



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

**93**<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting  
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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Körösi . . . . . (Hungary)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Ray (Nepal),  
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

## Agenda item 18 (continued)

### Sustainable Development

#### Draft resolution (A/77/L.80)

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts of Trinidad and Tobago to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.80.

**Mr. Mitchell** (Trinidad and Tobago): I have the distinct honour to introduce to the Assembly draft resolution A/77/L.80, entitled “World Steelpan Day”.

The story of the steelpan is one of resilience and sustainability. Indeed, I am immensely proud to share with the Assembly that through the innate creativity and resourcefulness of our people, the evolution of the steelpan took flight from humble beginnings in an urban working-class community called Laventille, located just east of the capital city of Port of Spain, where it rapidly gained widespread appeal and acceptance.

For the people of our nation, Trinidad and Tobago, the steelpan represents more, much more than musical versatility. In fact, it is emblematic of artistic excellence, community empowerment, endurance, self-determination, community, culture, heritage and identity and, not least of all, national pride. Not surprisingly, the rhythmic tones and dance-enticing energy of steelpan music saw it adopted and replicated

throughout the Caribbean, making it a common offering at tourist resorts and even at most remote getaways in the Caribbean.

The steelpan emerged in response to the suppression of the use of other musical instruments and its conceptualization began from the recycling of discarded materials, such as milk cans, garbage-can covers and oil drums by underprivileged Afro-Trinbagonian youth for use in the annual carnival parades in the early 1900s. As the musical complexity of the carnival parades evolved, larger 55-gallon oil drums were used to replace the earlier metallic objects and smaller drums. Those larger oil drums allowed for more musical notes and more complex melodies, making the steelpan the only acoustic musical instrument invented in the twentieth century.

Following naturally, was the rise of the steelband, which is an orchestra comprising the tenor pan, the double tenors and double seconds, the double and treble guitars and treble cellos, and the tenor, six, nine and twelve basses, essentially a family of steelpans, being played by a group of musicians called pannists.

The steelpan industry is far-reaching and heavily dependent on the integration of a variety of sectors, such as tourism, culture, trade and education. Therefore, the manufacturing of the steelpan worldwide is a means of economic impetus, requiring both skilled and unskilled labour in its production.

In 1999, the Government established the Trinidad and Tobago National Steel Orchestra and later, in 2007, upgraded that organization to form the National Steel

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Symphony Orchestra. The National Steel Symphony Orchestra was designed to raise the benchmark for professional steelpan presentation and serves to test and establish the viability of Trinidad and Tobago's very own genesis pan, also known as the g-pan, which was developed in 2006 by the University of the West Indies, in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister. The g-pan is made from durable high-grade steel sheets, and its creation is the result of the integration of the arts, science, technology and engineering into the manufacturing of steelpans.

Pan Trinbago is the premiere representative body for steelbands in Trinidad and Tobago and is responsible for the organization of the annual steelband competition, known as Panorama. As the mother of all steelband festivals, Panorama is the ultimate steelband competition, usually featuring as many as 200 junior and senior steelbands competing for the coveted title of national champions. Made up of both local and international steelpan players, Panorama is one of the predominant events during Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, which is considered the greatest show on Earth. Owing to their unique participatory nature, steelbands have gained prominence in more than 40 States in almost every corner of the globe, with steelband competitions similar to Panorama now occurring in many countries across North America, Europe and, of course, the Caribbean.

I might add that some universities in Europe, Canada and the United States have academic programmes dedicated solely to steelpan music. In the province of Ontario, Canada, the steelpan has long been used as a teaching aid in the country's multiculturalism programmes, which support the integration of Caribbean and other immigrant youth into the Canadian school system and into the wider community, helping to build tolerance and understanding among and between communities. The steelpan allows for considerable tonal versatility and is used equally effectively to play local cultural compositions of soca, calypso, rapso, reggae and jazz, as well as more complex compositions, such as classical music in the genre of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and other composers. Such renditions have brought adoring audiences to their feet, as much in the local steelpan yards or "panyards", as they are called in Trinidad and Tobago, as at some of the most prestigious concert halls the world over, including Carnegie Hall, Madison Square Garden, the Royal Albert Hall, the Kennedy Center and other venues.

We cannot deny that music and, by extension, musical instruments have had a positive impact on our lives and livelihoods. In 2019, Port of Spain, the capital city of Trinidad and Tobago, was designated a UNESCO Creative City of Music for its creativity through the steelpan as a strategic component for sustainable urban development. In that context, it is irrefutable that the steelpan meaningfully contributes towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically with regard to SDG 3 on maintaining good health and promoting well-being; SDG 4 on providing educational opportunities, particularly for those children and youth that may not be academically inclined; SDG 5 on promoting gender equality; and SDG 11 on fostering sustainability within and among communities. I would also like to underscore that the steelpan has the potential to create an enabling and sustainable environment for rural and small communities through income generation for small businesses involved in the industry, thereby, positively impacting their overall socioeconomic development.

