacebuilding on better links between peace and security, human rights, climate and development, and to adopt comprehensive and coordinated approaches that focused on the root causes of conflict. The Commission had a central role to play in that regard.

42. The Commission's engagement with human rights issues was paramount, as human rights mechanisms formed an integral part of the Commission's bridging mandate. Ahead of the upcoming high-level meeting on financing for peacebuilding, her delegation would continue to call for increased quality and quantity of financing, stronger partnership, flexibility and predictability.

43. In its continued support of the peacebuilding priorities of Liberia, the Liberia configuration would focus on supporting a peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent electoral process in Liberia; promoting the empowerment of women and gender equality, including through advancement of the women and peace and security agenda; and exploring linkages between the environment, climate change and peace and security in support of the country's newly adopted National Adaptation Plan. The configuration would continue to engage with civil society, local actors, international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank, and regional actors, including the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union.

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

45. **Mr. Costa Filho** (Brazil), speaking as the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, said that the configuration remained fully committed to supporting Guinea-Bissau in its political stabilization process as the Government endeavoured to deliver on the eight peacebuilding priorities identified in its national development plan. The configuration attached particular importance to institutional reform and socioeconomic development, in line with the core principle of national ownership.

46. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco), speaking as the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration, said that the Central African Republic had held legislative elections in 2021, enabling the Government to preserve institutional stability. In addition, the President had declared a ceasefire, as called for in the joint road map for peace in the Central African Republic adopted at the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region in

September 2021. The aim had been to create a climate conducive to holding a republican dialogue, which had yet to be convened owing to a number of obstacles, most recently the regrettable decision by the opposition to withdraw from the organizing committee.

47. He called upon all parties to continue engaging with a view to holding an inclusive republican dialogue, thereby fulfilling the hope of relaunching the peace process. In 2021, significant progress had been achieved towards combating impunity, strengthening the rule of law through the operationalization of transitional justice mechanisms, in particular, the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Criminal Court, and establishing a commission of inquiry on violations of human rights by the armed forces. Nevertheless, considerable challenges remained in various areas, including implementation of the peace process, good governance and decentralization.

48. All technical and financial partners should redouble their efforts to support governmental efforts to emerge from the crisis and consolidate peace gains. The configuration attached priority to supporting the implementation of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. It would continue to follow closely the 2022 elections, the first to be held in the country since 1988, and would underscore the importance of access to justice, including in coordination with the Special Criminal Court reference group.

General discussion

49. **The Chair** said that she intended to hold quarterly meetings to take stock of the progress made and the remaining challenges.

50. **Mr. Ishikane** (Japan) said that it was important to ensure that the lingering COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts, as well as the consequences of climate change, did not impair efforts aimed at peacebuilding and sustaining peace. It would be useful to review the realities on the ground in the conflict-affected communities. For example, a close eye must be kept on the situation related to COVID-19 vaccinations and climate-related hazards in those communities to see how they were holding back efforts and discuss what needed to be done. The Commission's work should refocus on the development-peace-humanitarian nexus.

51. To prepare for the forthcoming high-level meeting of the General Assembly, the Commission had the duty to provide inputs on ways to ensure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. In the light of the development-peace-humanitarian nexus, the financial needs to sustain peace were

enormous and required the mobilization of the entire United Nations funding mechanisms and beyond. Therefore, the Commission should contribute to the financing discussion by making full use of its convening power, strengthening coordination with other United Nations entities and reaching out beyond the United Nations system to all possible sources of funding.

52. The Commission's function as a platform to share best practices and lessons learned across the regions should be further leveraged. While drivers of conflicts could differ depending on the given geopolitical or historical context, a comparative analysis provided fresh insights. The members of the Commission could learn from each other through evidence-based exchanges on thematic and cross-cutting challenges, especially in their efforts towards institution building and conflict prevention.

53. Lastly, the Commission's advisory function had been underexploited. Full use should be made of the Commission's convening and bridging power and it should formulate effective advice to relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system and beyond. The Commission had the potential to contribute more to the global effort of building and sustaining peace.

54. **Mr. Akram** (Pakistan) said that peacebuilding was a collective effort involving a wide range of stakeholders, but it was the Government of the country where peacebuilding was to take place that should set the priorities. He therefore welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General had invited Member States eligible for funding from the Peacebuilding Recovery Facility to share their national priorities with the Commission.

