

“Our Common Agenda”
Thematic consultation 3
Frameworks for a peaceful world – promoting peace, international law and digital cooperation
21-22 February 2022, UN Headquarters New York
BACKGROUND NOTE

I. Background

In line with General Assembly resolution 76/6 of 15 November 2021, and the letters from the President of the General Assembly to Member States dated 23 December 2021 and 17 January 2022, this is the third in a series of five open, inclusive, informal thematic consultations convened by the President of the General Assembly on the UN Secretary-General’s report on “Our Common Agenda”.

II. Overview of proposals for consideration at thematic consultation 3

The third thematic consultation is on the theme, “Frameworks for a peaceful world – promoting peace, international law and digital cooperation”. It seeks the feedback of Member States on those proposals in Our Common Agenda report that aim to promote peace and prevent conflicts, to ensure peaceful, secure and sustainable use of outer space, to encourage compliance with international law and ensure justice, to improve digital cooperation, to restore confidence in public information, and to uphold human rights. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us that we are more interconnected and interdependent than ever before. It has also exposed weaknesses in how we govern and solve key issues of global concern. This can include areas where we already have robust agreements, but where implementation is insufficient or no longer commensurate with the gravity of the challenge. It can also include areas where agreements or roadmaps are outdated, fragmented or lacking.

The ideas and initiatives on which Member State feedback is sought as part of this cluster include the suggested **New Agenda for Peace**, building on commitment 3 of the UN75 declaration to promote peace and prevent conflicts. Our Common Agenda notes that the world is moving closer to the brink of instability where the risks we face are no longer managed effectively through the systems we have. In response, it proposes a New Agenda for Peace, which can potentially focus on six core areas, including reducing strategic risks, strengthening international foresight and capacities, reshaping responses to all forms of violence, investing in prevention and peacebuilding, supporting regional prevention, and putting women and girls at the centre of security policy. As part of the discussion on the New Agenda of Peace, Member States are also invited to consider allocations of the **Peacebuilding Fund** from assessed contributions, and potentially expanding the role of the **Peacebuilding Commission** to more geographical and substantive settings. A New Agenda for Peace could be developed as a contribution for Member States to consider at the Summit of the Future.

Feedback is also sought on whether systematic consultations with a broader range of actors, including regional organizations; exercising restraint in the use of the veto; and expanding the use of informal mechanisms, such as Arria-formula meetings can strengthen the inclusiveness and

legitimacy of the Security Council. Member States could also comment on whether reinforced action on prevention would be a useful mechanism to avoid the agenda of the Security Council expanding exponentially.

Feedback is also sought on the proposed **dialogue on outer space**, to seek agreement on the peaceful, secure and sustainable use of outer space, move towards a global regime to coordinate space traffic, and agree on principles for the future governance of outer space activities. Member States could consider taking these ideas forward through ongoing processes within the First and Fourth Committees of the General Assembly and give consideration to additional meetings or conferences that could accelerate progress towards a high-level political agreement at the Summit of the Future.

The proposal to develop a **Global Digital Compact** is included in this cluster for Member State consideration, in line with commitment 7 of the UN75 declaration to improve digital cooperation. Building on the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, the Compact could be an opportunity to agree on shared principles for a more open, free and secure digital future for all, with specific commitments to achieve universal connectivity, protect human rights in the digital sphere and promote digital inclusion. Member States could consider these proposals within ongoing processes, including through the Internet Governance Forum, the World Summit on the Information Society, the World Telecommunication Development Conference, and the UNESCO Science and Technology Committee, among others. These discussions could be complemented by multistakeholder engagement as appropriate leading towards agreement at the Summit of the Future.

