



PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Ambassadorial-level meeting of the Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia

28 May 2025

Chair's Summary

On 28 May 2025, the Peacebuilding Commission's Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting to hear from Liberia on its peacebuilding priorities, with a focus on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), and to reflect on how the international community may provide support. Briefers included the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Liberia, a Liberian civil society representative, the UN Resident Coordinator in Liberia and a UN Women representative. Member States applauded Liberia for its successful journey from conflict to peace and democratic stability, commended its commitment to the WPS agenda, including the Government's commitment to extend the second National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS and to develop a third NAP, called for the full, equal, meaningful and safe inclusion of women in decision-making, welcomed Liberia's newly adopted national development plan, expressed support for its efforts to develop its first NAP on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), encouraged further efforts to provide transitional justice, and called for sustained political, technical, financial, and in-kind support for Liberia's peacebuilding priorities.

1. In her opening remarks, **H.E. Ms. Nicola Clase, Permanent Representative of Sweden, Chair of the PBC Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia**, lauded the remarkable progress that Liberia has achieved over the past 22 years, having transformed from a post-conflict society into a stable and vibrant democracy. Liberia was a case study of successful peacebuilding. Since its establishment in 2010, the PBC Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia had sought to accompany Liberia on its peacebuilding journey. In this regard, the Chair underlined the PBC's efforts over the years to provide support for Liberia's electoral processes. The Chair commended Liberia for the peaceful Senate by-election in Nimba County in April 2025. The Chair noted that she had travelled to Monrovia in November 2024 and to Washington, D.C., in March 2025. In Liberia, the Chair had been received by the President of the Republic of Liberia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and other Government representatives, and held meetings with political leaders, civil society, youth representatives, the UN Country Team and the diplomatic corps. In Washington, D.C., the Chair met with interlocutors at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

2. **H.E. Ms. Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liberia**, expressed appreciation for the consistent support provided by the PBC, and reaffirmed Liberia's commitment to peacebuilding, inclusive development, and the empowerment of women and youth. The Government was guided by the recognition that peace is more than the absence of conflict. The Minister observed that peace requires justice, opportunity, and inclusive governance. Noting that Liberia has made very significant progress in its post-war peacebuilding journey, the Minister encouraged sustained support to further help Liberia consolidate its gains. In this regard, the Minister called for support to Liberia's current and forthcoming NAPs on WPS and its forthcoming NAP on YPS. Noting that more than 60 percent of Liberia's population is under the age of 25, the Minister stressed the importance of promoting technical and vocational education and training, civic participation, and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth. If elected to the UN Security Council, Liberia would strive to bring the voices of conflict-affected women and youth to the forefront. The Minister stated that Liberia launched its latest national development plan, the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID), in January 2025, which sought to tackle the structural drivers of poverty, inequality, and conflict. The Minister further drew attention to the importance of the Liberian diaspora to help advance peace and development.

3. **H.E. Ms. Gbeme Horace Kollie, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Liberia**, reaffirmed the Government of Liberia's commitment to inclusive peacebuilding. The Minister expressed gratitude to the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) for having played instrumental roles in helping to formulate and implement Liberia's two NAPs on WPS. Progress had been achieved under the second NAP, including through an increase in women's employment in the security forces from 3 to 7.5 percent, and added that the incumbent Minister of Defense is the first woman to serve in that role. The Minister noted that challenges to the NAP's implementation include insufficient domestic financing and a global pushback against the WPS agenda. The Minister informed that the current second NAP would be extended to remain in effect until the end of 2025, and that a new third NAP would be developed. The Minister further noted that Liberia would be a champion for women peacebuilders on the UN Security Council.

