



## **Contribution to the New Agenda for Peace**

**March 2023**

### **New Agenda for Peace and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Preparation of a New Agenda for Peace calls for an understanding of the long-term causes and drivers of conflict and complex nature of the challenges faced by many societies. These include economic and social factors such as widespread poverty, demographic and agricultural pressure, limited recognition of people's land rights, weak governance, poor natural resource management, easy availability of small and light weapons and erosion of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. Furthermore, inequality between groups within countries is also considered a major contributor to conflict in many regions. Drivers of conflict can also include environmental factors such as climate change-related threats related to ecosystem health, land management and food and water security. Therefore, investing in prevention and peacebuilding requires a focused attention to ensuring that social protection systems, education and healthcare systems are meeting people's needs, including those of the most vulnerable.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is not only a roadmap for sustainable development but also for sustaining peace, and therefore a useful framework for the New Agenda for Peace. Sustaining peace is critical for achieving all the goals and in turn, the implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda can help to address the long-term causes and drivers of conflict and contribute to sustaining peace.

Escalating and protracted conflicts, climate crisis and the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to undermine efforts and advances towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The upcoming SDG Summit and the discussions around the New Agenda for Peace in the lead up to the 2024 Summit of the Future, provide opportunities to prioritize addressing the root causes of conflict through sustainable development to make communities more inclusive, better governed, and resilient and to fulfil the 2030 Agenda's promise of leaving no one behind.

Conflicts often have detrimental impacts on public institutions and public administration, whose functioning and services are critical to addressing grievances and boost start sustainable development and progress. Inclusion is essential for peace and security, not least because it can build trust in public institutions and promote a virtuous cycle of civic engagement and improved state capacity. In contrast, exclusion, marginalization and inequalities undermine public trust and create a fertile ground for extremism and violent conflict. Post-conflict building and prevention must involve the broader society and stakeholders to create a sense of belonging despite political differences. Institutional capacity-building and collaboration to identify and address grievances could help avoid a relapse into conflict. Moreover, inclusion should also be reflected in the engagement of women and young people in peace processes. They should be involved in defining, widely disseminating, protecting and upholding peace agreements and their provisions. Efforts should focus on investing in and supporting women's and young people's agency, voice, capacity and leadership, empowering them to participate in development processes, both formally and informally.

The full implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development is also crucial to mobilizing greater resources domestically, through more efficient, fair and transparent tax systems and effective international cooperation on tax matters, and internationally, through greater international development assistance. International policy coordination and coherence can improve aid effectiveness and strengthen institutions in conflict-affected countries to mobilize domestic revenues and reduce dependence on official development assistance.

## **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**

The Economic and Social Council's oversight role in matters of operational activities for development, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance and its overall coordination of the United Nations development system complements the valuable work taking place in the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. While the Peacebuilding Commission focuses on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, the Economic and Social Council has a mandate to promote economic and social progress, and inclusive peaceful societies in the context of long-term sustainable development. Over the years, the Economic and Social Council has played an important role in developing mechanisms to respond to the challenges faced by countries emerging from conflict to assist them on their path to long-term development. Currently, the agenda of the Economic and Social Council includes consideration of agenda items related to country-specific situations, such as the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti and the integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan, as well as the Sahel region, which are considered in the ECOSOC Transition Meeting.

The guidance provided by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities (QCPR) on transition has also given ECOSOC a role to promote integrated support by UN entities at country level. UN system operational activities, by supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, can contribute to building and sustaining peace and prevent conflicts. In addition, ECOSOC holds a formal Transition meeting on integrating development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding activities, which can make an important contribution to the intergovernmental debate on these issues.

The Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies address various drivers of conflict in their ongoing work. Some functional commissions, including the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), have adopted resolutions with relevant policy advice for countries emerging from conflict, and the Commission for Social Development has been providing policy guidance towards building peaceful society for all through its resolutions on drivers for peace, such as poverty eradication, reduction of inequality and promotion of decent work for all. Other subsidiary bodies, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), addressed the issue of conflict from the perspective of their work.

The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) also serve as important entry points where conflict-affected countries can engage in peer learning and share experiences and lessons learned on promoting peaceful societies through their national sustainable development policies and actions.

### **New Agenda for Peace**

- Given the centrality of sustainable development to sustaining peace, the New Agenda for Peace could promote comprehensive, integrated solutions which span actions across the peace, security, humanitarian and development pillars of the organization. This would require leveraging the work of the Economic and Social Council's various segments and forums, and subsidiary bodies, as well as HLPF, that identify (including through better data) and address drivers of conflict and identify transformative actions to promote SDGs in conflict-affected contexts. It would also require promoting a closer relationship among the intergovernmental bodies with a view to more integrated, coherent and coordinated UN response.
  - A more strategic approach to the joint work of ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission could be promoted to generate evidence and knowledge on the drivers of conflict and identify targeted and tailored policy interventions across the humanitarian, development, peace and security areas.
  - A stronger relationship between ECOSOC and the Security Council could be promoted, utilizing [Article 65](#) of the UN Charter which allows ECOSOC to provide advice to the Security Council. ECOSOC's oversight role over the UN development system is important in this context, in particular, following the drawdown of Security Council mandated missions in countries on the PBC agenda and ongoing monitoring of countries in post-conflict situations. Lessons and ideas coming out of ECOSOC's engagement with the relevant UN

country teams could lead to further development of policy guidelines on operating in complex environments and be shared with the Security Council and the PBC.

- More systematic meetings with the participation of Presidents of Charter bodies could be promoted.
- Prevention and development efforts need to be inclusive, equitable, foster trust in each other and in public institutions, including through mechanisms that address grievances, promote resilience, respect human rights, and leave no one behind, in order to be transformative and sustainable. All groups and segments of society must be meaningfully engaged to sustain peace and promote sustainable development. Women and youth should be involved in defining, widely disseminating, protecting and upholding peace agreements and their provisions. Efforts should focus on investing in and supporting their agency, voice, capacity and leadership, empowering them to participate in development processes, both formally and informally. A gender lens must be brought to conflict analysis and policy making.

**Resources related to DESA's work on peace and development, including its support to intergovernmental meetings**

[United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

- [DESA Highlights Report 2021-2022](#)
- [Leaving No One Behind](#)
- [Strengthening Institutions](#)
- [Economic and Social Council](#)
  - [ECOSOC subsidiary bodies](#)
  - [ECOSOC's collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission](#)
  - [ECOSOC's collaboration with the Security Council](#)
  - [ECOSOC Transition Meeting](#)
  - [ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment](#)
  - [ECOSOC Ad-Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti](#)
  - [Consideration of the UN development system's support to South Sudan](#)
  - [Support to the Sahel region](#)
- [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#)
  - [Voluntary National Reviews \(VNRs\)](#)