

Suggested Initial Thailand's Inputs for the Proposed "New Agenda for Peace"

A. Overview

1. As the world faces multiple and compounding challenges and crises, Thailand concurs with the UN Secretary-General's view that we have come to a point where it is necessary to make a choice between "a breakdown or a breakthrough". The current geo-political landscape, intense politicization of the multilateral system, and trends towards increase in the number of conflicts require a more inclusive, resilient and effective multilateralism, with the United Nations at the core and that works in close partnership with international financial institutions, regional organizations and institutions, and other key stakeholders.

2. That is why creative ideas on how to attain and sustain peace, on how to promote enhanced use of diplomacy and peaceful means rather than confrontation, and on how to strengthen the UN's role in serving as an effective and universally accepted bridge-builder that is trusted to bring different parties together to work on sustainable peaceful solutions, should be an important premise and guiding philosophy in the development of a "New Agenda for Peace". Maintaining international peace, security and stability means that the UN should give primacy to its foremost instrument to attain this objective, and that is diplomacy.

3. In so doing, the United Nations must be able to build trust and confidence and shift the narrative of confrontation to that of compromise and dialogue, thereby preventing and addressing the conflict at the root cause. Failing to do so risks the United Nations losing relevance and credibility and becoming an idle bystander, with the vicious cycle of conflict, crisis and confrontation continuing unabated.

B. Adopting a Holistic Approach

4. In order for peace to be enduring, it is important to have a holistic approach that addresses the inter-linkages and strengthens the complementarities between peace, sustainable development and human security. Peace and sustainable development must go hand in hand, as these are essentially two sides of the same coin, with one side reinforcing the other. At the same time, peace and sustainable development should be people-centred and contribute to the promotion of human security.

5. In order to help ensure that peace is sustainable, particularly in conflict-prone areas, it is therefore important to accelerate efforts at achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in tandem with promoting human security. In this connection, any

development of the “New Agenda for Peace” should also take into account the UNDP’s 2022 Special Report on “New threats to human security in the Anthropocene: Demanding greater solidarity”, for example.

C. Specific Elements in the proposed “New Agenda for Peace” as contained in “Our Common Agenda” report

6. Elements of the proposed “New Agenda for Peace” that reflect ongoing efforts and priorities could strengthen the momentum for peace and further advance current discussions in multilateral fora on these issues. These include the following:

6.1 Reducing strategic risks (nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, cyberwarfare)

○ The international community should pursue multiple-track towards the end goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Different initiatives should be viewed as potential contributions toward this goal, which are mutually reinforcing and complementary. The proposed “New Agenda for Peace” should, therefore, continue to promote universality, synergy and complementarity between existing international frameworks ranging from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and other forum such as the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament, to name a few.

○ In dealing with cyber security, the proposed “New Agenda for Peace” should further our collective efforts to create a universally-accepted common understanding of international law applicable to cyberspace and on the implementation of norms, rules, and principles for responsible State behavior in cyberspace, while placing great emphasis on capacity-building to bridge digital gaps among Member States. This is with a view to strengthening our collective resilience in the cyber domain, as well as the capacity to safeguard the security of civilian and critical infrastructures.

○ Emerging security issues should be addressed in an inclusive and transparent manner, whether through developing a common understanding on their scope, definition, and trends with regard to such security issues, building norms and promoting relevant principles of international law. In the meantime, existing security challenges, whether projected through conventional weapons or WMD, should likewise be addressed, and not re-prioritized with the advent of emerging security issues.

6.2 Reshaping responses to all forms of violence and putting women and girls at the center of security policy

○ While protection of women and children from all forms of violence should remain high on our agenda, the response of the international community must go beyond legal punishment. The proposed “New Agenda for Peace” should

place greater emphasis on, *inter alia*, education, empowerment, and respect for gender. It is also important to promote women's leadership and their participation in decision making process. At the same time, Member States should continue to develop national and regional strategies for advancing the "Women, Peace and Security" agenda.

6.3 *Investing in prevention and peacebuilding*

- Prevention and peacebuilding have proven to be more effective and cost-efficient than responding to conflict. Sustainable development is key to preventing conflict from occurring or recurring. Such undertakings must be driven by domestic stakeholders and guided by national priorities. The proposed "New Agenda for Peace" should also play a major part in engaging with and mobilizing support from international financial institutions, the private sector and other innovative sources in financing for prevention and peacebuilding activities.

7. New elements under the proposed "New Agenda for Peace" which need to be further clarified and discussed include the following:

7.1 *Supporting regional prevention*

- The role of the region in the maintenance of international peace and security has long been overlooked and underestimated. In order to achieve a resilient, effective and sustainable peace and stability in any conflict-affected area, close dialogue and engagement with the affected countries and region are crucial. The concerns of the affected countries and region matter. On matters affecting regional peace and stability and the ways to address them, the affected region knows best.

- It is therefore encouraging to see that this element was highlighted as central to sustaining peace and preventing and responding to insecurity in the proposed "New Agenda for Peace". The United Nations, especially the Security Council, should reinforce region-driven processes, building on an effective international-regional interface that incorporates the participation, approaches and priorities of the region in the global agendas.

- Countries in the region, particularly those directly affected by peace and security challenges, are best placed to help identify and create pathways forward for sustainable peace through sustainable peacekeeping and peacebuilding. But the international community's role is no less important: providing best practices, catalyzing initiatives and mobilizing resources.

- A reformed Security Council that reflects broader geographical representation, cross-regional balance, and greater representation of developing countries is critical.

7.2 *Strengthening international foresight*

○ While strategic foresight, together with other initiatives, including the proposed Global Risk Report, would allow early warning, preventive diplomacy and early response to potential challenges, including conflicts, it needs to be further clarified in terms of scope, definition, and other details, through a process which must be Member States-driven. Effective strategic foresight and appropriate early warning strengthens preventive diplomacy, but this important process must have Member States in the design phase and their representation through an agreed upon modality in the decision-making loop.

D. Putting the UN and Multilateralism Back at the Centre

8. The proposed “New Agenda for Peace” should, as its primary objective, put the UN and multilateralism back at the centre of peaceful and diplomatic efforts at preventing and addressing conflict, and rebuilding trust and faith in the role of the UN, as well as strengthen its capacities. This is so that the UN can exercise its legitimate and strong convening power and bring different parties to the table to negotiate in good faith, with a view to preventing or de-escalating conflict. The United Nations should also be utilized more widely as a platform for collective efforts to address the conflict at the root causes through promoting sustainable development and human security.

9. Taking into account the current political tensions, the United Nations must strengthen its role in delivering effective humanitarian response and continue to advocate for the protection of civilians, based on consent of the host country and in accordance with international law. Any humanitarian response must be based on the key principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence, and must not be politicized. Useful concepts, such as, humanitarian windows of opportunity and humanitarian corridors, for example, should be developed further and made available to be operationalized when needed.

10. The proposed “New Agenda for Peace” should also have a strong element of promoting a Culture of Peace and other initiatives that would inculcate a strong commitment to diplomacy and use of peaceful means in preventing and addressing conflict, as well as in overcoming challenges to international peace and security. It is important to replace a zero-sum game obsession with a positive-sum game mindset in addressing questions of international peace, security, and stability. Peace should not be seen as detrimental to or favouring one side over another, but something that can bring mutual benefits to all.
