

## Civil Society Statement: Peacebuilding Commission Expert-Level Meeting on the margins of the 2nd Annual CSO-UN Dialogue on Peacebuilding

*On 13 December 2024, Ahmed Mohamed Nasir, Deputy Director and Head of Programs of GPPAC member Save Somali Women and Children, briefed the Peacebuilding Commission on financing for peacebuilding.*



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Dear PBC experts, UN and civil society colleagues,

Yesterday, we discussed a variety of issues pertaining to financing and I hope I can do some justice to the main points raised by my fellow civil society colleagues, UN and donors.

Sustaining peace requires a strengthened effort from the UN system, and the donor community to support both *the quality* (a standard encompassing more participatory, accessible, flexible, and sustained financial resources) and *the quantity* of financing in *a coordinated manner*.

**What does work is a grant that allows local actors to address their needs, as well as build their institutional capacity.** The trajectory away from core funding does not help local organisations, especially those newly emerging and youth organisations. In this sense, the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) was brought up as a good practice example.

**The funds that have civil society advisory boards appear to be more effective** in supporting the needs of local communities. Bilateral donors can similarly consider consulting local partners in deciding how and on what money needs to be spent in a specific context.

**We must redefine what success looks like.** Donors have unrealistic expectations of peacebuilding and prevention impact and have a different understanding of what success looks like in the specific context, peacebuilding is a process and less of a tangible outcome/product.

**Donors must allow for failure and learning.** Issues with one CSO should not be generalised. Things that don't work are opportunities for learning and adjusting and we should give visibility to what we are learning too.

**Local peacebuilders need better funding mechanisms.** Donors should simplify rules and procedures, co-define them with the donors, ensure core funding for local CSOs and sustain through multi-year agreements, and ensure access in local languages;

**Finally, long-term funding is a good practice.** For example, the recent eight-year partnership launched by the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the support of localisation is a good practice example, and we believe that more bilateral donors could consider similar approaches. While short-term and project funding could be effective to fill in gaps, they cannot replace long-term institutional support. Another good practice is the EU Youth Empowerment Fund: not specifically on peacebuilding, but it has allowed young people to establish the rules and reduce the bureaucratic burden and UNOY sub-granting program.

Now, **what does it mean for the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)?**:

1. **The PBC should promote quality and quantity financing for peacebuilding:**
  - The convening role of the PBC could play an important role in increasing quality funding streams for peacebuilding. One approach is to encourage the establishment of dedicated country-based peacebuilding pooled funds, with dedicated funding windows for local peacebuilders, women and youth. These funds can be linked to the implementation of the Cooperation Framework or a specific peacebuilding strategy. The PBC can convene relevant actors to encourage the creation of such funds and promote learning from the context where such funds are already in existence.
  - The major peacebuilding donors present on the PBC should maintain existing and allow for more funding for peacebuilding, allocating at least 30% of their ODA to peacebuilding.
  - The PBF and other pooled funds should be:
    - Long-term and multiyear to be able to sustain strategic efforts in building peace;
    - Flexible to address emerging issues.
    - We know that the PBF has its limitations when it comes to funding for local peacebuilders, so it is important to discuss how these gaps should be filled and by whom.
2. **Through its convening and advisory role, the PBC should support peacebuilding action in complex political settings.** Donors should avoid freezing resources during periods of conflict relapse. Instead, they should reallocate funds to support peacebuilding efforts through alternative strategies that sustain peace across the conflict continuum. This approach helps stabilise and prevent further escalation of conflict, recognising the dependence of national constituencies on these resources and the importance of applying peacebuilding principles throughout the conflict cycle. Donors should also refrain from withdrawing peacebuilding resources prematurely after a situation at the country level stabilises unless advised by an independent assessment.

Premature withdrawal can risk a relapse into conflict and undermine peacebuilding mechanisms that depend on continued funding.

3. **The PBC should further encourage support for regional peacebuilding and work in the border areas**, as problems that we face at the local level often do not result within a specific country, but rather are a result of regional problems.
4. **The PBC should promote financial support for locally-led peacebuilding action.** The PBF as well as other UN grants should encourage proposals where local organisations are the primary implementing partners and direct receivers of funds and if necessary international non-governmental organisations/intermediaries play a supporting and administrative role. This will address the challenges of high-cost implementation, better context analysis, and providing or finding local solutions.
5. **The PBC should improve coordination among peacebuilding donors.** Many donors who are members of the PBC expressed their commitment to localisation. They should establish monitoring mechanisms for donor commitments to localisation. Donors should report transparently on progress. This can include developing tools to monitor the indicators and provide evidence-based data that can measure localisation success.

We do hope that young people, women and other local partners can embrace their full capacity with the support of the PBC and its members.

I thank you.