The melodious sounds of the steelpan are a true reflection of Trinidad and Tobago's dynamic culture, history and traditions and, in a sense, encapsulate its national aspirations for robust innovation and product development that is world class. However, given its potential and contribution to sustainable development, it is anticipated that, should the General Assembly give its assent to the proclamation of 11 August as World Steelpan Day, there will be an accompanying increase in its advocacy and the use of the steelpan worldwide. We have now arrived at this pivotal point in the journey of the steelpan, and we hope that the international community can envision the positive impact of the musical instrument in the context of sustainable development, as we do. The ubiquitous nature of the steelpan, its versatility and its ability to cross over several musical genres, but most importantly, its proven ability to bring people together and to build intercultural understanding, is a testament to the fact that there are no limitations to confine the trajectory envisioned for the steelpan.

I would like to take this opportunity to salute and pay tribute to the entire pan fraternity, including those who are no longer with us, who have paved the way for global recognition of the steelpan. We are therefore eager to present this evening, right here at the United Nations, the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago — our symbol of excellence and a medium of

expression for our people, which has now achieved the prominence that the pioneers and creators of the steelpan have toiled for since the early twentieth century. In that regard, I would like to express the deepest appreciation of the people and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the enthusiasm shown and the invaluable support provided by Member States. I would like to especially recognize the Member States that have joined in co-sponsoring the draft resolution.

I would like to share with Member States that the late Dennis Franklyn Williams, a prolific composer and calypsonian from Trinidad and Tobago, who was known in the calypso world by his sobriquet Merchant, lamented in his popular calypso “Pan in danger”, that the steelpan was in danger. I have every reason to believe that were Merchant alive today, he would be confident that, with the adoption of this draft resolution, the steelpan will continue to rise to its zenith.

On that note, musically speaking, Trinidad and Tobago kindly requests the support of all Member States for the draft resolution, which will recognize 11 August, annually, as World Steelpan Day.

**The Acting President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/77/L.80.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. Sharma** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/77/L.80, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Djibouti, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Thailand, Türkiye, Tuvalu, the United Arab Emirates and Zambia.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/77/L.80 entitled “World Steelpan Day”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/77/L.80?

*Draft resolution A/77/L.80 was adopted (resolution 77/316).*

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 18.

**Agenda item 124** (*continued*)

**Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**

**Report of the Second Committee (A/77/451/Add.1)**

**The Acting President:** The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. Therefore, if there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Committee that is before the Assembly today.

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position. I would like to remind members that, in accordance with decision 34/401, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation’s vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee. I further remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by representatives from their seats. Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Committee, I would like to advise representatives that we will proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance.

The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Committee in its report.

We will now take action on the draft decision entitled “Revitalization of the work of the Second Committee”. The Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*The draft decision was adopted (decision 77/538 B).*

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded the stage of its consideration of agenda item 124.

#### Agenda item 7 (continued)

#### Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

**The Acting President:** Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of agenda item 68 at its 55th plenary meeting, on 16 December 2022. In order for the Assembly to take action on the draft resolution, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 68.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of agenda item 68?

*It was so decided.*

#### Agenda item 68 (continued)

#### Promotion and protection of human rights

##### Draft resolution A/77/L.81

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Spain to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.81.

**Ms. Jimenez de la Hoz** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to present on behalf of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Germany, the Philippines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and my own country, Spain, draft resolution A/77/L.81, entitled “International Day of Care and Support”, for consideration by the General Assembly. The text is the result of consultations that benefited from broad participation, and it reflects the vast majority of the contributions proposed in the negotiation process.

We thank all States that actively participated in the negotiations for their constructive attitude and cooperation in arriving at the text that we are considering today. We would also like to thank the United Nations system, in particular UN-Women, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, for their support during the drafting and negotiation of the draft resolution.

We enormously appreciate the co-sponsorship of the 35 Member States, representing all the regional

groups, and encourage all those that have not yet done so to join us in co-sponsoring of the draft resolution.

The importance of the care economy is such in our societies that the International Labour Organization states that, if the value of care were valued based on a minimum wage per hour, it would reach 9 per cent of the global gross domestic product.

With this draft resolution, which proclaims 29 October the International Day for Care and Support, we would like to highlight the importance of the care economy, promoting decent work for care workers and ensuring that they are represented and that they benefit from social dialogue and collective bargaining. Collaboration among all stakeholders involved to ensure compliance with this draft resolution, including the United Nations system and all civil society organizations, will be key to ensure that care and support systems, as a fundamental pillar of the protection and well-being of States, will be comprehensive, inclusive and grounded in human rights.

**The Acting President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/77/L.81.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. Sharma** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/77/L.81 and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/77/L.81, entitled “International Day of Care and Support”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/77/L.81?

*Draft resolution A/77/L.81 was adopted (resolution 77/317).*

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 68?

*It was so decided.*

## **Agendas items 28, 58 and 114 (continued)**

### **Report of the Peacebuilding Commission**

#### **Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/77/720)**

#### **Peacebuilding and sustaining peace**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund**

##### **Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/77/756, A/77/756/Corr.1)**

**Mr. Elshandawily (Egypt):** At the outset, I would like to congratulate Croatia for the superb work done as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). We greatly appreciate the time taken to share Croatia's experience and insights to make significant progress in strengthening the Commission's role, particularly its bridging, advisory and convening role.

There has been enough evidence over the past few years to show that the Peacebuilding Commission has fostered a more inclusive and effective multilateralism by promoting and supporting multidisciplinary solutions that cut across current silos and help reshape United Nations responses to the multidimensional nature of new threats. In particular, the Commission has made a remarkable effort to deliver on its promise by supporting national and regional peacebuilding priorities.

