



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

25 June 2019

Excellency,

In reference to General Assembly Resolution 73/126 of 12 December 2018, entitled “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, I will convene on 13 September 2019 a High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace to observe the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

This Declaration, considered to be one of the most significant legacies of the United Nations, encourages action at all levels, including civil society, academia, the private sector, media, and individuals who are identified as key actors for its effective implementation.

This year’s observation on the theme “The Culture of Peace: Empowering and Transforming Humanity” will reflect on the enduring value of the Culture of Peace and its significance for achieving the transformative 2030 Agenda.

Kindly find attached a preliminary concept note on the High-level Forum. A detailed programme and additional information regarding the event will be provided in due course. For further information, please contact my Senior Advisers, Mr. Eugenio V. García ([eugenio.vargasegarcia@un.org](mailto:eugenio.vargasegarcia@un.org)) and Mr. Marcio Burity ([marcio.burity@un.org](mailto:marcio.burity@un.org)).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "MFEspinosa".

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés

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

## Concept Note

### **United Nations High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary convened by the President of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly**

*Friday, 13 September 2019*

*General Assembly Hall and Trusteeship Council Chamber  
UN Headquarters, New York*

#### **Overview**

The United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 73/126 on 12 December 2018 at its 73<sup>rd</sup> session, in which the Assembly requested the President, H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, to **convene a high-level forum devoted to the implementation of the Programme of Action on the occasion of the anniversary of its adoption. The Assembly also requested the President of the General Assembly to give special attention to the appropriate and befitting observance of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action, which falls on 13 September 2019, which will be an opportunity for renewing the commitments to strengthen further the global movement for the culture of peace.**

Recognizing the need to further promote the Culture of Peace, particularly in the current global context, the 73<sup>rd</sup> UNGA has affirmed the afore-mentioned mandate with the co-sponsorship of 100 Member States.

#### **Background**

It may be recalled that on 13 September 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, by consensus and without reservation, its pioneering and norm-setting resolution 53/243 on the **Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace**. 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 since 1997. Through annual substantive resolutions for the last 20 years as well as annual High-Level Forums since 2012, the General Assembly has highlighted the priority it attaches to the full and effective implementation of these forward-looking decisions which are universally applicable and responds to the yearnings of every people for progress.

Recognizing the need for continual support to the further strengthening of the global movement to promote the Culture of Peace, as envisaged by the United Nations, particularly in the current global context, including for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the one-day High-Level Forum is intended to be an opportunity for the UN Member States, observers, UN system entities, civil society, including NGOs, academia, media, private sector, and all interested parties, to have an exchange of ideas and suggestions on the ways to build and promote the Culture of Peace, also taking into account emerging trends.



## **Significance of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Theme of the Forum: “The Culture of Peace: Empowering and Transforming Humanity”**

The Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace unanimously adopted two decades ago is a universal document explaining, outlining, and defining the focus of the Culture of Peace as agreed upon by the international community. This historic norm-setting document, considered one of the most significant legacies of the United Nations, sees the Culture of Peace as a process of individual, collective and institutional transformation. The Programme of Action identifies eight specific areas which encourage actions at all levels – the individual, the family, the community, the national, the regional and, of course, the global levels. Even though the Declaration and Programme of Action is an agreement among states, in this document governments, civil society, media and individuals are all identified as key actors for its effective implementation.

The Culture of Peace is interlinked with the sustainable development agenda. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its sustainable development goal 4.7 includes, among others, promotion of culture of peace and non-violence as well as global citizenship as part of the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. The international community is called upon to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills for culture of peace and non-violence as well as global citizenship by 2030. The High-Level Forum on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Culture of Peace and the subsequent events of the High-Level Meetings of the High-Level Week of the 74<sup>th</sup> session in September provide collectively a unique opportunity to highlight the interconnection between peace and sustainable development and advance progress in the last decade of implementation of the SDGs.

In the light of the importance of the Culture of Peace and its potential for responding to the global challenges facing mankind, the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Observance should be central to the pivotal discussions and commitments expected at the General Assembly in September. The theme for the High-Level Forum on 13 September 2019, “The Culture of Peace: Empowering and Transforming Humanity”, reflects the enduring value of the culture of peace for the transformative 2030 Agenda.

### **Participation**

Member States and Observers of the General Assembly are invited to participate at the highest level possible. The meeting is also open to UN agencies, civil society organizations, including NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders.

### **Format of the Anniversary Forum**

The format of the High-Level Forum on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Culture of Peace, to be held on Friday, 13 September 2019, will consist of an opening segment, a plenary segment, an interactive panel discussion and a closing segment.

The opening segment and plenary segment will be held in the General Assembly Hall from 10:00 am-1:00 pm. The panel discussion will take place in the Trusteeship Council Chamber from 3:00 pm-5.50 pm, followed by closing segment from 5:50pm-6:00 pm. The opening segment will feature statements by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, and will hear two keynote speakers.

Also, during the opening segment, there will be a short video, which will provide a historical background on the High-Level Forum on Culture of Peace held in the past, as well as a musical interlude and a special recognition to the Chair of the negotiations and presenter of the UNGA resolution 53/243 of 13 September 1999.

The plenary segment will comprise of statements by Member States and Observers of the General Assembly. A list of speakers will be made available in accordance with the established practices of the Assembly. The list of speakers will be open for inscriptions on 26 August 2019 at 12 noon. Member States are encouraged to limit their statements to three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States. For inscriptions, please contact the General Assembly Affairs Branch, Mr. Carlos Galindo (galindo@un.org). Member States are encouraged to deliver statements on behalf of a group of States, whenever possible. In view of the time limitation for the plenary segment, delegations that did not have the opportunity to speak can upload their statements on the Paper Smart portal.

The panel discussion in the afternoon will focus on the theme of the Anniversary of the High-Level Forum: "The Culture of Peace: Empowering and Transforming Humanity". The panel discussion will feature remarks by five distinguished panelists followed by an interactive discussion. The panel will be moderated by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace and the former Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. There will be no established list of speakers for the panel discussion.

During the closing segment, also in the Trusteeship Council Chamber, the High-Level Forum will be closed by the President of the General Assembly.

Further information regarding this meeting will be made available on the PGA's website: <https://www.un.org/pga/73/>

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