


# THE SECOND CSO-UN DIALOGUE ON PEACEBUILDING

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UN HEADQUARTERS  
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We would also extend our gratitude to the continuous support of our CSO-UN Dialogue Initiative on Peacebuilding Core Group:



## 2024 CSO-UN Dialogue on Peacebuilding – Executive Summary

### Introduction

The second iteration of the Civil Society (CSO)-United Nations (UN) Dialogue on Peacebuilding took place at UN Headquarters in New York on 12-13 December 2024. The annual Dialogue convened over 125 civil society representatives, providing them with a platform to contribute to the [2025 UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review \(PBAR\)](#)<sup>1</sup> and engage with UN actors on global policymaking on peacebuilding. 10 UN entities participated in the dialogue, as well as representatives of 15 Member States.

**The discussions generated concrete recommendations for the 2025 PBAR and reflected on broader systemic reforms** needed to make the UN peacebuilding architecture more inclusive, locally driven, and sustainable. The Dialogue featured sessions focused on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS), financing for peacebuilding, and meaningful civil society inclusion in UN processes, with conflict prevention running through all sessions as the cross-cutting focus.

At a time when civic space is shrinking, participants emphasised the need to **institutionalise civil society engagement** throughout the UN peacebuilding architecture and beyond, ensuring that local actors—especially women, youth, and marginalised groups—are systematically included in policy-and decision-making. The Dialogue emphasized the importance of **decentralising UN-civil society partnerships**, with a stronger focus on how these relationships can be built at the regional, national and local levels. Calls were made for a more multisectoral understanding of civil society and greater investment in long-term partnerships with local actors and trust-building.

### Challenges in Peacebuilding Financing

Participants emphasised that **sustainable, flexible, and accessible funding is essential for effective peacebuilding**, yet current financing remains short-term, donor-driven, and often inaccessible to local, youth-, and women-led organisations. Bureaucratic barriers and a focus on project-based funding exclude grassroots actors with deep contextual knowledge and hinder long-term peace efforts. There was a strong call for multi-year core funding that prioritises local ownership and builds trust. Participants also noted the need to shift donor expectations, recognising that peacebuilding is a process, not a quick-fix outcome, and urged more space for learning from both successes and failures.

### Prioritising Conflict Prevention

**Investment in prevention** emerged as an essential priority for sustaining peace, with participants urging actions to align funding with policy commitments. Prevention efforts must extend beyond early detection of conflicts to tackle structural and systemic drivers of violence, including root causes such as exclusion, marginalisation, weak governance, and inequality. Participants highlighted the effectiveness of locally driven early warning systems, calling for the localisation of prevention strategies. Prevention efforts require **long-term, flexible, and sustainable funding** that is directly accessible to local actors, prioritizes **local ownership** and builds lasting trust between donors and grassroots organizations. To this end, the Dialogue highlighted the need to reduce bureaucratic barriers to enable more context-specific and impactful support.

### Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda

Despite the commitments outlined in the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), youth remain largely excluded from meaningful participation in policy discussions and decision-making while facing structural barriers, tokenistic engagement, and limited access to sustainable funding. In light of the upcoming 10th anniversary of the Resolution, this year's Dialogue aimed to reaffirm the YPS agenda by calling for intergenerational co-creation and partnerships, and direct financial support to youth-led organizations and reforms that ensure the meaningful inclusion of **youth voices in peacebuilding efforts beyond tokenism**.

### Toward Institutionalising Engagement

Throughout the sessions, diverse voices and perspectives contributed to a rich, important and comprehensive discussion, reflecting on the necessary pathways to enhance the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts in face of today's increasingly challenging global environment, and providing actionable recommendations to Member States, the UN system, and other stakeholders. The second CSO-UN Dialogue on peacebuilding incorporated lessons learned from the first iteration and contributed to a further institutionalisation of civil society engagement with the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

2024 CSO-UN Dialogue on peacebuilding

## Member states

## UN system

## All donors



### Prevention and Conflict Resolution

- Establish and integrate prevention strategies informed by community experiences into national peacebuilding efforts.
- Strengthen national infrastructures for peace to institutionalise prevention as a core component of governance.



### Financing for Peacebuilding

- Allocate at least 30% of ODA to peacebuilding, ensuring direct access for local and grassroots peacebuilding organisations.
- Encourage donor coordination by leveraging pooled funds.
- Ensure funding continuity after conflict stabilisation to prevent relapse and address emerging drivers of violence.
- Develop national policies that prioritise multi-year, flexible, and sustained peacebuilding funding.
- Encourage the PBC to bring together the diverse donor community through regular convenings to ensure greater coordination.



### Youth, Peace and Security (YPS)

- Ensure the meaningful participation of youth in the design, implementation, and evaluation of peacebuilding and YPS initiatives, local and national peace structures and national strategies such as National Action Plans on YPS.
- Support youth-led conflict prevention programmes, especially in contexts with intergenerational violence, and ensure both young women and men are involved in national violence prevention strategies.
- Recognise informal youth networks and social movements as legitimate actors in peacebuilding.



### Prevention and Conflict Resolution

- Strengthen early warning mechanisms with CSO-led risk assessments.
- Improve coordination between UN and HQ and Country Offices, ensuring alignment between peacebuilding, development, human rights, and humanitarian programming.
- Develop best-practice guidelines on prevention.
- Ensure the systematic integration of prevention into UN programming and operations. This should include shifting from crisis response to early prevention.



### Financing for Peacebuilding

- Improve peacebuilding impact indicators.
- Incentivise and monitor donor commitments to localisation.
- Facilitate the establishment of accountability frameworks to ensure that funding reaches the intended beneficiaries.
- Establish country-based pooled peacebuilding mechanisms, through the Peacebuilding Fund, with dedicated funding streams for local actors, youth, and women-led initiatives.
- Strengthen regional and cross-border financing initiatives to address transnational peace and security challenges.



### Youth, Peace and Security (YPS)

- Create dedicated youth advisory groups to support the integration of the YPS agenda across the UN system to promote system-wide engagement in line with UNSCR 2535.
- Incorporate youth participation targets and monitoring in peacebuilding frameworks. Expand technical support and capacity-building for youth-led peace initiatives.
- Establish institutionalised youth peacebuilding dialogues within UN



### Prevention and Conflict Resolution

- Ensure flexible and sustained funding that address the root causes of conflict.
- Shift funding priorities to early prevention by investing in long-term infrastructures for peace/
- Develop financing models that enable local actors to lead prevention efforts.



### Financing for Peacebuilding

- Reduce bureaucratic barriers for grassroots and local CSOs.
- Integrate peacebuilding into long-term development projects and foster new partnerships with humanitarian actors that de-risk investments.
- Strengthening the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) as a strategic partner to IFIs.



### Youth, Peace and Security (YPS)

- Involve youth in designing calls for proposals to guarantee co-ownership.
- Ensure at least 20% of peacebuilding funds are directly allocated to youth-led or youth-centred initiatives. Ensure longer-term institutional support for youth-led organisations.
- Establish dedicated funding streams for local youth peacebuilders working in fragile and conflict-affected areas.