

A New Agenda for Peace (the “Agenda”) is a comprehensive brief that reflects Secretary-General António Guterres’s agenda on the future of peacebuilding and the role multilateralism can play in it. The agenda posits several major challenges and a series of interlocking threats in achieving global peace, particularly: the changing nature of armed conflict, the dangers of weaponizing emerging technologies, persistent violence outside armed conflict, rising inequalities within and among states, and the climate emergency, which are all common themes amongst member states regardless of socioeconomic or development status. As the global order shifts from traditional warfare to 21st century security issues, the American Pakistan Foundation (APF) encourages member states to practice multilateral collective action. It is pertinent to use international platforms to work on common goals through joint treaties guided by international law which are then enforced through national action.

The Agenda shares several practical and scalable models for effective management such as a bottom-up, people centered approach that can be achieved through awareness and campaigns to curb violence and promote peaceful civic engagement. All member states have a role to play in promoting peace through the investment of prevention and inclusivity efforts. A theory of sustainable peace becomes tenable when the practice of violence eradication is utilized as a core component of conflict deterrence. Similarly, including the voices of the affected in the search for a peaceable solution is paramount to effective change. Additionally, minorities, underrepresented groups, and the youth can play a key role in dismantling groups that dominate the traditional power structure.

The Peacebuilding Commission can help generate a renewed commitment to multilateralism by engaging in mediation and negotiation efforts to solve existing intergovernmental disputes that are the root of subsequent regional conflicts. As Secretary-General António Guterres stated, the “underutilization of the different tools referred to in article 33 of the Charter remains one of our greatest collective shortcomings.” These tools are mainly “negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means” which the parties to a conflict may choose to pursue. Utilizing and implementing Chapter VI of the UN Security Council, which promotes solutions via negotiation and arbitration, is one of the foundations of attaining sustainable peace through multilateralism.

Summit of the Future in 2024, a UN conference scheduled to take place in September 2024, ought to prioritize international conflict resolution through the aforementioned methods and investing in peacebuilding efforts. Moreover, it is pertinent to address secondary development issues such as rising poverty rates, inflation, investment in renewable energy, and public health emergencies, threatening the progress of sustainable world peace. Investment in democratization and social reforms which promote civic engagement is crucial to achieving long-lasting peace operations. Additionally, disarmament efforts, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, which have been stagnant for several decades, should be reinvigorated and revitalized to optimize their efforts. Lastly, none of the recommendations and programs can be effective until an extensive monitoring and evaluation system is in place to ensure enforcement by member states. States ought to be held accountable for their contributions to climate change and progress in democratization and better governance.