This cluster also provides the opportunity for Member State consideration of the proposals that respond to commitment 4 of the UN75 declaration, to abide by international law and ensure justice. This includes the proposal to hold regular, inclusive dialogues on legal matters of global concern at the General Assembly and to consider a **global road map for the development and effective implementation of international law**. Proposals to update or clarify application of **human rights frameworks** and standards to address frontier issues and prevent harms in the digital sphere, consideration of universal access to the Internet as a human right, and placing human rights mechanisms on a more sustainable financial footing are also proposed for discussion at this session.

Finally, Member State feedback is sought on proposals relating to building trust in line with UN75 commitment 6, including the proposed **global code of conduct to promote integrity in public information**.

The full list of proposals that will be considered at thematic consultation 3 is provided in the annex.

III. Participation and organizational matters for thematic consultation 3

Thematic consultation - 3 will be held over two full days and be chaired by the Permanent Representative of Belgium in his capacity as Vice-President of the General Assembly.

The first day of the thematic consultations will take place at the General Assembly Hall and will consist of a plenary segment. It will include a statement by the President of the General Assembly and an opening briefing by USG Volker Türk on the cluster of proposals for this third thematic consultation. It will be followed by an informal debate with the participation of Member States and observers of the General Assembly.

For inscribing on the list of speakers for the plenary segment, please contact the General Assembly Affairs Branch (email: galindo@un.org with copy to gaspeakerslist@un.org). Short and focussed interventions, as well as group statements, are encouraged (3 minutes for individual delegations and 5 minutes for groups of delegations). Longer statements and position papers may be submitted through *e-Statement*.

The second day of the thematic consultations will feature two moderated “fire side chat” style panel discussions with 1) senior officials from the United Nations system (morning), and 2) relevant stakeholders including the private sector, young people, academia and civil society representatives (afternoon). The meeting will take place in the Trusteeship Council and there will be no pre-established list of speakers. Member States and observers of the General Assembly will be able to intervene in both discussions. In accordance with resolution 76/6, to ensure broad and inclusive consultations, relevant partners will be invited to intervene in the afternoon session through either in-person participation or pre-recorded statements.

All meetings within the thematic consultations will be webcast on UNWebTV.

The Vice-President overseeing the thematic consultation will prepare a summary of the proceedings. This will constitute the outcome of the meeting.

Tentative Program

Day 1: PLENARY SEGMENT

Morning (General Assembly Hall)

10.00am – 1.00pm: Opening remarks from the President of the General Assembly and USG Volker Türk followed by statements of Member States and observers of the General Assembly

Afternoon (General Assembly Hall)

3.00pm – 6.00pm: Statements by Member States and observers of the General Assembly

Day 2: PANELS (“fire side chats”)

Morning (Trusteeship Council Chamber)

10.00am – 12.00pm: Panel-1 *fireside* chat with senior officials of the UN system.

Introductory Reflections:
(EOSG - USG Volker Türk)

Moderator:
(DGC)

Panelists:
Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology, OHCHR,
OLA, DPPA, ODA, DPO, UNOCT

Afternoon (Trusteeship Council Chamber)

3.00pm – 4.45pm: Panel-2 *fireside* chat with relevant partners from youth; civil society; private sector; academia/thought leaders; and local actors.