4. **Ms. Esther Yango, Executive Director of the Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL)**, remarked that Liberia was among the first countries in Africa to develop a NAP on WPS. Noting that Liberia is nearing the conclusion of its second NAP, the Executive Director stated that the real test of its effectiveness should be measured by the on-the-ground impact it has had on the lives of Liberian women. The Executive Director emphasized the importance of localization in this regard, including translating the NAP into local languages and empowering women in rural communities to lead its implementation. It was clear that a lack of funding and investment had hindered the NAP's implementation. The Executive Director noted that structural barriers to women's equal participation in politics persist, including tokenism and threats to their safety, adding that only 11 percent of parliamentarians and 35 percent of cabinet ministers were women. Women and women-led organizations had been central to post-conflict reconstruction and

peacebuilding, acting as first responders in providing psychosocial support and community reintegration for ex-combatants. The Executive Director noted that 16 years had passed since the publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and called for the urgent implementation of its recommendations, including the establishment of a war and economic crimes court. Stressing that women are not merely beneficiaries of peace but also its architects, the Executive Director called for increased support, including financial assistance, for grassroots women's organizations.

5. **Ms. Sarah Hendriks, Director of the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division at UN Women**, recognized Liberia as a global leader in the implementation of the WPS agenda. The Director applauded Liberia for having been one of the earliest countries in Africa to have formulated a NAP on WPS, recognized the infrastructure of Women's Peace Huts as powerful symbols of inclusive peacebuilding, and welcomed Liberia's commitment to transitional justice. Other countries could draw lessons and inspiration from Liberia's efforts. The Director further noted that chronic underfunding of women-led solutions, as well as pressures on civic space, were important challenges. The Director put forth four calls to action on UN Women's behalf, for: increased, flexible, and sustained financing for women-led peacebuilding; support for Liberia's third NAP on WPS and its roadmap for a feminist foreign policy; technical and financial support for gender-responsive transitional justice; and protection for women, women-led organizations, and civic space.

6. **Ms. Christine Umutoni, UN Resident Coordinator (RC) in Liberia**, noted that Liberia had progressed remarkably from war to peacekeeping to peacebuilding, and that important lessons could be drawn from Liberia's experiences. The RC observed that Liberian women had been at the heart of national peace processes, having promoted social cohesion, reconciliation, trauma healing, intercommunity dialogue, and inclusive governance. The Women's Situation Room was an initiative that had helped ensure nonviolence during recent elections. The RC commended Liberia for its two NAPs, credited the PBC, the PBF, and the Government of Sweden for having provided essential support, and called for additional and sustained support from Liberia's partners. The RC also welcomed the fact that a gender perspective had been integrated into the AAID. The UN Country Team supported Liberia's efforts to produce a policy and legislation to protect human rights defenders.

7. In their interventions and observations, **Member States and Observers**:

- Commended Liberia for its successful transition from conflict to stable democracy.
- Noted that Liberia presents a model for how nationally owned and nationally driven peacebuilding efforts, backed by sustained support from the international community, including the PBC, can deliver durable peace dividends.

- Commended Liberia for the three cycles of peaceful general elections post-conflict, marked by peaceful transfers of power, including the most recent general elections in October and November 2023.
- Commended Liberia for having overseen and facilitated the orderly drawdown of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2018, noting that Liberia's experience with peacekeeping offered valuable lessons learnt for the future of peace operations.
- Encouraged Liberia to share its experiences and lessons learnt as a successful case study of transitioning from conflict to peacekeeping to peacebuilding, including during the Peacebuilding Architecture Review (PBAR).
- Noted that Liberia's candidacy for an elected seat on the Security Council marked a further step in the country's journey from war to peace.
- Expressed appreciation and recognition for the pivotal role that women and women-led civil society organizations played in facilitating an end to war and consolidating post-conflict peace, including via grassroots mobilization, during peace negotiations, involvement in electoral politics, and fostering reconciliation.
- Highlighted Women's Peace Huts in Liberia as proven models of effective local conflict-resolution and reconciliation mechanisms.
- Welcomed Liberia's continued strong commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women, as demonstrated in part by the first and second NAPs on WPS.
- Commended progress made under the second NAP, welcomed the Government's expressed intention to extend it until the end of 2025, and further welcomed the Government's expressed intention to develop a third NAP.
- Called for the envisioned third NAP to be informed by a rigorous evaluation of successes and gaps in the implementation of the second NAP.
- Noted that structural barriers remain to the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in public life, including under-representation in public institutions, limited economic power, and persistent sexual and gender-based violence, and called for the elimination of such barriers, through measures such as investment in girls' education, gender-responsive budgeting, reconsideration of harmful customary practices, and gender quotas in public institutions.
- Further noted that Liberia faces significant peacebuilding and sustainable development challenges, including poverty, inequality, un- and under-employment, corruption, and institutional fragility, among others.
- Welcomed the publication of the AAID, Liberia's national development plan, noting that it offers a blueprint for sustainable development.
- Further welcomed that gender is mainstreamed across the AAID's six strategic pillars.
- Noted the importance of inclusive, transparent governance, of rooting out corruption, and of strengthening the rule of law, including to ensure public trust and social cohesion.