55. The Commission should seek more information interactions with the Security Council, especially ahead of mandate renewals, drawdowns of peacekeeping missions and visits by the Council to conflict-affected countries. The Commission's advisory role was underutilized, and the Commission should be able to submit to the Council substantive inputs and recommendations on peacebuilding, conflict resolution and thematic issues.

56. A response to the challenges of peacebuilding required long-term engagement as well as adequate financial investments. The Commission could promote such investments through robust advocacy and by leveraging its bridging role with United Nations organs, international financial institutions, the private sector and the Peacebuilding Fund, in particular in order to convert small-scale catalytic projects that were financed by the Fund into long-term sustainable projects for peace and recovery.

57. The Commission could play a critical role in addressing the root causes of conflict in and among nations that were not always addressed in the Security Council for a variety of reasons. It was a forum that could spend more time on contributing to the resolution of the underlying causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality, competition over scarce resources, environmental degradation and unresolved conflicts and disputes.

58. It must be acknowledged that the nature of conflict had changed. Small groups, whether militants or terrorists, could now destabilize powerful countries and internal conflicts often had cross-border impacts and implications. There was growing foreign intervention in local conflicts and financial interests were involved in the scramble for natural resources. In addressing modern complex conflicts, the new guideline to follow should be “follow the money”.

59. **Mr. Fernandez De Soto Valderrama** (Colombia) said that, as a former Chair of the Commission, he had facilitated the involvement of Colombian women peacebuilders, who had been able to share with the Commission their experiences of the Colombian peace process, in particular on matters related to women and peace and security. At the current session, it would be particularly important to address the issue of how to fund peacebuilding in general and the Peacebuilding Fund in particular. He commended the Secretariat for its tireless efforts to ensure that the Commission’s work was properly reflected.

60. **Mr. Tirumurti** (India) said that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic had made countries rethink some of their priorities. Any sustainable recovery from the pandemic should start with vaccines. Unfortunately, much of the developing world was yet to be vaccinated and more needed to be done to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on conflicts.

61. Adequate attention must also be paid to institution building. Indeed, the enduring structures of governance, which protected human rights and ensured the rule of law, could only be attained through institution building.

62. The growth of terrorism, particularly in Africa, had increasingly exposed gaps between peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates. Terrorists were taking advantage of such gaps and unleashing terror, which conflict-ridden States were unable to combat because of a lack of capacity. That was increasingly becoming apparent in the Sahel and other parts of Africa. It was therefore necessary to strengthen the counter-terrorism capacities of States.

63. The world had changed irreversibly in many ways because of the adoption of digital initiatives. People-centric and citizen-friendly digital technologies therefore needed to be promoted, with a special focus on women and youth. That particular aspect should also be factored into the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations.

64. Lastly, the importance of adequate, sustainable and predictable financing could never be emphasized enough.

65. **Mr. Kimani** (Kenya) said that while the Commission had been busy over the past year, action was still needed to fulfil the growing faith of countries in the relevance of its work. In other words, now was the time for implementation. Key to responding to the most important needs of countries was investment in national resilience during post-conflict reconstruction, which was the time when a slide back into violence was most likely.

66. The Commission’s deliberations over the past year had highlighted the tools needed to reinforce peacebuilding investments, in particular the efforts made to stimulate local and private sector economic growth, including through peace-supporting youth employment. They had also emphasized the importance of environmental protection, sustainable business practices and, where appropriate, targeted climate change adaptation measures. It had been proposed that a certain percentage of assessed contributions should be allocated to support medium- to long-term peacebuilding in order to ensure the continuity, predictability and sustainability of financing for peacebuilding. In that regard, Kenya supported the call of the Secretary-General for assessed contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund as such action was crucial for conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

67. While Kenya commended the Commission for holding the aforementioned deliberations, it was disappointing that reporting on their factual outcomes had become an area of contention. Reinforced efforts were therefore needed to reflect the Commission’s actual deliberations and recommendations when reporting on its work.

68. **Mr. Pildegovičs** (Latvia) said that his country’s membership of the Commission demonstrated its aspiration to play an active role in the efforts of the United Nations to ensure stability and peace in conflict-affected regions. For years, Latvia had participated in United Nations peacekeeping activities. As peacekeeping and peacebuilding were essentially two sides of the same coin, Latvia was increasing its effort in both directions.

