



Joint G7 Input Paper to the UN’s New Agenda for Peace

G7 Expert Group „Supporting and Sustaining Peace“

Berlin, 19 October 2022

The G7 Expert Group “Supporting and Sustaining Peace” convened at a moment when great power tensions are at an all-time high and as the prospects for resolving today’s most violent conflicts are in doubt. The G7 discussed a range of conflict situations, including Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. This document is a reflection of the G7’s peace policy priorities at large. It sets out the G7’s vision for a greater reduction of violent conflict globally: multilateral peacemaking efforts backed by well-resourced and impactful peacekeeping and peacebuilding, spearheaded by the United Nations with its unique mandate to maintain international peace and security. This joint input paper has been compiled in response to a direct request from the UN and has intentionally been kept at a technical level. It focuses narrowly on peacemaking, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and prevention. Should the Secretary-General’s office wish to seek input on additional topics contained in the New Agenda for Peace from this Group, the G7 would be more than happy to contribute.

Based on a number of academic inputs reflecting the latest rigorous evidence on peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention, the G7 Expert Group on Supporting and Sustaining Peace (G7 EG) discussed how to render UN peace policy as impactful, effective, efficient, relevant and accountable as possible. The G7 EG emphasizes that successful conflict prevention and resolution provide important benefits, given the enormous humanitarian and economic burden of violent conflict globally. It recognizes that UN peace operations (peacekeeping missions and special political missions) are key tools at the disposal of the international community to prevent and resolve conflicts, and that they should continue to adapt to new challenges. Consecutive reviews, including (but not limited to) the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, have sought to encourage the more flexible use of the full spectrum of peace operations at the UN’s disposal, in order to respond to changing needs on the ground. Recent reform initiatives, such as the UN peace and security architecture reform, and the Secretary-General’s Action for Peacekeeping initiative, have addressed this, in addition to prioritizing political solutions to conflict.

There is, however, a need for continued support to the adaptation of peacekeeping to evolving challenges. Therefore, the G7 EG calls for more strategic and solution-oriented approaches to conflict, and a continuation and revitalization of initiatives in the maintenance of international peace and security. The G7 EG agrees on the need to address the conflict-to-peace cycle holistically’, and to renew efforts to agree on more effective collective security responses and a meaningful set of

steps to manage emerging risks. The G7 EG comes to the following conclusions, which it submits to the drafting process of the UN's New Agenda for Peace, to be considered where appropriate:

1. **Peacemaking:** Peacemaking aims at supporting inclusive, negotiated political settlements that can end violent conflict sustainably, breaking the “conflict trap” and resulting in political and economic benefits for affected societies. As a stated policy goal of bilateral and multilateral efforts to end armed conflict, peacemaking seeks to bring parties together, within formal and informal processes, to reallocate power in an agreed manner, alongside military and economic efforts towards a political settlement. In supporting peacemaking as a primary policy goal to end armed conflict, the G7 call for:
 - a. Increased investments in those activities that have demonstrated to lead to more sustained political solutions including through power-sharing arrangements and those that have reduced violence in the medium to long term.
 - b. A reaffirmation of the indispensable role played by the UN Secretary-General, his Special Representatives, Special Advisors and his Envoys in providing good offices and mediation.
 - c. A strengthening of mediation and dialogue capabilities in all relevant areas of the UN's work, including mediation, dialogue and facilitation support for Special Envoys and Representatives, regional prevention offices, special political missions, peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding programmes, as well as an expansion of UN support to national and local level mediators, facilitators and parties engaged in peacemaking efforts.

