



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2 April 2018

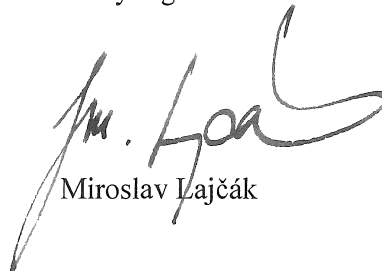
Excellency,

In reference to General Assembly Resolution 70/262 and Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016) on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, I will convene a High-level Meeting on efforts undertaken and opportunities to strengthen the United Nations' work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in April 2018.

In this light, I have the honour to convey the enclosed Concept Note of the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, to be held on 24 and 25 April 2018 at the United Nations' Headquarters.

The logistics note and other relevant documents were previously circulated to all Member States and Permanent Observers to the United Nations and made available on the President of the General Assembly's website ([www.un.org/pgs/72](http://www.un.org/pgs/72)).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest considerations.



Miroslav Lajčák

All Permanent Representatives and  
Permanent Observers to the United Nations  
New York

## **High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace**

24-25 April 2018

### **Overview**

In reference to General Assembly (A/RES/70/262) and Security Council (S/RES/2282(2016)) resolutions on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, the President of the General Assembly will convene, under the agenda item entitled “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace”, a High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace.

The overarching objective of the High-Level Meeting is to assess efforts undertaken and opportunities to strengthen the United Nations’ work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

As specific objectives, the meeting will also reflect on how to:

- 1) Respond to the renewed emphasis on conflict prevention and on addressing the root causes of conflicts to sustain peace;
- 2) Strengthen operational and policy coherence including through accountable leadership, and improved capacity across the United Nations system in support of peacebuilding and sustaining peace;
- 3) Increase, restructure and better prioritize funding to United Nations peacebuilding activities;
- 4) Strengthen partnerships for peacebuilding and sustaining peace among the United Nations and key stakeholders in the field at the country, regional and global levels;
- 5) Enhance and strengthen the role of women and youth in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts.

The 2016 resolutions renew the United Nations’ commitment to conflict prevention as embodied in the UN Charter.

Yet, violent conflicts in many parts of the world are surging and becoming more complex, deadly and protracted. As the nature of conflicts changed over the past decades, the world has witnessed a troubling increase in casualties among innocent civilians that have been the targets of direct attacks, as well as unparalleled numbers of displaced populations.

Following the high-level reviews of peace operations, the peacebuilding architecture and the implementation of Security Council Resolution S/RES/1325 (2000), there is growing understanding that the United Nations needs to adjust its capacities to build and sustain peace. It must engage with Member States long before conflict breaks out and be able to support them at all stages of conflict.

### **Participants**

The High-Level Meeting will be attended by national Governments, civil society, including women’s and youth groups and representatives of the private sector, international, regional and sub-regional organizations, international financial institutions and the academia.

### **Format**

The two-day meeting will consist of an opening and a high-level segment, a high-level lunch, a plenary debate of the General Assembly, four interactive dialogues and a closing segment. For further information, please refer to the letter of the President of the General Assembly, dated 7 March 2018, which circulated the logistics note of the High-Level Meeting.

## **Outcome**

A draft procedural resolution is to be adopted by the General Assembly during the High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace on 24-25 April. In addition, the President of the General Assembly will publish a summary of the discussions held during the two-day meeting.

## **Preliminary Draft Programme**

**Tuesday 24 April 2018**

### **Opening segment (9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., GA Hall)**

*UN system representatives*

*Special guests*

*Civil society representative*

*Youth representative*

### **High-Level Segment (11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., GA Hall)**

### **Plenary debate (3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., GA Hall)**

### **Interactive Dialogue I: “Sustainable Financing for Peace” (3:00 p.m. - 4:25 p.m., ECOSOC Chamber)**

As the 2018 UN-World Bank *Pathways for Peace* Report highlights, more resources are spent on addressing the aftermath of conflicts than on preventing them from flaring up and escalating. The study makes a compelling case for prevention by pointing out its economic benefits both nationally and internationally. The amount spent on preventing violent conflict in the first instance is a fraction of that spent on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

The resolutions on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture emphasize the importance of “adequate, predictable and sustained financing in order to effectively assist countries to sustain peace and prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.”

