



Special UNGA74 event: Building Strategic Partnerships for Sustaining Peace at the Regional Level

24th September, 2019, 8:30am-10:00am
Large Conference Room
3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 10th Floor

To strengthen the implementation of the UN's work on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, especially at the country and regional levels, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (DHF), the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), and the International Peace Institute (IPI), have initiated a series of roundtable discussions to examine the operationalization of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. The series aims to convene member states, UN staff and civil society representatives working at expert level on peacebuilding and sustaining peace to discuss key thematic areas of relevance to the implementation of the Sustaining Peace resolutions.

The fifth roundtable in the series organized in partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), and the Community of Democracies (CoD) and will focus on strategies to operationalize the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace resolutions at the regional level and the engagement of regional actors. Roundtable participants will reflect on positive examples as well as key challenges in establishing strategic and operational partnerships between the United Nations (UN), regional organizations and civil society, and possible ways forward to address these challenges.

The role of regional organizations in operationalizing sustaining peace was strongly highlighted in the 2016 parallel Resolutions on Sustaining Peace (S/RES/2282) and the 2018 Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (S/2018/43). The recent Interim Report of the UN Secretary-General on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (S/2019/448) also notes that "strategic partnerships with regional and sub-regional partners on sustaining peace and peacebuilding remain a priority for the UN" ahead of the 2020 Review of the UN's peacebuilding architecture.



As part of its reforms, the UN aims to strengthen regional infrastructure, capacities and coordination on peacebuilding. One element of the peace and security reform is the support to the operationalization of the single regional structure designed to support a more holistic approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace. This includes strengthening regional responsibilities of Assistant Secretaries-General and the integration of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the former Department of Political Affairs into the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

However, the role of and strategic engagement of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), among others, with regional institutions and actors in relation to the newly reformed UN structures and policies remains an area that calls for greater attention and clarity. The Interim Report unambiguously highlights the need to improve operational partnerships with regional actors outside of the UN system and “further explore ways to partner with international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank and the African Development Bank, as well as civil society organizations.” This builds on the recognition of the geographical proximity and mandate of regional organizations to address root causes, risks and capacity gaps in the interest of mitigating any outbreak of violence, and to support de-escalation efforts.

The roundtable discussion will provide space for member states, UN representatives and civil society to discuss the challenges and strategies to respond to this call for strengthening the partnership between the UN, regional organizations and civil society. It will also allow for reflections and generate ideas for how the 2020 Review of the UN peacebuilding architecture can present an opportunity to strengthen the partnership and dialogue between UN entities and regional organizations, and what needs to happen to make sure these efforts are supported by appropriate financing arrangements.

Participants also will have a chance to learn about and take forward the themes raised during the Conference organized on 19-20 September, 2019 in Washington D.C. by GPPAC, together with the OAS, CoD and International IDEA. The Conference brings together the UN representatives, regional organizations and civil society to explore avenues for mobilizing and, where needed, enhancing the capacities of regional organizations to support peaceful, just and inclusive societies.



The roundtable will bring the main conclusions of the Conference to the ongoing policy and reform discussions at the UN, exploring ideas for reinforcing the important work undertaken at the regional level to advance sustaining peace and reflect on key challenges in establishing strategic and operational partnerships. Representatives of civil society, the UN, regional organizations and member states will present their experiences of engaging regionally, including on early warning and early response, and the opportunity of regional actors to advance the youth, peace and security agenda. Finally, participants will share recommendations on how to improve partnerships between the UN, member states, and civil society with regional organizations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Questions:

The discussion seeks to generate, discuss, and address the following key questions:

- What are some promising initiatives employed by regional organizations to prevent conflict and sustain peace? What lessons can be shared with other intergovernmental, governmental, and civil society actors? How can such initiatives be adapted to different contexts?
- How do regional peace and security frameworks and policies help advance the parallel resolutions on Sustaining Peace and the UN-World Bank Pathways for Peace Report? What are the gaps and how can they be addressed?
- What are the key elements that allow for strong operational partnerships at the regional level? What good practices from such partnerships can be shared?
- What is the role of civil society in strengthening operationalization of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace resolutions at the regional level? What are the good practices in fostering effective partnerships between civil society and regional organizations? How can such partnerships be further strengthened?
- What are some of the main opportunities and challenges for developing and working from a shared analysis at the regional level? How does the UN Cooperation Framework, World Bank's Fragility, Conflict and Violence Strategy support such a process?