69. Latvia wished to focus on strengthening the resilience of institutions in post-conflict situations, including by promoting good governance, media literacy, digital skills and inclusive participation of youth and women, in line with the women and peace and security agenda. It would not hesitate to share its best practice in all those areas.

70. United Nations peacebuilding efforts must be rooted in key values and principles, such as an international rules-based order, democratic governance and human rights. There were no shortcuts to building sustainable peace. It required persistent efforts and an inclusive approach by the communities affected and also by international partners.

71. Peacebuilding also required appropriate financing. For that reason, Latvia had become a donor to the Peacebuilding Fund and supported the calls for adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. As it was important to continue advancing that priority, he looked forward to the upcoming high-level meeting dedicated to financing.

72. The key strength of the Commission lay in its bridging role. The Commission needed to continue developing links with other institutions and should not shy away from any engagement which corresponded to its mandate, including within the human rights pillar. Connecting various actors and institutions helped to overcome a fragmented approach to peacebuilding and enabled teamwork on a local, regional and global scale. That approach should be extended more effectively, given the potential synergies between the missions carried out by the United Nations and other international actors, such as the European Union.

73. **Mr. Chindawongse** (Thailand) said that Thailand would continue to do its part to “sustain sustainability” across the three pillars of the United Nations. Sustainability was the key to engagement with various stakeholders, especially in peacebuilding efforts on the ground.

74. In taking forward peacebuilding and sustaining peace, it was important to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in peacebuilding and sustainable development, and the roles of peacekeepers as early peacebuilders. In that connection, Thailand was willing to share its own approaches to sustainable development, including its Bio-Circular-Green Economy model in support of peacebuilding efforts.

75. Thailand welcomed the closer coordination between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council, since progress in the economic, social and development agendas was integral to peacebuilding, and

enduring peace was essential to growth and development.

76. Lastly, he looked forward to seeing how the Commission’s role could be further enhanced, including in the context of the discussions to be held on *Our Common Agenda*.

77. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that the Commission’s efficiency and flexibility must be enhanced in support of sustaining peace. The Commission should therefore move in step with the rest of the United Nations, as conceived in the Secretary-General’s report *Our Common Agenda*. The Commission’s work must reflect not only the current conditions of conflict, but also cross-cutting issues that affected entire regions and posed a threat to peace and security, such as the climate crisis.

78. At the current session, sufficient time should be allocated to discuss how to fulfil the Commission’s basic functions. Her delegation was particularly interested in the bridging role that could be achieved by responding to invitations to brief other bodies on the Commission’s peacebuilding work and its mandate. The previous year, for the first time, the Commission had received an invitation to brief the Human Rights Council. Unfortunately, it could not agree on the best way forward and the issue was still pending. The failure to report to a United Nations body was an unprecedented situation which demanded further discussion. As stated in the twin resolutions of 2016, an integrated and coherent approach within and outside of the United Nations system was critical to peacebuilding. The issue should remain part of the agenda at the current session and should also be reported because the Commission’s discussions and outcomes must be publicly available as United Nations documents.

79. According to its founding resolutions, the Commission should act in all matters on the basis of the consensus of its members. However, there was no definition of consensus in the Charter of the United Nations, nor was there any such definition in the Commission’s methods of work or in its rules of procedure. To have an efficient Commission, its members must consider the views of the vast majority and not confuse consensus with unanimity. However, in order to reach consensus within the Commission, inclusive, transparent and thorough discussions were required, and members should begin to consider having more permanent rules of procedure.

80. The Commission had done much in its relatively short lifespan to fill policy voids and establish viable policy connections, attract the best diplomatic talent from across the United Nations system, offer guidance

to States at earlier stages of conflict threat, and free up resources to address peacebuilding deficits in real time and in diverse communities of need. It was well positioned to anticipate conflict and promote inclusive responses, including building institutional capacity and genuinely listening to people.

81. **Mr. Arbeiter** (Canada) said that the Commission had been created to fill a gaping hole in the institutional architecture of the United Nations. Building and sustaining peace required resources, but it also required time, patience and a willingness to listen. The Commission was at its best when it worked to put inclusivity at the heart of its discussions. Welcome progress had been made over the past year to strengthen efforts to include civil society briefers and to expand and deepen the Commission's engagement with young peacebuilders. In adopting action plans on gender and youth and in making commitments to monitor and report on their implementation, the Commission was setting an example for other United Nations bodies to follow.