2. **Peacekeeping:** Peacekeeping can be an important buttress to political processes that seek to end conflict. Studies show it can have a powerful effect on curbing violence in civil wars. Investment in peacekeeping is therefore of clear benefit to all countries, given the enormous costs of violent conflict globally. The G7 EG recognizes that under the UN's “Action for Peacekeeping” and “Action for Peacekeeping Plus” initiatives, aimed at addressing outstanding challenges, there has been a concerted effort to advance political solutions to conflict and enhance the political impact of peacekeeping, while also strengthening the protection provided by UN peacekeeping operations. Against this background, the G7 call for:
 - a. Regular reviews of peacekeeping strategies to address resourcing of peacekeeping missions, in order to make them fit for purpose and to be able to address the new challenges they face, such as host state support failure, mercenaries and misinformation, and to deliver on their political mandates at the operational level, in particular their good offices and mediation mandates. This should include, from every Member State, including G7, dedicated human, technical and financial resources, tailored to local



context (e.g. local language skills), in order to make sure that peacekeeping operations are informed by mediation, negotiation and dialogue efforts at all levels.

- b. Regular reviews of mission-wide protection-of-civilians strategies to ensure that implementation of mandates responds to the changing conflict context, and that activities are sufficiently linked such that they reinforce mediation, negotiation, and dialogue efforts by various actors, including by local communities and civil society organizations.
- c. Regular reviews of UN country offices to ensure that they have the proper capabilities, staff and plans in place to enable the implementation of peacekeeping operations transition plans and regional organization alternatives.
- d. Peacekeeping strategies that are informed by the most recent independent and rigorous impact assessments, and that focus on credibly identified and sustainable violence-reducing effects, in particular after the withdrawal of peacekeepers.
- e. Further elaboration of innovative, evidence-based approaches to UN peacekeeping operations, with a view to improving operational performance, and as a contribution to delivering on Action for Peacekeeping and A4P+.
- f. Continued support to UN peacekeeping operations, troop and police contributing countries and relevant regional organizations, including to the improvement of the overall performance of their operational capacities, efficiency, safety and security, in line with Action for Peacekeeping and A4P+.

3. Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding¹ can be essential to ensure national governments and local communities can withstand the outbreak of future violent conflict. It needs to go hand in hand with peacemaking, i.e. efforts to bring parties to an agreement, supported by equitable investments that will lead to more sustained peace. Therefore, the G7 calls for:

- a. A more comprehensive analysis of the funding architecture for peacebuilding efforts, including by broadening purposes captured in the UN Peacebuilding Dashboard, such as post-conflict situations, implementation of peace agreements and facilitation of political dialogues.
- b. Strong support for an active role of the Peacebuilding Commission in the context of regional configurations and discussions of human rights and climate-related peace and security risks, as well as a leveraging of its convening power, particularly in its advisory role to the Security Council, in order to make peacebuilding activities more integrated, coordinated and relevant to current political dynamics.

¹ We understand *peacebuilding* as activities which focus on the root causes of conflict, including issues such as socio-economic inequality, political exclusion, and other deep-seated grievances causing conflict. *Peacemaking* on the other hand addresses activities aiming at bringing conflicting parties to a negotiated settlement.



- c. Additional effort by the UN to produce more impact assessments of its peacebuilding work, demonstrating how, and in what circumstances, it can contribute to impactful reductions in violent conflict.
- d. Investments in those activities demonstrated to have had a significant peace impact in the medium term. Clearer, evidence-based theories of change, including links to power sharing and inclusive political settlements.

4. Prevention: Investment in early conflict prevention and resolution is likely to generate meaningful peace and stability returns. Activities that stop the spread of armed conflict before it escalates can avoid vicious cycles of violence and pave the way for the negotiation of an inclusive political settlement. Such a settlement is far more likely to transform political structures in order to generate equitable power and resource sharing, democratic and resilient institutions, and positive relations with other countries. A shift of incentives away from downstream intervention towards upstream political, economic and social prevention activities, including the prevention of atrocities, is therefore critical. The growth of regional UN prevention offices in settings like West Africa/Sahel, Central Africa, the Horn of Africa, and Central and Western Asia means the UN now has far greater capacities in many conflict-affected regions and has shown its ability to respond to conflict risks at an earlier stage, including by lending support to regional organizations. The G7 is supportive of strengthened, coordinated conflict prevention practices and improved regional conflict prevention to enhance cohesion and common purpose. The G7 welcomes:

