

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Forum on Culture of Peace

9 September 2015

Trusteeship Council Chamber

Background

On 13 September 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, by consensus, its landmark, pioneering and norm-setting resolution 53/243 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. It contributed, inter alia, towards the effective observance and realization of the objectives of the UN-declared International Decade for Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). Asserting and re-affirming the commitment of the totality of the UN membership for building the culture of peace, the UNGA has adopted resolutions on the subject every year.

The General Assembly, through these annual substantive resolutions, continues to highlight the priority it attaches to the full and effective implementation of these forward-looking decisions which are universally applicable and sought after by the vast majority of all peoples in every nation.

Following the successful first High Level Forum (HLF) on The Culture of Peace held on 14 September 2012, and also during the second and third HLF in 2013 and 2014 respectively, the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 69/139 on “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace” on 15 December 2015, which was co-sponsored by 97 Member States.

The resolution requests the President of the General Assembly to consider convening a high-level forum, as appropriate and within existing resources, devoted to the implementation of the Programme of Action on the occasion of the anniversary of its adoption, on or around 13 September.”

The resolution also expressed the Assembly’s positive support to the Forum by welcoming the successful holding on 9 September 2014 of the General Assembly High-level Forum on The Culture of Peace, convened by the President of the Assembly, and the high-level participation, wide-ranging partnership and inclusive collaboration among Member States, international organizations and civil society, as evidenced at the Forum. It also welcomed with appreciation the observance of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace by the Forum.

Since adoption of resolution 67/106 in 2012 requesting the President of the General Assembly to consider convening the High Level Forum, the Assembly has reiterated this decision every year and, in pursuance, the President has convened the Forum annually.

Objective

As the international community moves toward the adoption of a transformative post-2015 development agenda by world leaders at a Summit in September 2015 in New York, the critical linkage between peace and development has been underscored in the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs. Goal 4 is on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, and its targets include “promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence”. Goal 16 is on promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Recognizing the need for strengthening further the global movement to promote the Culture of Peace, particularly in the current global context, the one day High Level Forum will provide an opportunity for Member States, UN system entities, civil society, Non-governmental organizations, media, private sector, and other stakeholders to exchange views on this important issue. It will also highlight emerging trends that impact on the implementation process.

Some of the guiding questions on key issues to be discussed on Panel One on: “Promotion of the Culture of Peace in the context of the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda”, include:

1. What roles can specific actors and sectors of societies, such as educators, women and youth, play in promoting inclusive approaches to a culture of non-violence and peace?
2. What practical strategies can be devised to promote the culture of peace in the context of Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, and how can Member States, the UN system and other stakeholders ensure their effective implementation?
3. What measures can be taken in national education systems to help educate a future generation that embraces diversity and a culture of peace?
4. What roles can local community leaders play in promoting a culture of peace?
5. How the objective of global citizenship as envisaged in the Global Education First Initiative and the culture of peace are interconnected and could be incorporated in the educational curricula at all levels?

Some of the guiding questions on key issues to be discussed on Panel Two on: “Role of the media in the promotion of the culture of peace”, include:

1. What are the practical and pro-active steps the media can take to contribute towards building sustainable peace, given the worrying trends of rising intolerance and violent extremism?
2. How can media, using its wide network of viewers and readers, promote peace, development and social stability?
3. In this age of global connectivity through the internet and social media, among other networks, what are the opportunities and challenges to the peoples of the world, particularly for the young generation, to integrate the culture of peace in their lives and societies, and to counter intolerance, hatred and bigotry?
4. How can the important role the media plays in reaching people at the community level be utilised to promote a more tolerant and peaceful world?

Format and Outcome

The High-level Forum will consist of an opening segment and two consecutive interactive panels in the afternoon. One panel will discuss “Promotion of the Culture of Peace in the context of the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda”. The second panel will discuss the “Role of media in the promotion of the Culture of Peace”.

The outcome will be a President's summary, which will be circulated to all Member States, Observers and other stakeholders.

Participation

Member States will be invited to participate at the highest possible level, U.N agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders will also be invited.

Further information on the High-level Forum, including Programme details will be availed in due course.