82. The progress made over the past year in strengthening the Commission's advisory role was also welcome, particularly in offering advice to the General Assembly and the Security Council and in expanding the Commission's engagement with non-United Nations bodies. However, it was regrettable that the Commission had not been able to fully exercise its mandated bridging role and had been prevented from accepting an invitation to brief the Human Rights Council. The Commission should accept all invitations from all United Nations bodies that wished to learn from its work.

83. The Commission's great strength was that everything it did was at the request and with the consent of the countries and regions with which it engaged. The Commission spoke with countries, not about them. All its work was grounded in national priorities to promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Commission members should continue to work together to ensure that peacebuilding efforts were properly coordinated and funded with the necessary and appropriate resources.

84. **Mr. Edokpa** (Nigeria) said that the adoption of the Commission's report was a testament to the strong and unwavering commitment of its members to implement the Commission's mandate. Nigeria was highly committed to peacebuilding and regarded its membership in the Commission as an important opportunity to work to ensure that timely interventions were deployed effectively to allow countries experiencing conflict to build strong resilience. Nigeria appreciated the Commission's work on cross-cutting and thematic issues, and particularly welcomed its

increasing work on insecurity in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa. It therefore wished to see sustained engagement between the Commission and relevant regional and subregional bodies, especially the African Union. In the wake of the recent military coups in some African States, especially in West Africa, the Commission should utilize its convening role to hold thematic debates in support of those countries restoring democracy and ensuring good governance and inclusion.

85. While the Peacebuilding Fund continued to make important investments in conflict prevention and in the promotion of security and social cohesion in transitional and fragile settings, there was a need for sustainable and predictable financing for long-term peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, Nigeria welcomed the continued synergy between the Commission and the Fund, as well as more frequent engagement between the Commission and international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. At the same time, it was important to ensure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding, including through assessed contributions to the Fund. Long-term solutions were needed to the issue of how to fund peacebuilding.

86. The meaningful inclusion of young persons as active agents for change in leadership and political roles remained imperative for sustaining peace in countries transitioning from conflict. Women, who were among those most impacted by conflict, also needed to be active in peacebuilding processes. The Commission must therefore continue to support their full and meaningful participation as peacebuilders in local mediation efforts.

87. **Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa) said that peacebuilding was one of the key pillars for the maintenance of international peace and security, and, indeed, for laying the basis for long-term development in countries emerging from conflict. The Commission remained well positioned to support the Secretary-General's new agenda for peace, as articulated in *Our Common Agenda*. For peacebuilding to be successful, it must be funded on an adequate, predictable and sustained basis. South Africa would therefore continue to advocate for the possibility of using assessed contributions towards peacebuilding, as well as the other ideas put forward in *Our Common Agenda*.

88. South Africa appreciated the catalytic role of the Peacebuilding Fund and the support that it had provided to peacebuilding efforts and initiatives in various countries. During the past year, the Fund had explored other avenues for financing peacebuilding, including

through the holding of a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the role of the private sector in contributing to peacebuilding. That particular area deserved to be explored further. The upcoming high-level meeting on financing for peacebuilding also provided an opportunity to explore some of the funding options presented in *Our Common Agenda*, as well as other options presented by Member States.

89. In its approach to supporting country-specific and nationally-led peacebuilding initiatives, the Commission should engage with other relevant United Nations bodies to engage coherence within the United Nations system. Nigeria also welcomed the recognition of the importance of partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, and their role in promoting mediation and supporting peacebuilding. The Commission's convening role with those regional bodies, international financial institutions and the private sector, including youth and women's organizations, should be enhanced.

90. **Ms. Offermans** (Netherlands) said that she looked forward to robust and impact-driven discussions in the Commission, which should include civil society, local actors such as women and youth, international financial institutions and regional organizations, to maximize the impact on the ground. Important topics, such as inclusive justice, mental health and psychosocial support, should also be integrated in the Commission's discussions and documents.

91. Adequate financing remained a structural issue that warranted focused attention. The Netherlands underlined its support for the Secretary-General's proposals in that regard, including on assessed funding.