4.45pm – 5.00pm: Closing session

ANNEX – Proposals from the Our Common Agenda report for thematic consultation 3

SN	Proposal	Report paragraph number
1	<p>..I urge acceleration of our efforts to produce and disseminate reliable and verified information. The United Nations plays a key role in this regard....Other steps include support for public interest and independent media, regulation of social media, strengthening freedom of information or right to information laws and ensuring a prominent voice for science and expertise...A global code of conduct that promotes integrity in public information could be explored together with States, media outlets and regulatory bodies, facilitated by the United Nations...</p>	26
2	<p>.... the adoption of comprehensive laws against discrimination, including based on race or ethnicity, age, gender, religion, disability, and sexual orientation or gender identity, is long overdue. New approaches to proactively support the participation in public affairs of those who traditionally been marginalized, including minority and indigenous groups, are also necessary. Fuller use could be made of human rights mechanisms, including the universal periodic review, in this regard, and I support the update of the modalities of the universal periodic review by the Human Rights Council as part of the new guidelines. (34)</p> <p>Other elements that the UN system will take forward... implementation of my Call to Action for Human Rights, including through a United Nations system-wide agenda for protection, and making human rights commitments a reference point in the design and delivery of UN programmes, development assistance and crisis prevention initiatives. (113)</p> <p>...As indicated in my Call to Action for Human Rights, I am ready to work with States to find ways to put the human rights mechanisms on a more sustainable financial footing, including through more flexibility for the United Nations to allocate funding, and to better link them with other processes to maximize their impact and assist States parties with compliance. (129)</p>	34, 113, 129
3	<p>In 2023, we will commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 30 years since the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on Human Rights....Consideration should, for instance be given to updating or clarifying our application of human rights frameworks and standards to address frontier issues and prevent harms in the</p>	35

	<p>digital or technology spaces, including in relation to freedom of speech, hate speech and harassment, privacy, the “right to be forgotten” and neuro-technology...It may be time to reinforce universal access to the Internet as a human right with accelerated steps to connect the remaining 3.8 billion people by 2030...The United Nations stands ready to work with governments, businesses and civil society to find alternatives to disruptive blanket Internet shutdowns and generic blocking and filtering of services to address the spread of disinformation...</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>...we need a new agenda for peace potentially focusing on six core areas</p> <p>b) Reducing strategic risks:...</p> <p>c) Strengthening international foresight and capacities to identify and adapt to new peace and security risks</p> <p>d) Reshaping our responses to all forms of violence;</p> <p>e) Investing in prevention and peacebuilding: ..The new agenda for peace could renew calls for Member States urgently to consider allocating a dedicated amount to the Peacebuilding Fund from assessed contributions, initially through the peacekeeping budget and later through the regular budget, as a complementary investment that would increase the sustainability of peacekeeping outcomes and support the development agenda...Consideration could also be given to expanding the role of the Commission to more geographical and substantive settings, as well as to addressing the cross-cutting issues of security, climate change, health, gender equality, development and human rights from a prevention perspective.</p> <p>f) Supporting regional prevention:...It is becoming urgent to secure predictable financing for peace support operations delivered under Chapter VIII of the Charter covering regional arrangements...More broadly, the new agenda for peace could consider how to deepen United Nations support for regional capacities...</p> <p>g) Putting women and girls at the centre of security policy] (89)</p> <p>After decades of debate, the majority of Member States now acknowledge that the Security Council could be made more representative of the twenty-first century...strengthen the inclusiveness and legitimacy of the Council...Reinforced action on prevention to ensure that the threats we face today do not fester...The United Nations system needs to be able to address the cross-cutting</p>	<p>89, 127</p>

	issues of security, climate change, health...The proposed emergency platform for convening the key actors to respond to a complex global crisis could be another element of this. (127)	
3	...consideration could be given to a multi-stakeholder dialogue on outer space as part of a Summit of the Future bringing together governments and other leading space actors. The dialogue could seek high-level political agreement on the peaceful, secure and sustainable use of outer space, move towards a global regime to coordinate space traffic and agree on principles for the future governance of outer space activities.	91
4	...I would urge the Internet Governance Forum to adapt, innovate and reform to support effective governance of the digital commons and keep pace with rapid, real-world developments...building on the recommendations of the road map for digital cooperation (see A/74/821), the United Nations, Governments, the private sector and civil society could come together as a multi-stakeholder digital technology track in preparation for a Summit of the Future to agree on a Global Digital Compact. This would outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all...	93
7	...consideration could be given to a global roadmap for the development and effective implementation of international law. This could encourage more States to ratify or accede to treaties of mutual interest, such as on disarmament, human rights, the environment and penal matters...As a further part of this roadmap, States could consider holding regular inclusive dialogues on legal matters of global concern at the General Assembly...	96