In that context, I would like to focus my intervention on the following as a framework for our future agenda of the PBC:

First, in order to sustain the significant role of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, more needs to be done to address the most critical and pressing challenges it faces, namely, financing. We remain hopeful that our consultations will translate our commitment into concrete actions towards realizing adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. I would like to take this opportunity to stress the need for concerted efforts to overcome

the challenges facing the Peacebuilding Fund which is critical to strengthening the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Second, it is important to strengthen the interdependence between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in a way that contributes to addressing the root causes of armed conflicts and strengthens the peace, security and development systems. In that context, there is a need to support the efforts of States in building their national institutions and capabilities in a way that prevents them from slipping back into conflicts and implements their priorities in a way that guarantees security and stability for the sustainability of development.

Third, the instability caused in recent years by rising inequalities, wars, conflicts and pandemics has made it clear that the focus should be on prevention and proactive approaches, taking into account the provisions of Chapter VI related to negotiation, mediation and conciliation, as well as the emphasis on prevention and peacebuilding.

Fourth, we reaffirm the centrality of peacebuilding efforts to the work of the United Nations throughout the peace continuum. In order for peacebuilding to succeed, it is crucial to destigmatize prevention and make it a sovereignty enhancer by ensuring national ownership. It is therefore important that the PBC put national actors front and centre in prevention efforts and rally international support behind national peacebuilding priorities.

Fifth, all phases of the mandates of peace operations should include broader and adequately resourced peacebuilding components and contain guidelines to encourage timely transitions. With its broad peacebuilding mandate, the PBC is extremely well positioned to advise the Security Council during the formation, review and drawdown of peace operations' mandates.

Sixth, it is important that more be done to strengthen the PBC's cooperation with the Security Council and that avenues for strengthening its cooperation with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council be explored. In strengthening coordination with the Economic and Social Council, there is a need to explore innovative partnership modalities that incentivize international financial institutions to scale up financing and operational collaboration for peacebuilding and development efforts, particularly with international financial institutions and multilateral

development banks focusing more on fragility and transition contexts.

Seventh, it is important to enhance the role of women and young people in peacebuilding and post-conflict contexts. The empowerment of women and the inclusion of youth in various areas must be translated into executive policies to overcome economic, social and security challenges.

I would like to conclude by affirming that Egypt remains fully committed to supporting the Commission in its efforts to accomplish the goals of our Committee and to ensuring that the United Nations peacebuilding architecture's engagement in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace will continue to receive the requisite attention.

**Mr. Peñalver Portal** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President for convening this meeting. We take note of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/77/720), the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/77/756) and the reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Lasting peace requires an international environment based on respect for multilateralism and international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as respect for friendly relations and cooperation among States. In that context, we proudly recall the contribution of the Latin American and Caribbean region in proclaiming itself a zone of peace, and we reaffirm Cuba's commitment to that monumental proclamation. What is required is the eradication of the root causes of conflicts, especially the social and economic development problems affecting our nations — particularly the countries of the global South — as a consequence of the current unjust international order. The full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the creation of capacities in developing countries and their access to technologies under equal conditions and without discrimination, as well as the fulfilment of official development assistance commitments, without preconditions, would help to address those issues.

Peacebuilding activities should be carried out from the early stages of peacekeeping operations in order to help countries emerging from conflict develop and strengthen their national strategies for sustainable development. National Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing strategies for building

and sustaining peace. The role of the United Nations is to assist them in those efforts, as requested and within the framework of the functions and mandates given to United Nations bodies. That role must be performed in accordance with the Charter of the Organization, in full compliance with international law, and based on the consent of the receiving State and respect for national ownership and priorities. Also necessary is total respect for the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the political independence of countries, the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs and the rejection of the threat or use of force. That is the only way we can objectively and impartially support peacebuilding and sustain peace.

We join the call for increased funding for United Nations peacebuilding and sustaining peace activities. Decisions are required to ensure adequate, predictable and continued funding for those activities. At the same time, those activities should not divert or affect the resources allocated to development.

**Mr. Murugasu** (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to pay tribute to Croatia's remarkable work at the helm of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as that of Germany and Bangladesh. I also commend the Chairs of the country configurations on their personal commitment.

I would like to emphasize three points.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission must focus its efforts on specific geographical situations. Last year, the Commission was able to support a greater number of geographical situations. It has brought Member States into interactive dialogue with civil society, regional organizations and the private sector. The Peacebuilding Commission's strength lies in its convening power. France supports the Commission's work in transitional and post-conflict contexts. The Commission must also support preparations for the withdrawal of peacekeeping operations by mobilizing United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and all partners, development partners in particular. Its support for the transition of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be especially vital.

Secondly, the operational contribution of the Peacebuilding Commission must be decoupled, especially with regard to the General Assembly and the Security Council. In 2022, the Commission made

several recommendations to the Security Council, and France is particularly pleased that the Central African Republic country configuration made recommendations to the Council ahead of the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Force in the Central African Republic. With regard to the Security Council, the Commission must continue to produce complementary, targeted and operational recommendations that respect the mandates of the two bodies. Doing so before the renewal of peacekeeping operations mandates and in anticipation of dialogue with the Security Council penholders is essential. All those avenues must be explored as part of the discussions on the New Agenda for Peace, to which the Peacebuilding Commission must actively contribute.

