

New Agenda for Peace- a contribution of the Netherlands

Investing in prevention and peacebuilding

Although the case for conflict prevention has been clearly made, it remains critically under-prioritised and under-financed. Therefore, the New Agenda for Peace (NAP) should lead to a renewed broad political commitment to conflict prevention, while ensuring that the UN is equipped with enough resources to play its role. To meet these needs, the UN and specifically the Peacebuilding Fund require **adequate, predictable and sustained** resources. As the UN System's most important tool for prevention and sustaining peace, the **Peacebuilding Fund** (PBF) plays a central role as financial instrument of the NAP. The Netherlands support the SG's call for assessed contributions to the Fund and would like the NAP to include recommendations on how the member states can contribute to the catalytic effect of the PBF. Moreover, we believe the **PBC** is perfectly positioned to discuss cross-cutting topics such as climate security, gender, health and human rights. Therefore, the NAP should support a broader role for the PBC on the prevention agenda, including the possibility of using it as a forum to discuss national prevention strategies.

Besides aligning ourselves with the EU's contribution, the Netherlands would like to reinforce and add the following recommendations:

Leave no one behind: an inclusive, human rights based and people centered approach and putting women and girls at the centre

The NAP should encourage member states to put needs, experiences and ideas for solution of problems of people central in all peacebuilding efforts (**people centered/people led approach**). Only then can we ensure that no one is left behind, and support a renewed social contract with greater levels of institutional and interpersonal trust. Achieving stronger results on the WPS- and YPS-agenda's will fundamentally lead to progress in international stability and building and sustaining peace. Therefore, robust references to a human-rights based approach and inclusion across the board – of youth, women, and civil society – in the NAP are of paramount importance.

Women and girls, in many conflict-affected contexts in particular, continue to be excluded from decision-making and targeted for discrimination and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. It is critical that the international community acts now and uses the New Agenda for Peace to close the gaps between global commitments set out in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the subsequent nine Security Council resolutions on **Women, Peace and Security**, and their realization for all women and girls around the world. Equally it's important to lead by example and create an enabling environment by achieving gender parity in the UN System, including in UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Considering that many conflicts derive from or are fueled by discrimination, exclusion and/or repression of minority groups, we recommend broadening the "inclusion approach" to **minorities**, such as ethnic and religious minorities and sexual and gender minorities.

Streamline and optimize tools for prevention: an integrated crosspillar approach

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the *Human Rights Up Front initiative* and the *Call for Action for Human Rights* are all crucial instruments to prevent conflict, reduce human suffering and build a just and equitable world. Yet, there is still room for improvement to optimize a combined use of all prevention tools available in and beyond the UN System. Therefore, we recommend that the NAP includes clear goals and incentives for **effective coordination** and the operationalization of the

integration of the **peace and security, development and human rights pillar**, as well as the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (*triple nexus*).

Respect for human rights is a crucial conflict prevention mechanism. But when prevention falls short and violence is rampant, people need protection. This is why the NAP should include **Protection of Civilians** across the peace continuum. The NAP is an opportunity to further strengthen Protection of Civilians policy and practice across the UN system. This remains particularly important in mission and transition settings and should be a central concept not only in mandates but also objectives of Rule of Law and Security Sector Governance and Reform support of the UN system. The NAP should reiterate the importance of accountable and inclusive governance, and the instrumental role that Security Sector Governance and Reform can play in the protection of human rights and the provision of security for people.

Last but not least, we support the UN SG's call for **more networked multilateralism** and consider the NAP a unique opportunity to include cooperation with regional organizations, international financial institutions, development actors and other relevant multilateral institutions as a key component to work towards the goals of the NAP.

Integrate MHPSS in peacebuilding

In his 2020 Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/74/976–S/2020/773), UN SG Guterres committed the UN System to *the development of the integration of mental health and psychosocial support into peacebuilding to increase the resilience and agency of people and communities*. The importance of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) as a potentially potent peace-building tool has also been stressed in several occasions by Deputy-Secretary General Ms. Amina J. Mohammed and by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). MHPSS can help to counter the undermining effect of conflict on people's agency, empathy, identity construction and help build trust and social cohesion in and across communities. It helps to repair the broken social tissue at community level and restore the social contract between people, communities and their leaders. Therefore, applying a psychosocial lens makes peacebuilding efforts more effective and sustainable. By acknowledging this potential of MHPSS, the NAP can enhance integration of MHPSS in programming, budgeting and providing mandates for peacebuilding and conflict prevention initiatives.

Give rule of law a clear role as preventive tool in the New Agenda for Peace

The Netherlands also urges the UN to ensure that the **rule of law** has a clear role within the New Agenda for Peace. In a [recent statement to the UNSC](#), the UN Secretary General Guterres has recognized the primacy of the rule of law for peacebuilding efforts. In this regard, he urged Member States to make full use of rule of law as a preventive tool.

The Netherlands sees a clear link between strengthening the rule of law at the national level and peacebuilding. In the aftermath of conflict, people and communities live with grievances from harms and abuses committed against them. Disputes, despite the cessation of violence, may persist. When left unaddressed, these grievances and disputes may build up social tensions, which in turn can reignite conflict or drive people to seek redress through violent means, thus undermining peacebuilding gains or the process itself. Unresolved disputes foment peoples' feelings of injustice, undermining trust in institutions and authorities and leading to the corrosion of the social contract. Injustices that are not corrected, leave unequal, exclusive and oppressive structures to go unchallenged and fuel continuing cycles of violent conflict. From a peacebuilding and conflict prevention perspective, rule of law and access to justice are therefore critical components of the pathway towards sustainable peace.