- Welcomed Liberia's progress towards developing a first NAP on YPS, noting that the empowerment of youth and their active and meaningful inclusion in decision-making is critical, not least owing to their being a demographic majority.
- Noted the vital importance of human-capital development, especially by equipping youth with education and technical skills, to enable adequate opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment.
- Commended the important political support that the PBC Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia has provided since its establishment in 2010.
- Commended the PBF for having allocated significant and impactful resources to Liberia since 2007, noted with satisfaction the current active portfolio of projects, and encouraged continued support.
- Underlined the critical importance of transitional justice, in paying due recognition and respect to victims and survivors, fighting impunity, holding perpetrators to account, promoting national healing, and guarding against reoccurrence.
- Welcomed Liberia's stated intention to establish a war and economic crimes court and also welcomed the renewal of the mandate of the Office for the Establishment of the War and Economic Crimes Court.
- Encouraged the Liberian Government to continue striving to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- Commended the UN Country Team for its efforts, under the RC's stewardship, and encouraged further coordination and coherence between the UN agencies, funds and programmes active in Liberia.
- Called for adequate, predictable, and sustained financing for peacebuilding in Liberia, particularly to finance the implementation of the AAID and the NAPs on WPS and YPS, including from international financial institutions and regional and multilateral development banks.
- Also called for non-monetary, in-kind support to Liberia, such as technical expertise.
- Reaffirmed the sustained commitment of the PBC to supporting Liberia's peacebuilding priorities.

8. In response to interventions by Member States and Observers, the **Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection** reiterated that the current second NAP on WPS would remain in effect until the end of 2025 and would be followed by a new third NAP. The Minister added that the new NAP would be aligned with the AAID and take into account progress on transitional justice. The **Minister of Foreign Affairs** expressed appreciation for the recognition and encouragement provided by Member States and Observers. The Minister reaffirmed Liberia's commitment to the implementation of the WPS and YPS agendas and noted the interconnectivity between them. Acknowledging that corruption remains a challenge, the Minister noted that significant efforts were underway to curb it, including the strengthening of the Anti-Corruption Commission and mandatory declaration of assets by public appointees. The Minister also noted efforts to strengthen

the judiciary. The Minister further noted that such efforts had already been impactful and had translated into improvements in Liberia's standing on international corruption and governance indices.

9. **Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, UN Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Peacebuilding Support**, reiterated the commendations expressed by Member States and Observers for Liberia's successful peacebuilding journey. She noted that good practices and lessons learnt from Liberia's experience could help inform PBAR and the review on the future of all forms of peace operations mandated in the Pact for the Future. In this respect, the ASG noted that the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, through its Impact Hub, had proposed to conduct an impact evaluation of peacebuilding efforts in Liberia. The ASG also noted that challenges in Liberia remained and that support from Liberia's partners should be sustained with a view to consolidation. She expressed satisfaction with the support provided through the PBF for nationally defined peacebuilding priorities such as WPS, YPS and transitional justice. The ASG further suggested that Liberia could both learn from and impart knowledge to other countries and stakeholders on matters pertaining to its national peacebuilding priorities, through modalities of South-South and Triangular Cooperation. She concluded by underlining the importance of optimizing synergies among Liberia's partners, including with international financial institutions.