

Beyond the UN Peace and Security Architecture: How can Enhanced Cooperation with Civil Society and Regional Organizations Help the UN to fulfill its Purpose?

A side-event to the President of the General Assembly's High-level Thematic Debate on Peace and Security,
organized by:

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) &

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)

Co-sponsored by:

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN &

The Africa Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) &

UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

May 11, 2016, 1.15pm-2.30pm

Conference Room 8, UN Secretariat Building, 1st Avenue and E. 45th Street, New York

A light lunch will be served

Please RSVP to m.hoiland@gppac.net

Background:

During 2015 the UN undertook three key reviews: the UN peace operations review, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review and the Global Study on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. As the UN reflects on its working methods and the different tools and mechanisms available to address the complexity of today's challenges, it should also consider how more fluent collaboration with actors beyond the UN system would contribute to a more effective global peace and security architecture. Enhanced cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as civil society organizations with expertise in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, could help the UN to fulfill its purpose.

Regional and Sub-regional Intergovernmental Organizations (RIGOs) play an important role in the collective peace and security architecture. They are increasingly called upon to take over greater responsibilities to sustain peace and security in their respective regions and contribute to the establishment of functioning democratic institutions in post-conflict countries in transition. Chapter

VIII of the UN Charter was conceived to leverage these regional arrangements providing a framework for the relationship between the UN and RIGOs in the field of peace and security. However, it can be argued that this instrument has been underutilized and that cooperation between the UN and RIGOs remains limited.

This situation has been acknowledged by the UN Security Council and the General Assembly. UNSC [Resolution 2171 on Conflict Prevention](#) of 21 August 2014 recognizes that ‘some of the tools in Chapter VI of the Charter which can be used for conflict prevention have not been fully utilized, including resorting to regional and sub-regional organizations and arrangements.’ The UN General Assembly, in its [resolution 68/303](#) of July 2014, also made strong reference to Chapters VI and VIII of the UN Charter and to the role of regional and sub-regional organizations in mediation. The resolution calls on regional organizations to continue to develop their mediation capacities. It also ‘encourages the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations to regularly hold dialogues on mediation upon mutually agreed agendas, exchange views, information and lessons learned and improve cooperation, coordination, coherence and complementarity in specific mediation contexts (...’)

The different reviews of the UN Peace and security architecture also constitute an important moment to examine how the UN engages with local people in civil society through its peacebuilding architecture (PBA). The founding resolutions of the PBA by the General Assembly and the Security Council recognize “the important contribution of civil society and non-governmental organizations, including women’s organizations, to peacebuilding efforts.” Each resolution also encourages consultations with civil society, non-governmental organizations, including women’s organizations, and the private sector. However, the findings from research conducted last year by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) [on the inclusiveness of the PBA](#) suggest that these initial aspirations, despite the existence of specific policy guidelines to support them, have not translated into meaningful and consistent engagement with civil society.

The High Level Thematic Debate on Peace and Security presents an opportunity to reflect about the roles that RIGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) can play to enhance the ownership, effectiveness and impact of conflict prevention, peace keeping and peacebuilding measures. The contribution of RIGOs and CSOs to the global peace and security architecture can be enhanced by strengthening the mechanisms of interaction and policy discussion between RIGOs, the UN (specifically the Security Council) and CSOs with expertise in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Establishing better connections among different levels of action (global through the UN, regional through RIGOs and local through CSOs) can enhance collective efforts to prevent violent conflicts and build more resilient and democratic societies.

Objectives:

- To reflect on how to strengthen the global peacebuilding architecture through enhanced CSOs-RIGO-UN cooperation in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and explore how these relationships can boost the role of these different actors.
- To share lessons learned on the inclusiveness of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture and the existing spaces for the participation of civil society, in countries under the consideration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and in New York.
- To share concrete recommendations on measures for the building of strategic partnerships between the UN, regional and sub-regional organizations and civil society.
- To highlight existing forms of consultation and collaboration that foster cooperation and experience-sharing amongst regional and sub-regional organizations with civil society organizations.

Agenda

Moderator: Darynell Rodríguez Torres, GPPAC

Welcoming remarks

- The Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the UN

Panel discussion with Questions & Answers

- Walter Odhiambo, Executive Director, the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa, NPI-Africa
- Representative of the African Union (tbc)
- Vasu Gouden, Executive Director of the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes, ACCORD
- Massimo Tommasoli, Permanent Observer for International IDEA to the UN

Closing remarks

- The President of the General Assembly H.E. Mogens Lykketoft