Thirdly, lasting peace must be based on sustained and predictable financing. The Peacebuilding Fund has proven its ability to catalyse financing to support an integrated United Nations response and to work with all actors on the ground. To that end, sustained financing for peacebuilding must be ensured. France reiterates its support for the possibility of putting in place arrangements for sustained financing. Once again, France will continue to support the Peacebuilding Fund this year in the amount of €5.5 million. The Fund must continue its efforts with international financial institutions in a coordinated manner, but also by fully mobilizing the private sector.

**Mrs. Gui Dan** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) during its sixteenth session, the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ambassador Muhammad Muhith, for his briefing on the PBC's work and progress achieved over the past year. China will continue to give its full support to the Chair of the PBC during its seventeenth session, the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Ambassador Šimonović, and his work. China commends the PBC for its accomplishments over the past year and also takes note of the many challenges the Commission faces in its efforts.

I would like to make a few points.

It is important to allow the countries concerned to take ownership and, at the same time, to support them in exploring a development path that is well suited to their national conditions, to provide constructive assistance based on their actual needs and priorities, and to improve the relevance and effectiveness of

peacebuilding programmes. It is up to the countries concerned to determine whether peacebuilding is effective or not. In that regard, engagement with the countries concerned should be enhanced, and their opinions and ideas should be taken on board in a timely manner.

Development must remain the top priority, as it is the master key to solving all problems. The most critical challenge for post-conflict countries is to grow their economy and improve people's livelihoods. Resources should therefore be prioritized for eradicating poverty, protecting people's livelihoods and improving access to education and public health, among other things. Peacebuilding efforts should synergize with the efforts of regional and international organizations and international financial institutions. Greater investments should be made in the development field in order to help post-conflict countries out of the vicious cycle of falling back into turmoil due to poverty and to deliver a peace dividend to the people. Developed countries need to earnestly fulfil their commitments on official development assistance and climate financing and make up for historical gaps.

In that regard, the Peacebuilding Commission should play a constructive advisory role. As a body that is jointly mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council, the PBC has the advantage of balancing politics, security and development. In the past year, the PBC has provided advice to the Council 17 times, and its engagement with the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council has also been further strengthened. We welcome that. We expect the PBC to make full use of its own advantages and — on the basis of adhering to the ownership of the countries concerned and promoting partnerships and by further strengthening engagement with the three United Nations organs I just mentioned — put forward more valuable and practical advice and recommendations.

China highly values peacebuilding and has always been a staunch supporter of conflict-affected and post-conflict countries in their nation-building and development efforts through multilateral and bilateral channels. The Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative that we put forward have injected strong impetus into common development efforts. China has made multiple financial donations to the Peacebuilding Fund and has provided funding support to many peacebuilding projects through the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund.

As we speak, discussions on peacebuilding financing issues are under way in the Fifth Committee and agreement has yet to be reached among the parties on assessed contributions, monitoring and oversight and other issues. China will continue to participate constructively in those discussions and expects all parties to reach a consensus on those issues. We will also continue to support the cause of peacebuilding through practical actions and contribute to achieving lasting peace.

**Mr. Figueiredo Sobral Torres** (Brazil): I thank the President for convening today's meeting. I also thank Ambassador Muhammad Muhith of Bangladesh for his comprehensive overview of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2022 and for his country's commitment and leadership in presiding over the PBC. I also thank Ambassador Ivan Šimonović and his country, Croatia, for their support and leadership in the Peacebuilding Commission in the first half of 2023 and their contribution to bringing the collaboration between the PBC and the General Assembly to the top of our agenda. They can count on the Brazilian delegation's continued cooperation on those matters.

The presentation of the Commission's 2022 annual report (A/77/720) has provided clear examples of the significant contributions the PBC can make by playing its advisory, bridging and convening roles. The PBC is well suited to work as a platform to promote greater coordination among the relevant partners of a particular country at risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, for example. It can mobilize regional organizations and international financial institutions and stimulate South-South and triangular cooperation arrangements to support national peacebuilding initiatives. The Commission can also support the implementation of peacebuilding efforts through peacekeeping operations. It helps to mobilize political support to promote reconciliation, the women and peace and security agenda, institution-building and other nationally defined peacebuilding priorities. However, the PBC could do more. For instance, the relations between the Commission and the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly remain yet to be fully explored. That matter has a priority status for most PBC members, which is why the relationship between the PBC and other bodies was included in its 2023 programme of work.

In that regard, I want to raise the issue of communications and take advantage of this opportunity

to reach out to the broader United Nations membership. Today's debate provides a good occasion to once again propose the suggestion for the holding of a seminar wherein current or former PBC and Peacebuilding Fund-supported countries could share their experiences with new potential partners, as a long-due measure of clarification to countries that may still be hesitating to seek PBC support out of a lack of understanding of the Commission's role. The General Assembly is by far the best venue to address such misunderstandings, which continue to hinder the outreach of the PBC. I trust the Commission and the countries under its consideration can offer valuable input on that topic.

Since today's debate also encompasses the work of the Peacebuilding Fund, I would like to assure the Assembly of my delegation's continued and constructive engagement with other Fifth Committee members aimed at the implementation of resolution 76/305 on financing for peacebuilding, adopted on 8 September 2022. We have made some progress in addressing the issues related thereto and trust that common ground can be found on the remaining ones.

