



Joint Meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission

The importance of the SDGs in linking peace and development on the ground

29 June 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

ECOSOC Chamber

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core, adopted in 2015 (A/RES/70/1), set out a transformative framework based on human rights, gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls and the principle of leaving no one behind to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. In [Our Common Agenda](#), the UN Secretary-General identified preventing war and strengthening global peace and security as one of the main challenges of our time. To achieve this, he called for a New Agenda for Peace, which will be underpinned by the 2030 Agenda's call to leave no one behind. It will call for global commitments to tackling inequalities, both between and within states, as a critical prerequisite to preventing conflicts and building and sustaining peace.

Amidst ongoing multidimensional and complex conflicts and crises, progress on human development has reversed¹, the number of people living in conflict-affected contexts has increased, and humanitarian needs have grown. One-quarter of humanity lives in conflict-affected contexts², and more than 100 million people are forcibly displaced,³ including 31.5 million people forced to leave their countries. In 2023, more than 345 million people are facing high levels of food insecurity – more than double in 2020⁴. As a result, the global path to achieving sustainable and inclusive development and lasting peace has derailed.

As the world approaches the half-way point of the 2030 Agenda, transformative and practical solutions to accelerate progress on the SDGs are urgently needed to achieve peaceful and prosperous societies. According to [the Secretary General's report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals](#), the world is not on track to meet most of the SDGs by 2030. The preliminary assessment of the 140 SDG targets indicates that only 12 percent are on track, close to 50 percent are moderately or severely off track and 30 percent have either seen no movement or regressed below the 2015 baseline.

¹ [Human Development Report \(UNDP, 2022\)](#).

² [States of Fragility Report \(OECD, 2022\)](#).

³ [Report of the Secretary-General: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals \(2023\)](#).

⁴ [WFP \(2023\)](#).

General Assembly resolution [A/RES/70/1](#) recognizes that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. Investments in peace and sustainable development generate a virtuous cycle – with development gains addressing the drivers of conflict and inclusive peace enabling development priorities to expand.⁵ In resolutions [A/RES/75/201](#) and [S/RES/2558](#) (2020), the General Assembly and Security Council encouraged “Member States and the UN system to advance efforts to bring greater coherence to peacebuilding efforts, in support of national peacebuilding priorities”.

In that regard, at the joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in December 2022 on “[Peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development: Towards coherence and impact on the ground](#)”, there were calls for systematic alignment and cooperation among the humanitarian, development, and peace actors to leverage complementarity of actions and for a timely coordinated response, encouraging further coherence through analysis, strategic guidance, and plans. The Agencies, Funds, and Programmes (AFPs) were urged to adapt and respond to local contexts while strengthening national ownership and leadership. The meeting emphasized the need for broad system-wide partnerships and coordinated responses across the UN system, regional and subregional organizations, the international financial institutions (IFIs), and civil society.

Addressing the root causes of conflicts and crises and responding to development and humanitarian needs require innovative and practical approaches and solutions for sustainable impact on the ground. Therefore, enhanced collaboration, and coordinated, coherent and complementary actions across the peace and development nexus are prerequisites to reducing vulnerabilities and risks, enhancing resilience, and addressing the multi-dimensional drivers and structural causes of conflicts and crises. Yet, emphasis on securitization, stabilization, and delivery of humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected contexts is prominent, while prevention, peacebuilding, and sustainable development receive less attention and resources.

The work of the ECOSOC on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs offers opportunities to bring greater focus to prevention by addressing the root causes of conflicts, in order to make communities more resilient, prevent reversals into conflict and be prepared to deal with emergencies. These opportunities, however, can only be harnessed if the UN system works in a coherent and coordinated manner.

Evidence shows that, thanks to its repositioning, the UN development system, with the Resident Coordinator at its core, is increasingly coming together in difficult contexts where humanitarian, development and peace challenges intersect. As noted in the Secretary-General’s report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) ([A/78/72-E/2023/59](#)), which was presented at the 2023 ECOSOC operational activities for development segment, between 90 and 95 per cent of programme countries responding to the 2022 DESA QCPR survey see United Nations entities as working in close collaboration across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actions and some and some 95 per cent agreed that in 2022, resident coordinators have contributed to building stronger synergies across these interventions Moreover, some 90 per cent of Resident Coordinators that responded to the survey describe “close collaboration”

⁵ [Report of the Secretary-General: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals \(2023\)](#).

among UN development system entities engaged across development and peacebuilding - a 6 per cent. increase since 2021. It is also worth noting that 91 per cent of programme countries now have national mechanisms to coordinate development and peacebuilding efforts - a 46 per cent increase since 2017) (Annex I QCPR Monitoring Framework).

Through its oversight role on development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and coordination of the UN development system, the ECOSOC continues to provide a platform to share lessons learned and ideas aimed at better integration between the policy and operational dimensions of sustaining peace and sustainable development. Similarly, the PBC has promoted a greater emphasis on actions that can have an impact on the ground, complementing the efforts of Member States to ensure lasting peace and attainment of the SDGs, while ensuring efficiency, coherence, and leveraging comparative advantages.

In advance of the [2023 High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) under the auspices of ECOSOC and the [SDG Summit](#), the joint ECOSOC-PBC meeting offers an opportunity for Member States to discuss the importance of the SDGs in linking peace and development on the ground. Further, the meeting is an opportunity to leverage the roles of the ECOSOC and the PBC in support of accelerating the implementation of the SDGs by addressing emerging challenges that are undermining peacebuilding, sustaining peace, and sustainable development.

Objective of the meeting

Building on several recommendations made in the joint meeting of the ECOSOC and the PBC of December 2022 on “[Peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development: Towards coherence and impact on the ground](#)”, the 2023 joint ECOSOC-PBC meeting will focus on ways to operationalize the linkages between peace and development on the ground, with a view to promoting coherence and impact for peacebuilding, sustaining peace and sustainable development efforts. The meeting will also explore the role of the UN system, as well as the ECOSOC and the PBC, in this endeavor.

Guiding questions

- How can the implementation of the SDGs be leveraged to link development and peace efforts on the ground for effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding?
- What are the current key obstacles hampering the realization of the SDGs, especially in conflict-affected contexts, in support of inclusive and sustainable development and lasting peace?
- What are innovative approaches, good practices, and effective tools to operationalize the peace and development nexus on the ground for sustainable impact?
- How can the role of the UN system, as well as the ECOSOC and the PBC, be further utilized to support the operationalization of the peace and development nexus and advance coherence and impact for peacebuilding, sustaining peace, and sustainable development on the ground?

Format of the Meeting

The meeting will be co-convened by the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for a three-hour duration. An opening segment with welcoming remarks will be followed by a moderated roundtable discussion among representatives of Member States, observers, the United Nations system and civil society.

Expected outcome

The outcome of the meeting will be a joint summary by the ECOSOC President and the PBC Chair, highlighting the main conclusions and recommendations of the joint meeting.