The resolutions also recognize that to share risks and maximize the impact of peacebuilding efforts, strategic partnerships, pooled funding, blended financing among the UN, bilateral and international donors, multilateral financial institutions and the private sector are needed. Therefore, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide options on increasing, restructuring and better prioritizing funding to United Nations peacebuilding activities.

Released in February, the Secretary-General’s report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) provides Member States with a set of financing options. Interactive Dialogue I will bring together Member States, international and regional financial institutions, development banks, private sector, civil society and the UN system to reflect on the specific proposals contained in the Secretary-General’s report for sustained financing for peacebuilding and on ways to further mobilize resources.

Suggested topics to be addressed:

1. *How can Member States ensure adequate, predictable and sustained financing for nationally led United Nations peacebuilding activities?*

2. *How can financing for sustaining peace and financing for the Sustainable Development Goals mutually support and complement each other?*
3. *How to address the continuing under-resourcing of the Peacebuilding Fund to take advantage of its catalytic nature? How to achieve the Quantum Leap in contributions to the Fund as per the Secretary-General's report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace?*
4. *How to build partnerships with International Financial Institutions and the private sector that reinforce traditional financing mechanisms and lead to innovative ways to finance sustaining peace?*

Panellists:

*International Financial Institution*

*Regional Financial Institution*

*Private Sector*

*Civil Society Representative*

**Interactive Dialogue II: “Strengthening the United Nations Work on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in the Field” (4:35 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., ECOSOC Chamber)**

Referring to the 2016 resolutions, a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace encompasses “the prevention of conflict and addressing its root causes, strengthening the rule of law at the international and national levels, and promoting sustained and sustainable economic growth, poverty eradication, social development, sustainable development, national reconciliation and unity, including through inclusive dialogue and mediation, access to justice and transitional justice, accountability, good governance, democracy, accountable institutions, gender equality and respect for, and protection of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

The implementation of the broad concept of sustaining peace requires a coherent approach across the United Nations system and strengthened coordination among its principal intergovernmental organs. Building peace is at the core of the work of the United Nations and is an activity that demands a “whole-of-system” approach.

While acknowledging the need for changing the Organization’s working culture and methods, the Secretary-General has undertaken efforts to reform the United Nations’ system with a view to improving its effectiveness. His report on the restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar (A/72/525) contains specific proposals on how to prioritize prevention and sustaining peace. The Secretary-General’s report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) further develops how to enhance United Nations’ policy and operational coherence to support peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Building on the enhanced flexibility in its working methods over the past two years, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) plays a key role as an advisory body that fosters better coordination and complementarity among the United Nations’ principal organs, governing bodies of UN entities and other key stakeholders, including international, regional and sub-regional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society organizations, women’s group, youth organizations, and the private sector.

Interactive Dialogue II will discuss the United Nations toolbox for sustaining peace, and the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in the report in support of sustaining peace in the field. It will cover the PBC and its innovative, new working methods, and its support to country and regional contexts. It will furthermore be an opportunity to hear from a member of the of the Advisory Group of Experts that provided the basis for the resolutions on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. The Dialogue will further focus on how the three reform streams proposed by the Secretary-General can help strengthen the United Nations' work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Suggested topics to be addressed:

1. *How can the United Nations better support Member States in the field comprehensively and strategically?*
2. *How can the advisory and convening roles of the PBC be further enhanced and results-driven? How to further enhance the role of the PBC?*
3. *How can the revitalization of PBSO contribute to enhanced coherence in support of the field? What is needed to further revitalize PBSO?*

Panellists:

*United Nations representative from the field*

*Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission*

*Civil society representative*

*Member of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation*

*Member of the AGE report on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture*

**Wednesday 25 April 2018**

**Plenary debate (10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., GA Hall)**

**Interactive Dialogue III: "Strategic Partnerships with the United Nations in the Field for Peace" (10:00 a.m. - 11:25 a.m., ECOSOC Chamber)**

While the primary responsibility of identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities for sustaining peace belongs to Governments, the resolutions on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture acknowledge the fundamental role of relevant stakeholders in assisting national authorities to pursue their peacebuilding objectives. They therefore call for "close strategic and operational partnerships between the United Nations, national Governments and other key stakeholders, including international, regional and sub-regional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society organizations, women's groups, youth organizations, and the private sector."