**Ms. Baños Müller** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador appreciates the convening of today's plenary debate, which is taking place in a context of enormous obstacles that stand in the way of making peacebuilding and peacekeeping a reality for millions of people affected by violence and conflict. In those circumstances, El Salvador reiterates that placing prevention at the centre of the United Nations efforts and investing politically and financially in peacebuilding and peacekeeping are urgent and essential to alleviate human suffering and to build just and inclusive peaceful societies.

Allow me to refer to the important work carried out by the Peacebuilding Commission, as outlined in the report on its sixteenth session (A/77/720). We commend Bangladesh and Croatia's leadership of the Commission and thank their respective representatives for their excellent briefings.

El Salvador commends the role played by the Commission in its advisory, bridging and convening functions in support of peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts in 14 region- and country-specific contexts and on a number of relevant cross-cutting issues. The general trend of increased activity and outputs of the Peacebuilding Commission throughout 2022 clearly demonstrates the recognition of its relevant role within



the United Nations. As the Assembly has recognized on numerous occasions, in order for peacebuilding to be effective, it is necessary to strengthen the synergies within our Organization.

In that regard, El Salvador recognizes the important role of the Commission, which in 2022 advised the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on more than 20 occasions. Promoting coherence throughout the United Nations system is also crucial for enhancing the impact of peacebuilding initiatives. In that connection, we believe that the Commission's work has played a role in improving the coordination of a wide range of United Nations entities in the field and at Headquarters, and it also continues to be a key instrument for humanitarian, development and peace actors.

El Salvador believes that the full, equal and meaningful participation of women is key in peacebuilding and sustaining peace initiatives. That is why my country commends the inclusion of the gender dimension and the prospects for and priorities of the women who work in the Commission's peacebuilding activities in specific countries and regions and on specific issues. Furthermore, we encourage the Commission to continue to advocate for its role as adviser to other intergovernmental organizations to support the crucial role of youth and youth organizations in peacebuilding and sustaining peace and in institutionalizing the youth, peace and security agenda globally.

With regard to the future of the Peacebuilding Commission, El Salvador believes that it is necessary to ensure that its composition is diverse and that all regional groups are duly represented in its overall composition. We also believe that it is essential that the Commission remain a relevant platform bringing together experiences and good practices from global peacebuilding initiatives. El Salvador recalls that, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), which established the Commission in 2005, the contributions of countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery are crucial.

Concerning its working methods, my country appreciates the recommendations made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission. In particular, we agree on the importance of increasing its visibility by developing a communications strategy, in consultation with the Department of Global Communications.

Owing to relevance of the Commission's activities, it is necessary to consider allocating additional resources to ensure that it can meet the increasing demand for cooperation with countries and regions. El Salvador therefore fully supports the strengthening of the Commission so that it can continue to carry out its functions.

With respect to the future and its commitment to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, my country hopes to contribute to the Commission's important efforts. That is why we submitted our candidature for elections that will take place at the General Assembly at its eightieth session.

The Peacebuilding Fund has continued to play a relevant role in El Salvador's efforts in sustaining peace, making significant contributions to strengthening national institutions, establishing public policies for peacebuilding, transitional justice and providing opportunities for decent work and social reintegration, among other things. Furthermore, the Fund has contributed to fostering inclusion by empowering women and youth through initiatives to strengthen their participation in decision-making processes, violence prevention, social coexistence and the broadening of civic space in El Salvador. The Fund has also supported key cross-border initiatives to address issues of human mobility, while facilitating the peaceful and sustainable integration of migrants and host communities.

We appreciate the work of the Office of the Resident Coordinator and of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in promoting initiatives that benefit our country. We reaffirm our commitment to continuing to ensure that those initiatives translate into tangible improvements in the quality of life of the men and women of El Salvador.

El Salvador takes this opportunity to express once again its deep concern about the persistent challenges in ensuring adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for peacebuilding. My country is of the view that the unanimous adoption of the first resolution of the General Assembly on financing for peacebuilding (resolution 76/305) was a milestone in Member States' commitment to decisively addressing those challenges. However, debates on the matter in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions have been delayed time and again in many sessions. As my country has said in the Commission, progress on the resolution is a matter of political will. The lack of that

key component in reaching agreements has undermined the adoption of a resolution that we believe is key to expanding the impact of the Peacebuilding Fund. El Salvador firmly believes that ensuring predictability for the Fund would guarantee important sustainable contributions and increase the range of benefits for peacebuilding in various countries and regions.

My country reiterates that given the difficulties in reaching an agreement that would enable us to adopt the draft resolution in question, it is necessary to turn our gaze towards the proposals that lie behind the exchanges and are essential to them. That involves looking at opportunities in the initial budget of the Secretary-General so that contributions are calculated based on half being applied according to the agreed pro rata rates set for the regular budget, while the other half is applied according to pro rata rates set for peacekeeping operations.

Moreover, we believe that the outcome of discussions will also be key in the eventual update of the Secretary-General's strategy for the Fund, which is valid until 2024. The update should provide for its revitalization with the use of resources mobilized from those new contributions. My country reiterates its firm commitment to continuing those conversations and further strengthening our national efforts in actions already under way within the context of the Fund.

In conclusion, El Salvador reaffirms its willingness to continue contributing to strengthening the role of the Organization to establish just and lasting peace.

**Mr. Coulibaly** (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Mali takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/77/756).

