



United Nations Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping Ministerial Preparatory Meeting – 3 and 10 November 2020

CHAIRS' SUMMARY FOR THE PREPARATORY MEETING ON PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE, CO-HOSTED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF BANGLADESH, CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Overview

- Member states engaged in discussions related to the challenges of integrating peacebuilding objectives into UN peacekeeping, particularly for missions in transition. This was informed by a white paper commissioned ahead of the meeting, and presentations by UN officials.
- Member states elaborated on their own initiatives and weighed options for further contributions in the area of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in peacekeeping contexts.
- Three topics received additional focus through dedicated breakout sessions: women, peace and security; institution building and training; and financing.
- Member states will consider the options identified as potential pledges for the 2021 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial.

On November 3 and 10, 2020, Bangladesh, Canada and the United Kingdom co-chaired a virtual preparatory meeting for the 2021 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial to be hosted in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The preparatory meeting, which focused on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace with an emphasis on transitions, brought together over 260 participants from more than 80 UN Member States, as well as the UN, over two sessions. The co-Chairs have summarized the meeting's discussions and key findings in this report.

1st Session – 3 November

Opening remarks and presentations

In his keynote address, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix stressed the importance of transition planning and the related capacities and resources, and for all stakeholders, particularly UN Member States, to recognize “all missions as being in transition”. Republic of Korea 2021 UNPKM Preparatory Secretariat Director-General Lee Joon-ho updated participants on plans for the Ministerial and its

overarching themes of technology and medical capacity, and sought Member States' views. Pakistan provided an update on the preparatory meeting it will co-chair with The Netherlands on protection of civilians, safety and security on 25-26 January 2021.

Plenary discussion

A panel discussion focused on concrete contributions that can be made by UN Member States in the area of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with discussions informed by a white paper on this theme commissioned by the Republic of Korea and presented by its authors, Daniel Forti and Richard Gowan. Also on the panel were UN representatives Katerina Limenopoulou, Chief of the Peacebuilding Support Branch, Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), who highlighted the need for predictable and coordinated financing; Robert Pulver, Chief of the Justice and Corrections Service, Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI), who spoke on addressing underlying causes of conflict and the role of experts; and UNAMID Deputy Joint Special Representative Anita (Kiki) Gbeho, who provided a view from the field that outlined unique coordination mechanisms and funding arrangements that support peacebuilding initiatives in the context of UNAMID's transition.

Discussions between participating UN Member State representatives and the panelists focused on coordination with UN Country Teams, integrating peacebuilding with development assistance, the role of the IFIs and the private sector, cultural differences, challenges related to cross-border conflicts, and the effect of COVID-19 on UN operations.

At the end of the first webinar participants were asked to consider the issues raised with their national colleagues and to prepare for more detailed discussions during the breakout groups in the second webinar. The focus in these groups would be the development of key policy issues and pledging ideas, including those proposed in the white paper.

2nd Session – 10 November

Breakout Groups

The second session consisted of three breakout groups, each moderated by a representative of one of the co-chairs, followed by a plenary discussion.

Breakout Group 1 – Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in Transition Contexts (Canada)

Discussion focused on specific pledges that can be made to quantitatively and qualitatively increase the participation of women, particularly in uniformed roles. Participants identified barriers to women's recruitment, deployment and effectiveness in peace operations, including longstanding issues like cultural biases, as well as new challenges such as the coronavirus pandemic. In addressing these barriers, participants underscored the importance of WPS National Action Plans, the opportunities arising from the ever-expanding WPS CHODS Network, and potential next steps following the adoption of the ground-breaking UN Security Council Resolution 2538 (2020) on Women in Peacekeeping.

To enable more gender-responsive peace operations and address barriers to women's meaningful participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, participants offered a number of best practices:

- In order to increase engagement with local communities and engage civil society groups, member states can deploy experts (either through direct provision or funding) who can provide strategic analysis on gender-related issues and/or effective engagement.
- The role of experienced women police and military officers should be highlighted in all aspects of missions. UN Member States should consistently champion a rights-based approach and the meaningful participation of women across all roles, as well as gender parity targets.
- To address barriers to uniformed women's participation, member states can implement fully the UN's Uniformed Gender Parity, commit to gender balanced Engagement Platoons, apply to access the Elsie Initiative Fund, and use the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations barrier assessment methodology for police and military organizations, developed through the Elsie Initiative.
- Member states can contribute to the UN Peacebuilding Fund, with a focus on supporting women and youth; the establishment of quotas to address gender disparity in mediation and negotiation; appreciation for the need for greater protection of women rights defenders; and expansion of digital inclusion initiatives to broaden participation in virtual interactions.

Breakout session 2 – Institution Building and Training in Transition Contexts (Bangladesh)

The breakout session on “Institution Building and Training” aimed at scoping out concrete deliverables on institution building and training in the field, and guiding the Member States in making possible pledges during the Seoul Ministerial meeting.

