CONCEPT NOTE

TRANSITIONING FROM PROTRACTED CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY INTO PEACE THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Kenya will host a Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on the topic “Transitioning from Protracted Conflict and Fragility into Peace Through Sustainable Development”. The meeting, which is co-sponsored by Brazil, China, Ecuador, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Sierra Leone, is scheduled to take place on 22 December 2022 starting from 3.00 p.m. at the UN Conference Room 1.

RATIONALE

Most peace support operations occur in environments dominated by persistent threats to civilians and significant social and economic disparities. Due to political demands placed on UN peace operations, reconfigurations and drawdowns have often occurred amid incomplete implementation of agreements and political settlements. As a result, peacebuilding and sustainable peace have remained elusive, with UN Missions deployed in protracted situations that sometimes last for decades. This is stretching scarce resources, exposing peacekeepers to sustained risks, and leading in some cases, to the reputation of the United Nations among local communities being tarnished. The Security Council’s implementation of its mandate will benefit from a fresh appraisal of how sustainable development, peace and security interact in ways that can be deployed in its decisions, resolutions and actions.

The Security Council frequently advocates for the root causes of conflict to be addressed if peace and security are to be secured and a relapse into civil or military warfare prevented. For countries emerging from conflict, their willingness to pursue the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals would be critical to securing sustainable peace. The holistic nature of the SDGs, their clear targets, and their ability to rally global support for fragile states, make them an important framework to address the major drivers of instability and conflict.
The importance of development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to overcoming conflict have been recognised as core imperatives for a stable and secure global community of states and peoples by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). For the past three decades, the UN has been clear that to assist countries emerging from conflict, and set them on the path to sustainable development, a comprehensive and coordinated approach between the Security Council, the General Assembly and ECOSOC is necessary. On this basis, the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups were established to help define long-term programmes of support for countries emerging from conflict.

Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016) emphasises coherence, sustained engagement, and coordination between the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the ECOSOC, as a prerequisite for sustaining peace. It addresses gaps arising from fragmentation in the UN system’s support to member states, lack of sustained and adequate financing as well as risk aversion among donors. It further stresses the need for closer cooperation between ECOSOC and the PBC, including through enhanced dialogue, to promote complementarity between the UN’s peace and security efforts and its development work.

In addition, Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security recognises the important and positive contribution of youth in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as contributing to justice and reconciliation.

The current state of combative multi-polar geopolitics and shifting investment priorities are risking international support for development. The demands on national budgets contending with energy and economic crises, the still ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and tying aid to national security aims are leading to a tightening of the development purse. UN agencies, funds and programmes delivering development support are reporting a growing tendency among formerly ambitious partners to cut budgets. Yet even as bilateral developmental support reduces, there is an increasing need for multilateral support for peace processes that require accompaniment by development. The demands for peacebuilding support now dwarf the annual peacebuilding fund target of US$500 million.

The bulk of investment in peace transitions and development happen at the national level, by governments, local authorities, and civil society. However, many states transitioning from conflict often suffer from a deterioration in their competence and financial resources. They need international investment that is catalytic and risk tolerant.

These resolutions, frameworks and funding envelopes are being tested on the ground. For conflict-affected communities, transitioning to peace means addressing the impact of conflict on their lives and livelihoods and the assurance of sustained peace and development. In a letter addressed to the President of ECOSOC in April 2018, the PBC chair noted that the contemporary
conflict demands urgent action, particularly because it hampers the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. In this regard, addressing the root causes becomes a critical factor in engaging conflict-affected communities marginalised from development and services. This is necessary in order to shift the negative incentives that may enable conflicts to be protracted and replace them with legitimised, accessible and resilient governance institutions and with efforts to improve livelihoods.

For the adequate resources to be made available for this work, there must be greater linkage between Peacebuilding, including the work of the PBC, accompanied by active Security Council support, and the broader UN development system. The aim is not to blend mandates but rather to go beyond recognising strategic complementarity and building mindsets, processes, competencies, skills and incentives in order to operationalise such strategic complementarity within the UN and at the regional, national and local levels.

The Arria Formula meeting will allow delegations, UN experts and researchers to discuss the complexities of this important linkage and to identify opportunities to leverage and challenges to overcome in addressing the root causes of conflict through sustainable development.

**OBJECTIVES**

This meeting will focus on the following main objectives:

a. To highlight the existing gaps in the UN system’s linking of development to national peacebuilding efforts and how they can be addressed.

b. To identify any missing links between peacebuilding norms and practice and UN-assisted development work.

c. To discuss how peacebuilding programmes can consciously incorporate the SDGs as targets, including through adequate financing.

d. To examine how the UN agencies, funds and programmes can better support states transitioning from conflict to coherently address security and development needs.

e. To encourage closer coordination between the UN General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC and the PBC for the achievement of peace through sustainable development.

**Below are some questions that may be helpful in guiding participation:**

a. Where are the gaps between peacebuilding and the UN’s support for the implementation of the SDGs and how can they be addressed?

b. Is peacebuilding presently supported by the UN in accord with the development work in countries emerging from conflict? What needs to change to improve effectiveness?
c. How can existing peacebuilding and peacekeeping transitions programmes be better supported by the implementation of the SDGs, and how can the UN and states ensure reliable and adequate financing?

d. What needs to change in Security Council practice to address root causes, particularly those linked to livelihoods, development and sustainability?

e. What skills, competencies and models are needed by UN agencies, funds and programmes to be more effective in supporting states transitioning from conflict?

f. What should be done to encourage closer coordination between the UN General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC and the PBC for the achievement of peace through sustainable development?

**Briefers**

**H.E. Muhammad Abdul Muhith**, Chair PBC

**H.E. Ms. Paula Narvaez**, Vice President of ECOSOC

**Ms. Soukeyna Kane**, Director of the Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Group at the World Bank

**Format**

All UN Member States, Permanent Observers and non-governmental organisations are invited to attend. There will be speaking opportunities for UN Security Council members and UN delegations. Participants are encouraged to limit their interventions to 5 minutes to allow as many participants as possible to participate.

A compilation document will be prepared containing the interventions of the briefers and speakers. Member States and briefers are encouraged to submit their statements no later than the day of the meeting at 11.00 AM. Subject to availability, and other Security Council commitments permitting, translation in all the six (6) UN languages will be provided. However, it is humbly requested that Members do their best to deliver their statements in English.

The meeting will be conducted in person and broadcasted through the UN Web TV.

To register please contact the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations on kenyasc@kenyaun.org