At the outset, I must underscore that the Peacebuilding Fund is an important instrument that deserves to be strengthened. Indeed, the key projects funded by the Peacebuilding Fund can make an effective contribution to preventing crises in many regions of the world.

In the specific case of my country, Mali, I would like to commend the work carried out by the Fund. Since 2019, Mali has benefited from its valuable support through the funding of some 38 projects, including several cross-border initiatives with neighbouring countries. Those relevant projects cover issues, such as conflict prevention and conflict management, inclusive

governance, the empowerment of young people and women and the negative effects of climate change.

The projects also allow for improved access for women and young people to formal and traditional justice mechanisms, while building the resilience of those exposed to the risk of radicalization because of the pernicious or regressive mindset and actions of terrorist groups. As members know, since 2012, terrorist groups have been exploiting people's vulnerabilities and potential conflict situations in our countries, including poverty, which remains a breeding ground for manipulation and terrorist propaganda.

As part of our national strategy to combat the scourge of terrorism, the Government of Mali has taken various measures, which, fortunately, have begun to reap positive results on the ground. I welcome the positive cooperation with the Peacebuilding Fund, which supports the Malian authorities in their tireless efforts to restore peace and stability in my country. In so doing, over time and through actions and results on the ground, including in the area of quick-impact projects, the Peacebuilding Fund has proved its usefulness across the board. That is why the delegation of Mali fully supports the Secretary-General's recommendation concerning financing the Fund with assessed contributions in addition to voluntary funding. Similarly, in the context of the ongoing withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the Government of Mali stands ready to continue its cooperation with the Fund to build on what has already been achieved.

Lastly, Mali calls for greater financial support for the Peacebuilding Fund so that, in turn, it can support peace initiatives around the world.

**Mrs. Adeng** (South Sudan): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate on the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, which are essential to supporting conflict-affected countries such as South Sudan. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and other colleagues for their insightful remarks.

South Sudan is currently at a critical point in its peace process, as it strives to implement the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement and address the root causes and drivers of conflicts. Despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the

economic crisis and climate change, South Sudan has made notable progress towards peace and stability. Some achievements include the formation of the National Unity Government, the establishment of the transitional justice mechanism, the reform of the security sector, the return and the reintegration of displaced populations, local-level social unity improvement and preparations for the general elections to be held in 2024.

Despite the progress made, significant challenges remain. They include intercommunal tensions, limited socioeconomic opportunities leading to frustration among the youth, climate change and environmental devastation affecting essential resources. In order to address those challenges, South Sudan has identified priorities, such as promoting inclusive governance and participation, strengthening public financial management reforms, enhancing disaster risk reduction strategies and building capacities for conflict prevention and early warning systems.

South Sudan requires more support and assistance in the areas of mediation, capacity-building, financial resources and political support and advocacy. We appreciate the contributions from the international community and the Peacebuilding Fund and appeal for more predictable and sustainable financing, aligned with national priorities and plans. We value the political support of the United Nations and its partners and call for more inclusive and participatory approaches to peacebuilding, involving all segments of society, as peacebuilding is a continuous process.

The value of peacebuilding is difficult to quantify, but some ways to assess its impact include aligning with national strategies and peace agreement provisions, the timeliness and inclusiveness of projects and contributions to peacebuilding at various levels. The evaluation of peacebuilding's impact faces challenges and limitations, hence the need for multiple sources of evidence and analysis designed for the unique needs of South Sudan.

In conclusion, South Sudan is committed to peacebuilding and welcomes collaboration with the United Nations and partners. We appreciate the support and solidarity in that shared goal.

**Ms. Agaronova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's event. We are grateful to the previous and current Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Bangladesh and Croatia, for their

comprehensive briefings (see A/77/PV.92) and energetic work in guiding its work.

We would like to acknowledge the expansion of the geographical scope of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in the past year, with the recent countries of Timor-Leste and South Sudan and the Central Asian region expressing their willingness to cooperate with the Commission. The number of States willing to share their experiences and seek recommendations from the Commission has continued to increase this year. We see that as a sign that international assistance aimed at strengthening the capacity of States in accordance with their self-defined priorities at the national level will not go unnoticed. We also believe that it is important to encourage the participation of post-conflict countries, which are the main beneficiaries of the Commission's activities, and States cooperating with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) at the Peacebuilding Commission's meetings.

A comprehensive and impartial approach that takes into account country-specific and regional factors, thorough analysis and the search for specific solutions to meet national priorities is the surest way to successfully achieve peacebuilding goals. We are convinced that such working methods are more effective than expanding the scope of thematic contexts to include generic issues, such as climate change, health care, gender equality and human rights, which are often already the subject of discussion in other United Nations specialized forums. We believe that the strength of the United Nations system lies in the principle of the division of labour among its main bodies, whereby all carry out their own specific tasks without encroaching upon one another's mandates. Any ambiguity in their roles will otherwise result only in the duplication of work and reduce the overall effectiveness of the Organization.

We would like to note the PBC's major potential and willingness to fully coordinate efforts with the international financial institutions. We hope that finding ways to involve them in such cooperation will be possible.

