



## PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

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

28 May 2025, 3PM–6PM, Trusteeship Council Chamber

#### **Concept Note**

#### **Background**

Over the past twenty-two years, Liberia has successfully sustained its hard-won peace. Successive governments have made peacebuilding a priority and sought to establish international partnerships to this end. Several milestones have been achieved, including the orderly transition of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2018 as well as a series of peaceful elections and changes in government.

The Government of Liberia has expressed its commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict, promoting justice and accountability, empowering women and youth, and building a more peaceful and prosperous society. Challenges include slow socio-economic development, fragile institutions and governance structures, low labor force participation among young people, as well as infrastructure development needs.

In January 2025, the Government launched the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID), Liberia’s fourth post-conflict National Development Plan, for the period 2025–2029.<sup>1</sup> It offers a comprehensive and forward-looking development framework designed to foster inclusive growth, sustainable development, and shared prosperity. The AAID is structured around six pillars: (1) economic transformation, (2) infrastructure development, (3) rule of law, (4) governance and anti-corruption, (5) environmental sustainability, and (6) human capital development. Peace and reconciliation as well as gender issues have been mainstreamed throughout the AAID.

#### **Women, Peace and Security**

Women have played key roles as advocates for peace during Liberia’s civil wars and in political leadership positions in the post-conflict period. Nevertheless, further efforts are needed to ensure the full, meaningful, and equal participation of women in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

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<sup>1</sup> See the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development ([here](#)).

Liberia has implemented two National Action Plans (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), covering the periods 2009–2013 and 2019–2023 respectively.<sup>2</sup> The second NAP was informed by assessments that pointed to persistent structural barriers to women’s participation in peace and security processes, due to factors that included weak representation in decision-making structures, unequal access to resources, and discriminatory customs within society. The second NAP was structured around five pillars: (1) prevention of violence against women and girls; (2) protection of the rights of women and girls; (3) participation of women and girls in decision-making processes; (4) meeting the needs of women and girls in relief and recovery interventions; and (5) coordination and accountability in NAP implementation.

The Government of Liberia is now, in consultation with civil society and other partners, considering whether to extend the second NAP until the end of 2025 and/or to develop a third NAP.

### Recent Peacebuilding Commission engagements

The Peacebuilding Commission’s Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia held its most recent meeting on 19 August 2024, with the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Justice of Liberia, among other briefers. The ministers presented the peacebuilding priorities of the new Government of Liberia, with a focus on transitional justice and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda.<sup>3</sup>

At the meeting, the PBC commended the successful conduct of the 2023 general elections, which were the first to be held following the withdrawal of UNMIL. The PBC also welcomed Liberia’s efforts pertaining to transitional justice and its commitment to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The PBC further commended Liberia’s commitment to adopt its first National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS).<sup>4</sup>

In November 2024, the Chair of the Configuration travelled to Liberia. The visit served to discuss challenges and opportunities in pursuing Liberia’s peacebuilding priorities, and to identify ways in which the PBC could provide further support. The Chair met with a wide range of interlocutors and visited several projects funded through the Peacebuilding Fund.

The Chair noted *inter alia* that Liberian women play pivotal roles in fostering and sustaining peace, including through grassroots structures such as Palava Huts and Women’s Peace Huts, but that they continue to face barriers to their political and economic empowerment. The Chair welcomed efforts to promote the full, meaningful, and equal participation of women in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

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<sup>2</sup> See the first National Action Plan ([here](#)) and the second National Action Plan ([here](#)).

<sup>3</sup> See the Chair’s summary ([here](#)).

<sup>4</sup> See the PBC press statement on Liberia ([here](#)).

In March 2025, the Chair travelled to Washington, D.C., to engage with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in support of Liberia's peacebuilding priorities.

### Peacebuilding Fund

The Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund has since 2007 approved over 100 million U.S. dollars for peacebuilding in Liberia. The current portfolio of 15.5 million U.S. dollars spans projects focused on supporting the resolution of land-related disputes and strengthening land governance; supporting public accountability, transparency in public services delivery, and anti-corruption efforts; supporting women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding; and supporting reconciliation and peace dividends, especially for marginalized groups and communities, including disaffected youth.<sup>5</sup>

### **Objectives**

The meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission's Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia on 28 May will be an opportunity for the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection to present the peacebuilding priorities of the Government of Liberia with a focus on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The ministers may provide an update on the Government's considerations as regards whether to extend the second National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS until the end of 2025 and/or to develop a third NAP.

The PBC will also be briefed by the Executive Director of the Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL), the United Nations Resident Coordinator, and a representative of UN Women.

Delegates will be invited to reflect on what support the PBC can provide for Liberia's peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities, with a focus on the WPS agenda. Delegates will also be encouraged to share experiences on the implementation of WPS action plans in their respective countries and regions.

The outcomes of the meeting will include a Chair's summary and possibly a PBC press statement in support of Liberia's peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities.

Delegates may wish to consider the following guiding questions:

- What further support could the United Nations, the PBC, and Member States provide to Liberia to advance the country's peacebuilding and sustaining peace priorities?

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<sup>5</sup> See the list of PBF projects ([here](#)).

- How should the United Nations, the PBC, and Member States support Liberia’s work on WPS? How can the PBC help mobilize the resources required to implement a possible new NAP on WPS?
- What lessons learned from implementing WPS action plans in other countries or regions would be relevant for Liberia?
- What measures could be pursued to dismantle structural barriers to the full, meaningful, and equal participation of women and girls in public life and decision-making, including as relates to peacebuilding and sustaining peace?
- What synergies could be found between the WPS agenda and Liberia’s parallel efforts on transitional justice and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) respectively?
- How could the PBC help inform and galvanize investment from international financial institutions in support of Liberia’s peacebuilding priorities?

### **Provisional agenda**

- Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Nicola Clase, Permanent Representative of Sweden, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission’s Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia
- Briefings by:
  - H.E. Madam Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liberia
  - H.E. Madam Gbeme Horace Kollie, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Liberia
  - Ms. Esther Yango, Executive Director, Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia.
  - Ms. Christine N. Umutoni, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia
  - Representative of UN Women (TBC)
- Interventions by Member States and interactive questions-and-answers with the briefers
- Remarks by Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support
- Closing remarks by H.E. Ms. Nicola Clase, Permanent Representative of Sweden, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission’s Country-Specific Configuration on Liberia