The discussion emphasized the engagement of peacekeepers in building effective and accountable national institutions in the host country, including by providing training to the local security forces and civilians, based on assessment and coordinated engagement of all stakeholders, to ensure sustainability of peace operations. Two major areas were identified for potential pledges: a) security sector (military, police and other paramilitary or civil components including the intelligence agency who are directly or indirectly related to the national sovereignty and law enforcement); and b) civilian sector, such as rule of law, judiciary, correction services, human rights (both protection and promotion), etc. Some structural and situational challenges were also identified which could affect a smooth transition, such as, funding gaps, prioritization, planning and coordination, expertise and capacity of national government in leading/coordinating the peacebuilding efforts, etc.

Some key takeaways are as below:

- A funding gap often obstructs momentum and hampers implementation of tailored projects. Peacebuilding efforts need to be coupled with timely and strategically targeted financial support;
- given scarcity of resources, judicious prioritization is essential, reflecting the unique conditions and needs of the country in question. Often the priorities are dictated by mandates or by availability of resources, rather than by the country's most urgent needs, which must be rectified;
- protracted conflict leaves behind not only physical destruction and institutional disarray, but also a torn social fabric characterized by mistrust, apprehension among the national and international stakeholders. Institution building must result in the enhanced trust and confidence among various stakeholders;
- engagement with traditional leaders, civil society and media, could help ensure accountable coordination by national governments. Also, while engaging experts, due importance should be given to cultural sensitivities and societal norms of the host country.

Breakout Session 3 – Financing in Transition Contexts (UK)

The Transitions Joint Project team, (UNDP-DPO-DPPA-DCO) set the scene by outlining the financing challenges faced in transitions contexts, such as the fall in the share of ODA allocated to peacebuilding, the apparent drop-off in international attention and the need to ensure that available funding was spent more efficiently. They also highlighted the various UN initiatives to address these challenges, including the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), Global Focal Point on the Rule of Law and the UNDP/DPPA Joint Project.

The discussions focussed on the following areas where participants believed progress could be made:

- The **PBF** plays a critical role in responding rapidly to peacebuilding requirements, but it requires more predictable, long-term funding. Canada will co-host a conference in January to replenish the fund and some other states plan to increase their contributions. Assessed contributions to the PBF have been discussed, but there is not yet consensus among member states.
- **Planning for transitions** should start at least two years ahead of implementing a transition and should cover at least five years following departure.
- **Programmatic funding** in peacekeeping budgets can support transitions, as we have seen in Sudan, but it is too limited and short-term to fill the peacebuilding gap on its own. Missions are often not best placed to carry out longer-term peacebuilding activities. Increased transparency, accountability and coordination with UN Country Teams is required.

- The **economic impact** on local economies as missions leave requires further research. There is a role for **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** in contributing to more predictable, sustainable funding, particularly with their ability to support national budgets.
- **Better coordination** with and within the UN system would improve funding efficiency, although funding is also needed to incentivise coordination. At a time of shrinking resources, we need to focus on making better use of existing funding. The Secretary-General's desire for a cross-UN approach and a shared assessment of requirements in transition contexts would help. The UNSG's Special Representatives have a role to play in bringing together different parts of the system at the country-level, but better coordination should be embedded across the UN, with the Transitions Joint Project being a good example.
- **Alternative funding/resourcing**, such as engaging the private sector, bringing in non-traditional peacebuilding actors and working with national and regional stakeholders, should be explored. 'South-South' and 'triangular' cooperation could provide fresh thinking to peacebuilding approaches, especially in light of the Covid pandemic.

Plenary Session and Closing Remarks

In plenary, the three moderators summarised the break out discussions from each group. During the subsequent open discussion, member states highlighted a range of issues: the need for meaningful collaboration and integrated assessments between Missions and Country Teams, making better use of funding tools, the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission as a forum for countries in transition, support to host governments, the links between peace, development and human rights, innovation in UN policing, matching national priorities with designated needs of the UN system, and the value of thematic expertise such as the Global Focal Point on Rule of Law and UN Women.

The closing remarks highlighted the evolving nature of peace operations, where, rather than engaging in military operations, security forces are required to protect civilians and create conducive environments for implementation of the socio-economic development agenda, leading to sustaining peace. Accordingly, attention of Member States was drawn to various priority areas where pledges could be made. These include: providing development aid to conflict-affected countries to help achieve socio-economic harmony, strengthening of national institutions and effective training to ensure smooth functioning of key enablers on the ground, increasing participation of women and incorporating a gender perspective in all areas of peace building, and finally, addressing budgetary constraints of peace operations as well as funding gaps in peacebuilding. Participants also called on the UN and other relevant stakeholders to increase engagement with women and civil society when formulating their conflict management strategy in mission transition contexts.



Bangladesh

Canada



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office