



**ROYAL NORWEGIAN
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Secretariat of the United Nations
Interdepartmental Team, New Agenda for Peace
New York, NY 10017

Your ref.:

Our ref.:

Date: 28 December 2022

A New Agenda for Peace – Submission from Norway

With reference to the United Nations Secretariat's note verbal DPPA/PMD/2022/01205, we thank the Secretariat for the opportunity to share our initial views, priorities, and recommendations regarding the New Agenda for Peace, within the broader framework of "Our Common Agenda".

The current record number of conflict-related fatalities and increased geopolitical tensions, demonstrates that our collective mechanisms for preventing and resolving conflicts and sustaining peace are not sufficient. The initiative for a New Agenda for Peace, is therefore timely and necessary.

The enormous suffering caused by conflicts around the world for millions of civilians makes it imperative to move forward with ambition and urgency. Although the UN system has gradually honed its tools for peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, since the Agenda for Peace was adopted in 1992, we still have a long way to go to optimize and streamline those tools. Meanwhile, new and complex threats have emerged, which demand new multilateral solutions. The unlawful Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is a gross violation of international law and the UN Charter. The targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure demonstrates a complete disregard for the suffering it causes. The conflict is not just a European conflict. It has dramatic global ramifications, magnifying existing global challenges. It must end.

Since the sources of instability and conflict are ever more complex and interdependent, our response must be bold and multidimensional, building on the core principles of the UN Charter and breaking down institutional silos. The relationship between climate and security is one example. The adverse impact of conflict on development through soaring prices on energy and food, is another. Governance challenges including widespread corruption is a third, undermining trust and breeding inequality.

Norway will contribute actively to the New Agenda for Peace, in close collaboration with other Member States, UN entities and external partners. At the outset of the process, we would like to highlight five main areas for consideration:

First, we need a renewed political commitment and updated institutional arrangements for prevention. Prevention is the most effective, the most responsive and the most cost-effective way to deal with conflict, as was well documented in the ground-breaking UN–World Bank joint report “Pathways for Peace”. The rationale for seamless approaches throughout the cycles of conflict has been recognized by the General Assembly and the Security Council in the resolutions on Sustaining Peace. While the reforms of the UN system that were adopted in 2018 and 2019, based on proposals from the Secretary General, has led to improvements, our impression is that the UN system has yet to optimize its combined tools for prevention. A new approach could seek to clarify leadership and responsibilities regarding prevention within the UN Secretariat. It could aim to harness the combined prevention resources of the wider UN system, in particular the new generation of UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinator’s Offices. It could highlight national and local ownership, and it could include the elaboration of nationally led vulnerability assessments and prevention strategies. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission could be expanded to provide Member States with a forum to discuss their respective national prevention strategies, based on partnership and mutual respect. We also encourage closer cooperation on prevention between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations, such as the African Union, as well as with the Multilateral Development Banks, based on the respective organizations’ mandates.

Second, the Secretary General’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) remains the UN’s most important tool for prevention and sustaining peace, being a flexible, risk-tolerant financing mechanism that brings together the UN system at country level and helps bridge gaps. Its funding, however, is limited compared to other parts of the multilateral system’s infrastructure of peace, like for instance peacekeeping operations. This prevents it from realising its full potential. Norway remains a committed donor to the Fund, and we support the SG’s proposals to increase the funding to peacebuilding activities through assessed contributions. In addition to ensuring the adequate funding of the PBF, we should look more at how the activities of other UN entities that fund quite similar interventions, like the Office of Counter-Terrorism, can be better coordinated with the PBF’s.

Third, with reference to Security Council Resolution 1325 and a broad range of subsequent resolutions from several multilateral bodies, the New Agenda for Peace should integrate and operationalize the principles of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Women constitute half of humanity, and it is inconceivable for sustainable peace to be achieved in any context without the active involvement and agency of women, at the strategic as well as implementation level. The meaningful inclusion of women in security and peace efforts is a must. It makes every peace process qualitatively better and heightens the chance of lasting success. The role of women should be highlighted throughout the conflict cycle.

Fourth, efforts to streamline transitions from UN's peacekeeping operations – in line with Security Council Resolution 2594 (2021), should be continued. Ensuring that operations are even more tailored to the specific needs of each context would in our view lead to more durable results on the ground. Specifically, efforts must continue to ensure that all mission transitions are planned and managed in an integrated and forward-looking manner, including through the provision of adequate resources to support long-term stability and the continuity of peacebuilding activities in the host country, also after the mission has been closed. It is also crucial to maintain efforts to protect civilians, even as missions draw down, to prevent insecurity and violations and recurrence of conflict. This would help counter well-known challenges related to post-peacekeeping operation vacuums and facilitate better transitional processes that prevent backsliding into conflict.

Finally, Norway agrees with the Secretary General's intention to explore new domains of conflict and looming strategic risks, inter alia relating to technological innovations and climate change. We look forward to policy briefs by the Secretary General in this regard.

Let me again thank the Secretariat for giving us this opportunity to provide initial thoughts and recommendations for a New Agenda for Peace. We look forward to engaging in the discussions in the months ahead. Norway is committed to playing an active and constructive role in developing the agenda, and we look forward to close cooperation with the Secretariat and Member States in this regard.

Yours sincerely



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