



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

12 September 2018

Excellency,

In reference to General Assembly Resolution 72/137 on the Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, I have convened a High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace on 5 September 2018.

In this light, I have the honour to transmit herewith the summary of the High-Level Forum. The summary aims to synthesize the key recurring messages that stood out during the plenary and the panel discussion.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Lajčák', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Miroslav Lajčák

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



**Summary of High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace
convened by the President of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly**

*Wednesday, 5 September 2018
UN Headquarters, New York*

Summary

1. The Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 1999 by consensus and without reservation, established fundamental principles and reiterates political commitment to promote the culture of peace in the new millennium.
2. The Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace defines a set of actions to help Governments, international organizations and civil society and individuals to foster the culture of peace at the national, regional and global level.
3. Recognizing the need to further promote the culture of peace, particularly in the current global context, the President of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, **H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák**, convened a High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace on 5 September 2018, in accordance to General Assembly resolution 72/137.
4. The one-day forum consisted of an opening segment, a music interlude, a plenary segment and a panel discussion on the theme “**The Culture of Peace: A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace**”. The forum aimed at highlighting emerging trends that have an impact on the realization of the culture of peace, and to enable Member States and Observers and relevant stakeholders to exchange views on how to further promote the culture of peace.
5. The opening segment featured opening remarks by **H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák**, President of the General Assembly, **Ms. Maria Luiza Viotti**, Chef de Cabinet to the UN Secretary General, and keynote address by **Dr. Rigoberta Menchú Tum**, 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.
6. The opening segment highlighted that peace needs to be part of our simple daily routine, especially by recommitting ourselves to the ideals of the UN Charter. Even though the Charter does not specifically mention the culture of peace, it is undoubtedly embedded in every word. In this light, the international system should continue supporting and promoting the culture of peace in the context of its efforts to bring a new approach to peace. Recommitting to the ideals of the UN Charter is the only way we can save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.
7. The need for a more coherent and integrated approach was also stressed, in order to ensure peace works in practice. Liberia, Colombia and the Gambia as success and inspiring stories of promoting a culture of peace through prevention, mediation and sustaining peace. Culture of Peace encompasses tolerance, disarmament, sustainable economic and social development, democratic participation, gender equality, freedom of expression and respect for human rights.



**UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON
THE CULTURE OF PEACE**

05 SEPTEMBER 2018, UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK



8. Furthermore, it was also highlighted that culture of peace is a cross-cutting feature of all cultures, which enables different peoples to work together in balance, harmony, complementarity and mutual respect. Culture of Peace must be built as a tangible heritage of humankind.
9. Forty-Two Member States and one Observer to the General Assembly took the floor in the plenary debate of the High-Level Forum. They strongly called on the need to advance the culture of peace. Member States stressed that the ongoing reform of the United Nations Peace and Security pillar is crucial to further promoting the culture of peace. They also underscored the crucial role partners from the private sector, academia, NGOs, civil society and media have in supporting the efforts led by the United Nations in promoting the culture of peace. Member States also stressed that inequalities, exclusion, poverty may have a negative impact on the culture of peace and while the speedy implementation of the SDGs, promotion of inclusive growth and respect for human rights can increase the chances of lasting peace.
10. The panel on the theme “The Culture of Peace: A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace” featured **4 panelists: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo**, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, **H.E. Mr. Lazarus Ombai Amayo**, Permanent Representative of Kenya, **Ms. Marie Paule Roudil**, Director of UNESCO Office in New York and UNESCO Representative to the United Nations, and **Ms. Rachel C. Allen**, Director, Peace and Justice Institute, Valencia College in Orlando, Florida, U.S.A.
11. The panel was moderated by **Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury**, Founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, Former Under-Secretary-General and High-Level Representative of the United Nations, Chair of the UN General Assembly drafting committee for the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (1998-1999). In tribute to Kofi Annan, he quoted his historic remarks stating that “if we want enduring results, we in short need the culture of peace”. Ambassador Chowdhury stressed that the essence of the culture of peace is self-transformation, whereby each one of us would commit ourselves to living in a peaceful way, and each of us must become an agent of peace and nonviolence. He also recalled that next year will mark the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on Culture of Peace and the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, whose birthday on 2 October has been recognized by the UN as the International Day of Nonviolence.
12. The panel discussion highlighted that the culture of peace needs to be strengthened within all peoples, especially youth by making them peacebuilders to prevent conflicts and sustain peace. It also stressed that respecting human rights is essential to peace, as well as further promoting the culture of peace in educational programs. Culture of Peace cannot exist in a vacuum and must be a multi-stakeholder process including educators, parents, officials, civil society organizations at the national, regional and international levels and others. “Educating for peace” is new and has only 20 years, panelists expressed, while acknowledging progress on the matter and sharing experiences and initiatives led on the effort to further advance the culture of peace.
13. The panel counted with four special invitees to participate as respondents from the floor: **Professor Federico Mayor Zaragoza**, former Director-General of UNESCO and President of the Culture of Peace Foundation, **Dr. Francisco Rojas Aravena**, Rector of the University of



**UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON
THE CULTURE OF PEACE**

05 SEPTEMBER 2018, UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK



Peace; and **Mr. Al-Saud Al-Babtain**, Founder and Chair of the Al-Babtain Foundation of Kuwait.

14. Respondents stressed the need for more dialogue between parties in conflict and more investment in peacebuilding, sustaining peace, prevention and mediation. Respondents also noted that there is a shared global responsibility on ensuring the culture of peace and that, therefore, multilateral partnerships and international cooperation are necessary to tackle the global threats. No one is able to address it alone. Women, youth and other segments of the society need to have an increased role in reducing violence and preventing conflicts. Education for peace is essential, and to implement it we must build on the experiences, voices, and actions of the local communities that make peace possible every day.
15. The closing segment featured remarks delivered by H.E. Mr. Jussi Tanner, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, on behalf of the President of the General Assembly. The closing remarks summarized the essence of the plenary and panel discussions, as well as called for a human-rights-based approach to both peace and development, to bring more coherence and integration between the three pillars of the United Nations.
16. Closing remarks also reminded that next year will be the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

To access the speeches delivered by delegations, refer to:

<http://papersmart.unmeetings.org/ga/72nd-session/high-level-forum-on-a-culture-of-peace/programme/>

To access the recorded videos of the High-Level Forum, refer to:

<http://webtv.un.org/search/high-level-forum-on-culture-of-peace-general-assembly-72nd-session-1st-plenary-meeting/5831207833001/?term=culture%20of%20peace&lan=english&cat=Meetings%2FEvents&sort=date&page=5>

<http://webtv.un.org/search/high-level-forum-on-culture-of-peace-general-assembly-72nd-session-2nd-plenarymeeting/5831294674001/?term=culture%20of%20peace&lan=english&cat=Meetings%2FEvents&sort=date&page=4>

To access the Concept and Logistics note, letters and other important documents, refer to:

<https://www.un.org/pga/72/event-latest/a-culture-of-peace/>