- a. A strengthening of the already close collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Security Council, towards more ambitious and structured deliberations, without prejudice to the responsibilities of the UNSC, the UNGA and the Secretariat. The PBC is ideally placed to raise the Council’s awareness on regional efforts, local communities’ understanding and expertise, as well as the cross-border dimension of crisis and conflicts. In doing so, it should draw on the principles outlined in the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas.
- b. An early-warning role of the PBC, to bring situations at risk of causing crisis and conflict to the attention of the Security Council and the international community.
- c. The sharing of crisis, conflict and atrocity risk data and analytical capabilities, to provide enhanced monitoring, timely warning, and understanding of both risks and opportunities for early preventive action.
- d. An enhanced effort at monitoring, evaluating and learning from prevention activities aimed at increasing both the effectiveness of interventions and the commitment to crisis and conflict prevention, including highlighting the lessons learnt from the 'One UN' model.

- e. More effective and, in particular, peace-positive use of the UN's "Agenda 2030" development instruments and programs for conflict prevention, based on good analysis and integrated and coherent political-development strategies.
- f. Regular briefings to the Security Council by the Secretary-General on situations at risk of conflict, drawing on UN system-wide analysis and reporting, including where relevant in partnership with regional organizations.

The current conflict landscape, which is characterized by an intensifying struggle for geopolitical influence, calls for smarter and better-informed use of the full spectrum of peace policy approaches at the UN's disposal, with constant attention to impact, coherence and coordination. The following key principles should therefore guide the implementation of all peace efforts:

- **The primacy of politics:** Sustainable peace requires political settlements that last. Resilient political order can be attained and sustained only when key stakeholders agree on power-sharing and a form of government. Therefore, all efforts need to be guided by a coherent political strategy that aligns other efforts, including at local level, to this overarching goal, while continuously verifying assumptions. Detailed political economy analysis should be an integral part of each peacemaking effort.
- **Impact and scale:** Some evidence is currently available to gain guidance on what does and what does not work in conflict resolution and prevention. In order to further enhance the quality of activities, monitoring, learning and impact evaluation need to be strengthened across the UN system. The UN needs to apply more rigor in focusing and investing in those activities that have a proven empirical record of sustainably reducing conflict risks and political violence, and support the distribution of evidence of what approaches are most effective and in which contexts. This can entail reviewing approaches that have proven less successful. Activities should follow from the needs of the local context, while also drawing on comparative insights. This requires the transition to a learning organization, including regular assessments of project and program impact, and increasing accountability for results by senior leaders supporting peace efforts.
- **Strategic foresight:** Climate change and accelerating technological change increase the need for future-oriented approaches to conflict. This means that conflict prevention and resolution will need to be more flexible, iterative, and learning-oriented than ever before, and coordinated across UN agencies, working towards a common goal. Efforts to understand how technologies can improve assessment of conflict and atrocity risks and drive peace approaches that are more timely and effective, including through better use of data, need to be part of this. An innovative, data-driven and tech-enabled approach requires well-trained, well-equipped professionals. It will be necessary to adopt an approach that prioritizes the use of data to underpin how technologies can benefit peace policy.



- **Gender-based analysis and women and youth’s full, equal and meaningful participation:** Conflict analyses and the planning, design and implementation of peace efforts must adopt a human-rights based approach, consider systemic inequalities and the experiences of diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people and take into account intersecting identity factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age and disability. The implementation of peace efforts must also be informed by continuous consultations with local civil society organizations, including women’s rights and youth groups and their priorities, as spelled out in the Women, Peace and Security respectively Youth Peace and Security Agendas, and build on evidence related to inclusion and sustainability of peace agreements. Additionally, women peacebuilders make vital contributions to more sustainable peace and security. Supporting them, recognizing their vital efforts and raising awareness of the value of women’s peacebuilding work to international peace and security is fundamental. Evidence has shown the tangible positive impact their work has on outcomes.
- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Continued efforts are needed to include conflict sensitivity as a core principle of all relevant activities, ensuring interventions do not exacerbate or introduce conflict but rather promote and sustain peace where possible.