One of the key topics for 2022 was financing for peacebuilding. A separate high-level meeting of the General Assembly was devoted to that issue, and the Commission prepared recommendations to that end. As a result, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 76/305. As we consider the modalities for replenishing financial resources for the Peacebuilding

Fund from the United Nations budget, we must also address the issue of how Member States define the mandates for those resources to be used and the oversight of their expenditure. We would like to point out that we have always viewed the PBF as an instrument that depends on voluntary contributions. It is precisely that way of replenishing the Fund that has made it a flexible mechanism enabling it to respond swiftly to any issue.

Despite various challenges, the past year was very busy for the Peacebuilding Fund. A large share of its resources was dedicated to promoting the participation of women and young people in peacebuilding, but it is encouraging that many projects were also aimed at supporting national reconciliation, preventing and resolving conflicts and promoting political dialogue with the participation of all segments of the population. In that regard, we would like to once again emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between the PBC and the PBF and linking their agendas, which would contribute to enabling the Fund to increase its focus on national priorities and the root causes of conflicts in the countries on the agendas of both bodies and would significantly increase the long-term results of peacebuilding and peacekeeping work on the ground.

It is important to underscore that respect for the sovereignty of the host country and the alignment of assistance with its priorities remain at the core of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as all peacebuilding and sustaining peace processes. Experience has shown that international assistance in peacebuilding is most effective precisely when it is based on the principle of national ownership, whereby the Government takes into account the needs of society and identifies and implements the most urgently needed peacebuilding strategies. As it is designed to link efforts to maintain peace and security with efforts to assist in reconstruction and development, the PBC is a unique forum in which participants in the peacebuilding process exchange views. As a result of such discussions, the Commission is then able to convey to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council information on the peacebuilding priorities of Governments, the views and expectations of civil society and the assessments of representatives of the United Nations system and other national and international actors. We are convinced that the Commission's assistance, based on decisions made by consensus among its members, could allow us

to take further balanced positions and garner support and respect at the international level.

**Mr. Dibba (Gambia):** I am delighted to make these remarks at this very important annual joint debate of the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). At the outset, allow me to express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly, and His Excellency Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, for their commitment to this annual debate. I also thank in particular Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.

The Gambia is thankful for the excellent and very informative Peacebuilding Commission report (A/77/720) and the Secretary-General's report (A/77/756) on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). Every year this joint debate provides Gambia a unique opportunity to share the successes and challenges of the partnership we have been forging and fostering between the Government of the Gambia, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund since 2017.

The Government of the Gambia is grateful for that partnership, which continues to provide support and guidance with a view to sustaining the gains we have worked so hard to achieve. The continued partnership with the Peacebuilding Commission has made it possible for the Gambia to learn useful lessons that have resulted into success stories worthy of sharing. The critical political awareness and support that the platform of the Commission continues to provide is the oxygen that sustained our transitional justice process to its completion and the implementation of its recommendations.

The Government of the Gambia owes a debt of unforgettable gratitude to the Commission for serving as a tool, providing the Government the right platform to raise political awareness and seek the much-needed support to consolidate the peace gains to enjoy the democratic dividend that our people are currently enjoying and deserve.

The hope and aspiration of the people we serve to sustain peace are renewed each time periodic briefings by senior Government officials to the Peacebuilding Commission are reported in the national news. We therefore do not take our engagement with the Commission lightly, for every opportunity to engage with it provides stability and hope for our people.

The Peacebuilding Fund has been instrumental as a catalyst to the sustained peace we enjoy today in the Gambia. The Gambia has undergone a peaceful democratic transition involving legal institutional reforms, including to the justice and security sectors and the civil service, as well as a significant opening of the public space. The Peacebuilding Fund was one of the earliest patrons of our transition, providing essential early financing to address the most pressing transition needs, including laying the foundation for transitional justice and providing technical support to the presidency to guide policy formulation coherence within the Government. Following a formal request by the Government in 2018, the Secretary-General declared the country eligible for receiving PBF funding through the Peacebuilding Recovery Facility until the end of 2023. It therefore gives me great pleasure to provide an overview of PBF support in the Gambia since 2017.

The PBF has invested in a total of 16 projects, including transitional justice processes, with dedicated support to the establishment and the work of the highly touted Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission. The completion of this national project involved every Gambian, both locally and internationally. The PBF's ongoing assistance in the post-Commission phase, which includes raising awareness about the recommendations, supporting their implementation by a range of stakeholders and monitoring progress by the National Human Rights Commission, which was also established and operationalized with the support of the PBF. Women and youth empowerment, especially in the area of political participation and hate-speech prevention is another key focus area over the past five years, thanks to the support provided by the PBF.

In addition to the above-mentioned tangible projects to sustain peace in the Gambia, the PBF's commitment to sustaining peace in the Gambia saw four recently approved projects, all geared towards supporting the implementation of several forward-looking recommendations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, such as the implementation of a peace and reconciliation commission, hate-speech prevention and social cohesion in conflict-prone rural areas. PBF support is already providing the expertise of the International Center for Transitional Justice, aimed at enabling youth to actively participate in the post-Commission process, notably by leading intergenerational dialogue, both at the community

level and with duty bearers, in order to ensure proper awareness-raising on the recommendations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, in addition to facilitating the localized implementation of some of the recommendations.

In conclusion, the Gambia appreciates the PBF's recognition of the need for women's political participation through the provision of concrete support with a view to improving several enabling conditions for strengthening women's political participation, such as advancing legal frameworks related to the quota system, capacity-building of candidates, as well as advocacy work at the community level with influential figures in order to increase the number of both elected and nominated women leaders in local governance structures and district tribunals. These will server to level the playing field for the inclusive democratic participation that we have long yearned for.