The Secretary-General's report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace acknowledges that "an ecosystem of partners working in support of governments is critical for sustaining peace". In this regard, the report underlines the role of the Peacebuilding Commission for enhanced collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

As part of the activities outlined in his Roadmap to Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, the President of the 72<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, convened a multi-stakeholder event, entitled "Sustaining Peace: Partnerships for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding" on 8 December 2017 at Columbia University to discuss the critical role of

partnerships in sustaining peace and prevention. The two take-aways of the event were that engaging stakeholders are an important aspect of prevention in itself and that local expertise paired with national, regional and international capabilities are indispensable for the successful implementation of the resolutions on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.

Interactive Dialogue III intends to build on this discussion to strengthen strategic partnerships with the United Nations for peace. The panel will bring together representatives from the United Nations in the field, civil society, including women's groups, regional organizations, academia as well as youth organizations. It will be an occasion for relevant stakeholders to reflect on how they can contribute to the current debate on prevention of conflict and to assist national Governments with their sustaining peace priorities.

Suggested topics to be addressed:

1. *How to effectively build an "ecosystem of partners" for sustaining peace?*
2. *How to ensure that partnerships build on the comparative advantages of different actors? How to effectively engage women and young people in peacebuilding efforts?*
3. *How can partnerships between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations be enhanced?*
4. *How to effectively develop community-engagement strategies in cooperation with national authorities?*

Panellists:

*United Nations representative from the field*

*Civil society representative*

*Regional Organization*

*Representative of the youth*

**Interactive Dialogue IV: "UN Comprehensive and Integrated Approach to Peace" (11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., ECOSOC Chamber)**

The resolutions on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture recognize that development, peace and security as well as human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The Secretary-General report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace highlights successful examples of cross-pillar cooperation in conflict-affected countries, maximizing impact on the ground and providing for a coherent approach to the United Nations' engagement in the field. The challenge is how to turn these *ad hoc* examples of good practices into a coherent and integrated approach to peace.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also acknowledges the interdependence between development and peace and security. It further recognizes that "there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development". According to the recent Secretary-General report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, most people in extreme poverty live in countries affected by conflict. The 2030 Agenda is the paramount goal of the United Nations, and it also happens to be the best defence against the risks of violent conflict.

In this regard, the Secretary-General proposes concrete measures to strengthen leadership, accountability and capacity in both the headquarters and the field to support peacebuilding and sustaining peace and further builds on the proposed development reform (A/72/492/Add.1).

Although sustainable development programmes are a core part of prevention efforts, they should be implemented in tandem with other policies that promote human rights and address root causes of conflict. As the UN-World Bank *Pathways for Peace Report* underscores, changing the incentives of actors to act violently is a fundamental component of preventing conflict.

Interactive Dialogue IV assesses how to further integrate in a comprehensive manner peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the overall work of the United Nations in the field and at headquarters. The panel will bring together representatives from across the United Nations system to discuss ways to further strengthen a system-wide approach to prevention.

Suggested topics to be addressed:

1. *How can the United Nations system ensure policy and operational coherence, accountable leadership and enhanced capacities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace across its pillars?*
2. *How to better integrate a youth and a gender perspective to a cross-pillar approach to sustaining peace?*
3. *How can sustainable development and the promotion of human rights be part of conflict prevention efforts?*

Panellists:

*United Nations representatives*

*Civil society representative*

*Gender Expert*

**Plenary debate (3:00-5:00 p.m., GA Hall)**

**Closing session (5:00-6:00 p.m., GA Hall)**