



Civil Society Statement to the Peacebuilding Commission 2021 Annual Session Financing for Peacebuilding

(Check against delivery)

Thank You, Chair.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Global Partnerships for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), Life & Peace Institute (LPI), Conducive Space for Peace and Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS), PeaceDirect, and other civil society organisations actively engaged in the discussions ahead of the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding, I would like to thank the Permanent Mission of Egypt for providing us with the opportunity to briefly address the Peacebuilding Commission during its 2021 annual session dedicated to the topic of financing for peacebuilding.

On this occasion, we would like to share the key messages learned through civil society efforts to coordinate engagement ahead of the upcoming 2022 High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding, including the paper on feminist financing presented to the Peacebuilding Commission during its meeting on Women, Peace and Security.¹ In developing these messages, we have engaged with both international, national and local peacebuilding partners, with whom we will continue the engagement in the lead-up to the 2022 High Level Meeting.

Together we believe there is a need to increase both the quantity of financial contributions to peacebuilding, but also the *quality of the financing* provided. By this, we mean funding that is flexible, sustainable, and accessible to national and local peacebuilding actors and used in a way that encourages coordination within the peacebuilding community and with other communities of practice rather than fosters competition. While increasing the quantity of funds is necessary to ensure that the demand for peacebuilding efforts is met and to reach communities most at risk of being left behind, ensuring the quality of these funds is just as, if not more, important as the lack of quality financing affects the ability of actors to utilise resources effectively and with the practices required for achieving long-term peacebuilding impact.

¹ See the Report 'Fund Us Like You Want Us To Win: Feminist Solutions for more Impactful Financing for Peacebuilding' at: <https://gppac.net/resources/fund-us-you-want-us-win-feminist-solutions-more-impactful-financing-peacebuilding>



One way of increasing quality financing is to localise and ground peacebuilding and sustaining peace at the community level.² One important lesson from our organisations' current engagement in Sudan, Somalia, and Mozambique is that the sustainability of peace is only possible where an enabling and supportive environment for local peacebuilding exists.

We applaud the recent political recognition of local peacebuilding actors and their networks as critical agents in building and sustaining long-term peace in their respective contexts. This includes the recent joint UNGA-UNSC resolution on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (S/RES/2558), the Peacebuilding Commission's Letter for the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review, the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)'s 2020-2024 Strategy, the 2020 UN Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and the recently -published UN System-Wide Community Engagement Guidelines.

To operationalise such a policy commitment, the upcoming 2022 High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding should identify and amplify existing best practices and adopt innovative approaches that channel resources to local peacebuilders, including women and young peacebuilders, in a way that supports and enables the long-term goal and process of sustaining peace.

Ahead of the High-Level Meeting, we suggest the Member States consider the following ways to support quality financing for peacebuilding actors that is rooted in existing good practices:

1) Integrate principles of authentic partnership into funding modalities, use these principles as selection criteria for intermediary partners, and ensure that intermediary organisations also apply these principles in their work with local peacebuilders.

Many of the current financing models rely on international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) to serve as intermediaries who then work with or channel resources to local peacebuilding partners implementing programmatic activities. If continued, this form of granting needs to be rooted in principles of authentic partnership based on:

- local organisations and INGOs jointly designing and managing resource allocation; and
- prioritising long-term, trusting, and equitable partnerships rather than short-term collaboration between intermediaries and local peacebuilders for a specific grant or tender process.

² See the Report 'Financing Mechanisms to Support Local Peacebuilders' at: <https://gppac.net/resources/financing-mechanisms-support-local-peacebuilders>



One example of such partnership is the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)'s the support of a joint GPPAC – Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) project, “Cameras in Hands,” in Kyrgyzstan. In this project, effective designation of roles between the organisations maximised effectiveness and impact. GPPAC primarily reported, monitored, and enhanced international visibility internationally. FTI, a Kyrgyz organisation, ensured local ownership, sustainability, and a more significant impact at the field level.

Further, donors should move away from the idea of a purely financial partnership where local peacebuilders often function as little more than service deliverers. A more active strategic and long-term partnership between donors and local peacebuilding organisations, who are equally interested in projects’ success and bring their comparative advantages in its pursuit, leads to more impactful peace action.

An example of this is the partnership between the PBF, LPI, and Somalia Peace Line (SPL) within Somalia's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative. This partnership was unique because there was a high degree of collaboration between all three partners at all stages of the process that proved beneficial for all parties. At the country level, LPI and SPL regularly updated a conflict analysis to ensure the project's relevance and was shared with PBF staff, who incorporated the updates into their broader peacebuilding work. Simultaneously, the PBF connected LPI and SPL to critical stakeholders and global discussions that were otherwise absent, thus supporting closing the gap between global and local levels.

2) Explore avenues to provide direct funding to local peacebuilding networks, initiatives, and organisations, including through embassies of bilateral donors.

Some embassies of bilateral donors, including but not limited to Sweden, the UK, Netherlands, Canada, and Ireland, provide direct funding for local peacebuilders. Local organisations are either invited by embassies to submit project proposals or proactively reach out to these embassies in search of strategic partnerships. Often local organisations and embassies jointly refine proposals in the process of co-creation. Local peacebuilders often characterise this type of donor-recipient relationship and the embassies’ role during project implementation as a form of support rather than control. Furthermore, embassies could act as key convenors to bring local activists and peacebuilders and their coalitions and networks together with other donors and embassies in a risk-informed manner. Regardless, this type of funding remains limited and largely not accessible in many contexts.

3) Engage local peacebuilders directly in decision- and grant-making.

When donors develop their approaches to funding peacebuilding action, they rarely consult with the local peacebuilders directly or involve them in grant development processes. This may be one challenge we face as the international community prepares for the upcoming High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding. Local peacebuilders are not viewed as



having meaningful contributions to decision-making processes but rather as implementers. This can lead to inaccurate analysis, duplication of efforts and misinformed priorities guiding the development of proposals that will not produce sustainable impact at the country level.

One good practice is the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF). Its Funding Board serves as a guiding and supervisory body of the Fund and comprises four UN entities, four civil society organisations, and the four largest government donors. This composition allows civil society to inform funding priorities and decisions directly and provides a relevant forum for coordination on policy issues.

Donors should liaise and work closely with local peacebuilders to conceptualise priorities and use this analysis as guidance in developing calls for proposals.

In conclusion, we recognise there are a variety of valuable considerations Member States need to reflect on as they prepare for the upcoming High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding. **However, it is essential that, as a peacebuilding community, we move away from rhetoric and focus on the implementation of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. This must be done in a way that enhances local ownership and engages local peacebuilders, including women and young people, as recognised partners and stakeholders during the High-Level Meeting and beyond.**

We thank you for your attention.