**Mr. Bakary (Niger)** (*spoke in French*): I thank the President for convening this meeting, which gives us the opportunity to share with the Assembly our experience with the Peacebuilding Fund. My statement will focus on facts that will enable us to better appreciate the relevance of the Peacebuilding Fund in conflict-affected or post-conflict countries.

Our experience with the Fund began in 2012 through the High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace, a Government institution tasked with stabilizing conflict zones and restoring social cohesion. Our collaboration began in 2012, and our first project was financed in 2013. Four priority pillars were defined for our 2021-2025 cooperation programme — preventing and managing local conflicts; accessing natural resources; bolstering the resilience of communities in the face of the risk of violent extremism; and enhancing community peace and security in border zones and strengthening strategic partnerships for the analysis, programming and coordination of peacebuilding actors.

Good collaboration between the High Authority and the Peacebuilding Fund has facilitated and continues to facilitate the commitment and alignment of resources with community needs and supports the Government's efforts to restore social cohesion. Our current cooperation portfolio consists of 13 projects, including three cross-border projects in the amount of \$30 million and four projects in the amount of \$8 million, which are now in the process of being approved.

I will turn now to some of our achievements.

In terms of empowering young people, who initially had no livelihoods nor financial or material resources and were therefore exposed to all kinds of illicit activities, as well as to the phenomena of migration and recruitment by terrorist groups, they have found themselves able, thanks to the Fund's activities, to promote small businesses or receive training in which they have acquired professional skills. Communication campaigns are being conducted in civic spaces that have become meeting places for young people in order to bring about positive changes in behaviour and lasting peace in the communities in which they are active. Intergenerational dialogues are also being held in those spaces. Young people, together with the facilitators, identify issues to be discussed according to their needs and exchange views with the elders and authorities concerned in order to find appropriate solutions to their concerns. More than 500 young people, 38 per cent of whom are girls, are being supervised and coached by 105 tutors on peace and security issues, as well as on a range of other issues of primary concern to young people. Former terrorist fighters have been rehabilitated and reintegrated across 18 communities. That experience is now being replicated throughout the country.

On the prevention and management of conflicts linked to natural resources, more than 10,800 members, including 6,030 women and girls, are working in close collaboration with community radio stations to broadcast messages of peace and social cohesion in villages. More than 600 women have been trained in a variety of areas, including mediation, conflict prevention and management and the culture of peace. They play a key role in mediating and managing conflicts, particularly between farmers and herders. A regional platform has also been established for the prevention and management of conflicts relating to access to and the management of natural resources, which has enabled a consensual agreement to be reached on a period for freeing up fields, and considerably reduced conflicts between farmers and herders.

With regard to migrants, more than 200 members of the community — almost 50 per cent of whom were women and girls — took part in socioeconomic and cultural activities to promote cohesion between migrants and host communities and to provide relevant skills and opportunities, with a particular focus on young people. Those actions have not only contributed to a significant reduction in conflicts between migrants

and host populations but have also enabled genuine intermingling between them.

Finally, on community security in border areas, mobile court hearings have allowed more than 500,000 civil status documents to be issued in conflict zones at the time of the most recent elections, enabling people to register and participate in the elections.

In conclusion, for the Niger, the Peacebuilding Fund is a useful financial instrument for the Government, as it is operational in the fields of both conflict prevention and management.

**Mr. Heartney** (United States of America): The United States extends its thanks to Secretary-General Guterres for prioritizing peacebuilding within the United Nations system, including in *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) and as an initiative as part of the New Agenda for Peace. I also thank the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission for all of their hard work in this critical area.

United Nations peacebuilding work supports the enhanced alignment of humanitarian, peace and developmental efforts to bolster complementarity and increase the impact of donor funding. We look forward to further strengthening United Nations peacebuilding efforts, including as part of the New Agenda for Peace and the related Summit of the Future. The Peacebuilding Commission can play an important role in advancing the outcomes of these key initiatives.

Over the past year, we have welcomed the Commission's growing scope and work. From expanding its country- and region-wide lens and convening more thematic engagements to fulfilling its critical advisory roles in the Security Council and other United Nations organs, we value the critical contributions that the Commission is making to prevent conflict and sustain peace. The Commission's attention to institution-building, transitional justice and the rule of law, electoral processes, displacement, climate change, socioeconomic development and partnerships for peacebuilding creates opportunities to reflect on how we can best support the core elements of lasting peace.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/77/756). The United States supports using assessed funding for peacebuilding, and we look forward to actively engaging in the Fifth Committee in the fall to bridge

differences now that peacebuilding funding can be assessed and administered.

In addition, I want to affirm that the United States will also work closely with the United Nations as a strategic partner over the next decade as we implement the United States strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability. We look forward to coordinating with local, national and regional partners to promote inclusive and sustainable peace, including through diplomacy and development. Our efforts under this strategy align with the priority windows identified by the Peacebuilding Fund, particularly the importance of regional approaches and fostering inclusion.

In conclusion, the United States looks forward to continuing its support for United Nations peacebuilding efforts. We would especially like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and her team for its steady management of both the Commission and the Fund, which makes all the work possible.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the joint debate on these items.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda items 28, 58 and 114?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.*