



Security Council

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Letter dated 28 October 2019 from the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Recalling the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission to the Security Council, I would like to share some observations and recommendations made at the ambassadorial-level meeting of the Commission on 21 October 2019 on strengthening linkages between women and peace and security and peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

On the eve of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, it is clear that progress has been made by the United Nations and Member States through the adoption and strengthening of policies and tools to ensure that women are included across all aspects of peacebuilding and through reiterated commitments to women and peace and security in numerous statements and resolutions. However, it is important to be honest in acknowledging that there is still a major gap in implementation in different cases around the world. Women continue to face exclusion from decision-making and peacebuilding processes. A major effort has to be made. The gender dimension is too often considered as an afterthought when it must be an integral part of all conflict analysis and planning that feeds into peacebuilding strategies. Women, especially young women, cannot be effective peacebuilders when they are marginalized. This takes women's agency away. It also reduces the chance of success in building sustainable peace. Women should be put at the centre of peacebuilding efforts.

Peace cannot be defined as the mere absence of conflict. A multidimensional, gender-sensitive approach to peacebuilding, including good governance, justice, rule of law and economic development, is needed for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Promoting development entails both addressing root causes of conflict and removing barriers to women's meaningful participation, such as limited access to resources and economic insecurity.

The Commission is pleased to note that, in his report on women and peace and security ([S/2019/800](#)), the Secretary-General places the promotion of gender equality at the heart of intergovernmental support for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The Commission takes note of the recommendations contained in the report and would like to share the complementary commitments and suggestions below, which were made at its meeting on 21 October.

The Commission would like to reiterate the importance of women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding and sustaining peace and the need to increase the



representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Ensuring that gender is considered in all discussions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace should remain at the forefront of the efforts of the United Nations and the international community.

The Commission welcomes the increase in the participation of female peacekeepers, which contributes to achieving the objectives of the women and peace and security agenda. The Commission would also encourage consideration of ways and means that would encourage the deployment of more female peacekeepers.

The Commission would like to underscore the need to strengthen data collection, including of gender-disaggregated data, to support evidence-based United Nations policy in furtherance of the women and peace and security agenda. In addition, gender expertise, analysis, resources, and monitoring and reporting mechanisms should be included in all United Nations strategic planning initiatives and guidance at the global, regional and country levels, including during transition processes. In this regard, the gender-responsive conflict analysis that informed the new United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework in Liberia and the role of women leaders in the Gambia in shaping the work of the Constitutional Review Commission are steps in the right direction.

The Peacebuilding Commission encourages the Security Council to include women and peace and security issues in relevant statements and resolutions. Testaments from experts and practitioners in meetings of the Commission have underscored the importance of such references for women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention, peace processes and the aftermath of conflict. This is especially important during the renewal of mission mandates and in transition contexts as these constitute critical moments for sustainable peace.

The Commission encourages continuous mobilization to adequately resource the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and invest in women peacebuilders. The twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) coincides with the next review of the peacebuilding architecture. It provides an opportunity to reiterate political commitment, consider concrete actions, and scale up investment in gender equality, an essential part of the peacebuilding agenda. It also provides an important opportunity to strengthen the Commission's bridging role in this area.

The Commission will therefore continue to use its convening and advisory role to provide a platform for women peacebuilders from different contexts to share experiences and for the exchange of expertise. The Commission agreed, during its 21 October meeting, to report annually on the implementation of its gender strategy, which was adopted on 7 September 2016. In line with its gender strategy, the Commission will scale up its inclusion of women and peace and security considerations in its thematic and country-specific discussions as well as field visits. As part of the efforts to strengthen the cooperation between the Commission and the Security Council, the Commission welcomes closer collaboration with the Security Council Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security in this regard.

I am also pleased to inform you that the Peacebuilding Fund surpassed the target set by the Secretary-General of 15 per cent of investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding, reaching 40 per cent in 2018 – a first for any United Nations fund.

In furtherance of its advisory role to the Security Council, the Commission is also committed to holding an annual discussion on best practices on women and

peacebuilding to feed into the Security Council open debate on women and peace and security.

The above points to advance the women and peace and security agenda are all elements of peacebuilding and sustaining peace and are of fundamental importance to women's meaningful participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peacebuilding. The Commission is committed to stepping up its efforts on women and peace and security and remains at the Security Council's disposal for further exchanges and advice, if requested, on good practices.

(Signed) Guillermo **Fernández de Soto**
Chair
Peacebuilding Commission
