

SUPPORT

**South Africa's
Candidature for
the Peacebuilding
Commission for
2021 – 2022**

#VotesAPBC21



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





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1. Introduction

South Africa's foreign policy recognises the importance of a strong multilateral system of global governance which allows states to collaborate in managing world affairs and solving complex international problems. South Africa seeks to rejoin the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in order to make a contribution to peacebuilding and sustaining peace using the country's enduring experience in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

South Africa has previously served in the PBC and co-facilitated, together with Ireland and Mexico, the 2010 review of the PBC. South Africa also served and contributed to the various country-specific configurations of the PBC. Additionally, the Government of South Africa has worked with the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), a South African research institution, which participated in all reviews of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (PBA), contributing substantially to the processes of further improving the PBA.

South Africa continues to contribute to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding with direct engagements in several conflict and post-conflict situations in various capacities including mediation. South Africa has also championed peacemaking and peacebuilding in its bilateral relations and through its active roles in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU) and the UN as well as in the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) configuration within the context of the IBSA Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund).

As the Chair of the AU in 2020, South Africa has been active in the Continent's campaign of Silencing the Guns. As Chairperson of the AU, President Cyril Ramaphosa has led a comprehensive continental response to COVID-19 to ensure that the pandemic does not reverse gains in peace sustainability, peacemaking, peacebuilding and development.



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The primary focus of South Africa's term as an elected member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in 2019 and 2020 has been on Africa. South Africa has sought to use its term on the Security Council to focus attention on further assisting the peaceful resolution of conflicts that persist in Africa such as in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Sahel, and South Sudan. South Africa has also prioritised the importance of post-conflict reconstruction and development for countries emerging from conflict in order to prevent their relapse into conflict.

South Africa has sought to promote greater cooperation between the AU and the UN, as well as to further advance the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda, which are imperative to ensuring inclusive and broader participation of all segments of society in preserving peace and stability.

Through South Africa's chairship of the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, it has also focused attention on the illicit exploitation of, and trade in, African natural resources as key drivers of conflicts on the Continent as well as on how reform and governance of the security sector contributes to conflict prevention, particularly at community and grassroots level.

Peacekeeping operations are increasingly playing pivotal roles in peacebuilding activities. South Africa remains one of the main troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) to UN peacekeeping operations. South Africa is also one of the top T/PCCs that deploy women peacekeepers.



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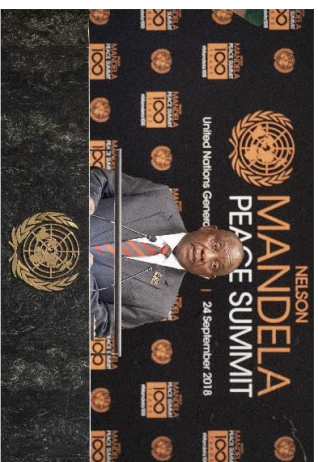
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2. South Africa's guiding approach to the PBC

South Africa intends to utilise its membership of the PBC to continue to support and promote the work of the Commission, informed by pertinent principles which we believe should underpin its work by focusing on:

- **Advisory role of the PBC:** South Africa believes that there is a need to continuously review and enhance the advisory role of the PBC to both the UN General Assembly and the UNSC. It should also enhance its cooperation with the Economic and Social Council. These principal organs of the UN can benefit from the work and expertise that the PBC brings in various country-specific situations, and as situations evolve.
- **Financing for peacebuilding.** Every effective and successful peacebuilding effort rests on a combination of nationally identified peacebuilding priorities, implementation of an agreed peacebuilding plan based on the national priorities supported by the international community, and ensuring adequate and predictable financial resources. South Africa will work with all UN Member States towards reaching an agreement on this important aspect.
- **National ownership:** South Africa will continue to advocate for the respect and safeguarding of the principle of national ownership in peacebuilding activities. This is important in all facets of peacebuilding and nation-building. A whole of society approach that empowers the population in advancing peacebuilding efforts is necessary to build trust and buy-in.



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- Conflict prevention:** Conflicts have imposed a huge toll on many societies, especially on the African continent, including death, displacement, debt, and poverty, amongst others. It is the view of South Africa that conflict prevention is far less expensive and more desirable than conflict resolution. In this regard, the PBC must further strengthen its contribution to the International community's investment in prevention and ensuring that countries do not relapse into conflict.

- Managing transitions:** Some peacekeeping operations on the African Continent are beginning to draw down. Post-conflict transition processes have proven complex, requiring careful coordination of efforts of various national and international stakeholders. Careful management of post-conflict transitions, from stabilisation to consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of peacekeepers to peacebuilding and socio-economic recovery and development is critical for sustaining peace. It is necessary for the PBC to enhance its ability to support transition processes.

- Transitional justice:** Transitional justice processes in post-conflict contexts are an important component of peacebuilding. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for example, was predicated on the notion that both victims and perpetrators of crimes should have an opportunity to reflect on their past experiences and move on with the task of statebuilding, nation-building and peacebuilding. This heralded South Africa's focus on promoting peace, truth, reconciliation, healing and justice as key components of transitional justice in post-conflict societies. South Africa will continue to promote these principles in light of the UN declaring 2019 to 2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, and the AU having declared 2014–2024 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa.



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- **WPS:** Women continue to bear the brunt of structural and material barriers that limit their participation in all peace processes including peacebuilding. Women and girls continue to suffer varied forms of abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse in situations of crisis and conflict. South Africa seeks to strengthen this thematic area within the peacebuilding and peace sustenance efforts. It will do so in efforts to implement all UNSC resolutions pertaining to the WPS Agenda, including resolution 2493 (2019) adopted during South Africa's Presidency of the UNSC in October 2019.

- **Youth and peacebuilding:** South Africa recognises the youth dividend particularly as the African Continent has a large youthful population. It is thus opportune to involve the youth in activities that promote sustainable peace. South Africa aims to promote the youth as agents of peace through their involvement primarily in peacebuilding activities particularly at community level, and foresees a greater role for the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth in this area.

- **Partnerships for peacebuilding:** Fostering partnership in support of peacebuilding reflects the recognition that peacebuilding is a multidimensional process involving the contribution of diverse national stakeholders and international partners. This includes partnerships within the context of the UN's cooperation with regional and sub-regional organisations. In this instance, South Africa advocates for the strengthening of the partnership between the UN and the AU as well as Regional Economic Communities across all areas including in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

- **South Africa's direct contribution to peacebuilding:** South Africa makes a direct contribution to consolidating peace and fostering development by providing support to countries around the world through mechanisms which include the IBSA Fund; the African Renaissance Fund; and the AU Peace Fund.



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