92. Attention must continue to be given to ensure the full, effective and meaningful inclusion of women peacebuilders and youth in the Commission's work, including by issuing invitations to brief the Commission.

93. The Commission's bridging and advisory role should be further expanded with respect to the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and other United Nations and non-United Nations bodies, including the Human Rights Council. Development, peace and security and human rights were known to be interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The acceptance of invitations that enhanced the Commission's work and its bridging role should therefore be based on the substance of the meetings themselves.

94. **Mr. Murugasu** (France) said that while the Commission's thematic debates had shown the need to promote the participation of women and youth in

peacebuilding, they should also deal with specific situations, such as transitional contexts and post-conflict situations. Peacebuilding should allow gains to be protected through peacekeeping; efforts should continue to make the Commission as agile as possible; and the Commission's recommendations to the Security Council should be substantive and be made well upstream of the renewal of peacekeeping mandates. Exchanges with regional organizations and civil society should set out clear areas for action. Lastly, the Commission's work should support the action of Peacebuilding Fund with a view to ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for the Fund.

95. **Mr. Geisler** (Germany) said that his delegation fully subscribed to the Secretary-General's emphasis on the need for the Commission to engage with human rights mechanisms. It therefore regretted that the invitation extended to the Commission to brief the Human Rights Council had not yet been accepted. Germany was also in full agreement with the Secretary-General's call for adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding in support of the conflict prevention and peacebuilding objectives outlined in *Our Common Agenda*.

96. The Commission's members should work to ensure the success of the upcoming high-level meeting on peacebuilding financing and should continue to work together in a spirit of cooperation and compromise, bearing in mind the Commission's bridging role and its interconnectedness with other United Nations bodies.

97. **Mr. Li Song** (China) said that, since the establishment of the United Nations peacebuilding system in 2006, the Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund had closely coordinated and cooperated with each other to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Positive results had been achieved from the way in which they had coordinated the international community's support for the reconstruction of post-conflict countries. The Commission and its country configurations should continue to provide assistance to conflict-affected countries with a view to strengthening their capacity-building, consolidating the dividends of peace and achieving lasting peace and sustainable development.

98. **Ms. Agaronova** (Russian Federation) said that United Nations peacekeeping was one of the most important instruments to help States deal with conflict, overcome its consequences and prevent its recurrence. The Commission remained the main intergovernmental advisory body for the coordination of peacekeeping activities within the United Nations. The concept of

sustaining peace was based on criteria such as eradicating the root causes of conflict, ensuring national reconciliation and, ultimately, promoting national recovery, reconstruction and development efforts in which the affected State itself assumed responsibility for defining its own priorities. Only a comprehensive and impartial approach to providing international assistance that took specific country and regional factors into account and recognized the genuine reasons behind a conflict could provide a solid foundation for building lasting peace. In that context, cooperation between the Commission should be further strengthened with regional and subregional bodies, such as the African Union. Effectively addressing conflict on the African continent required an African-led approach.

99. The Peacebuilding Fund has shown itself to be an important mechanism for assisting in the recovery and development of conflict-affected countries. Cooperation between the Fund and Commission should therefore be strengthened.

100. The Commission's consideration of cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, health, gender equality, development and the rule of law, only made sense when related to a specific country or region, but not as part of a general thematic discussion. The strength of the United Nations system lay in its division of labour between its principal organs. Duplication of effort and infringement on separate mandates only reduced the Organization's effectiveness and should therefore be avoided.

101. The Commission's decisions must continue to be adopted by consensus, in line with its founding resolutions. That approach was key to the effectiveness of the Commission's work as it ensured that the positions adopted were balanced and enjoyed international support and respect.

102. **Mr. Jung Jin Ho** (Republic of Korea) said that adequate, predictable and sustained funding for the Peacebuilding Fund was crucial. Hence, there was a pressing need for a constructive discussion of the Secretary-General's proposal for the allocation of assessed contributions to the Fund. The high-level meeting on financing peacebuilding would provide critical momentum to further that discussion.

103. The Republic of Korea would be very interested in taking up the position of informal coordinator of relations between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council. It wished to use that opportunity to further enhance the Commission's bridging role in the United Nations system.

104. A forward-looking agenda for the Commission was more important than ever in the context of the upcoming discussions of the Secretary-General proposals, as contained in *Our Common Agenda*. The Commission should use its convening power to draw international attention to that area during the current session.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.