

Pulling Together: The Multilateral System and Its Future



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Foreword and Acknowledgements

The United Nations is now seventy years old. And the world of seventy years ago was a vastly different place than the world of today. The question inevitably arises, therefore, whether this postwar institution called the UN remains “fit for purpose” to meet the needs of the international community in the century unfolding before us. If not, what can be done in practical terms to bring its mission, structure, and resourcing up to date to meet the formidable challenges ahead?

This was the subject of conversation between the UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, and the president of the International Peace Institute (IPI), Terje Rød-Larsen, in the summer of 2014, as the UN prepared for its seventieth-anniversary celebrations. It was decided that IPI would convene an independent review of the UN multilateral system. Its purpose was to make recommendations on the system’s future for the next secretary-general to consider at the beginning of her or his new term in January 2017.

IPI is not new to such work. As a close institutional friend of the UN for nearly half a century, IPI has a long history of producing policy papers and convening dialogue to support the work of the Secretariat in many areas. In 2009, IPI published the “blue papers” series on strengthening multilateral security capacity. The virtue of IPI is that, while a close friend and partner of the UN, it is still entirely independent.

The Independent Commission on Multilateralism (ICM) was launched in September 2014. IPI decided to appoint the Honorable Kevin Rudd, the former prime minister of Australia, as the chairman of the ICM. He was joined by the foreign ministers of Ghana and Norway and the former foreign ministers of Canada, Mexico, and Timor-Leste as co-chairs. A Ministerial Advisory Board of foreign ministers was also appointed, together with Ambassadorial

Advisory Boards made up of permanent representatives to the UN in New York, Geneva, and Vienna.

The ICM’s terms of reference were straightforward:

- What are the major challenges facing the twenty-first century global order?
- Is the UN multilateral system fit for purpose to meet those challenges?
- If not, what changes need to be made to the UN’s functions, structure, and resources to fill the emerging deficit in effective global governance?

In undertaking its work, the ICM has sought to be as open, transparent, and consultative as possible. It divided its work into fifteen functional areas of the UN’s work (detailed in Annex 2) and brought together experts from the Secretariat, permanent missions, civil society, academia, and other UN entities, for a series of policy retreats on each of these thematic areas over an eighteen-month period.

The ICM adopted this approach because it judged it was better to start from the premise of what functions the UN was created to perform, rather than what institutions the UN subsequently established. This was deemed necessary to get back to the basics of what exactly the UN is supposed to be doing, as opposed to accepting prevailing institutional arrangements as given. Form should always follow substance. Not the reverse.

The ICM briefed each of the UN’s geographical groupings on its proposed work plan in New York in early 2015. These consultations aimed to take into account the views of member states on how the ICM would go about its work and to issue them an open invitation to participate in the ICM’s program. For each of fifteen issue areas, the ICM then prepared an

“issue paper” and organized a retreat bringing together thirty or more participants for a day and a half of deliberations. The ICM drew upon these deliberations to produce a “discussion paper,” which was then broadly circulated for a formal period of public comment. Finally, following a series of public consultation events, which were webcast to the wider world, the ICM produced a “policy paper” on each issue area.

Altogether, 342 diplomats, academics, UN officials, and civil society actors attended the ICM retreats, and 612 people participated in the public consultations. The ICM’s public consultation on youth, which was held online through Facebook Live, reached more than 56,000 people connected to IPI on Facebook, as well as over 117,000 additional Facebook users, and received 508 reactions, comments, and shares. Additionally, 27,960 people consulted ICM papers on the website. This process finally concluded in March 2016. A chronology of the ICM’s consultations and further details on participation in this process can be found in Annexes 3 and 4.

This is the ICM’s final report. It will be followed by the release of fifteen issue-specific policy papers. These reports are intended not just for the incoming secretary-general. They are also intended for member states, both in their capitals and in their permanent missions. And they are intended for the wider public engaged in answering the question of how we sustain our fragile global order for the future, given the great and turbulent changes now facing it.

This is, in the end, an independent report. It has no official UN status. Whatever status it may obtain in the future will, hopefully, be the result of the clarity of the analysis and the usefulness of the ideas it puts forward.

This has been a team effort. It has been led by the ICM secretary-general, HE Hardeep Puri, and his deputy, and later successor, Barbara Gibson. The team has also included the following: Els Debuf, Ariun Enkhsaikhan, Warren Hoge, Walter Kemp, Jimena Leiva Roesch, Adam Lupel, Youssef Mahmoud, Maximilian Meduna, Nadia Mughal, Thong Nguyen, Omar El Okdah, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, Véronique Pepin-Hallé, Asteya Percaya, Anette Ringnes, Rodrigo Saad, Hillary Saviello, Jill Stoddard, Albert Trithart, and Margaret Williams. Their combined efforts have been greatly appreciated.

The ICM also thanks the three sponsoring governments for their financial support for the ICM’s operations: Canada, Norway, and the United Arab Emirates. Without their support, the ICM would not have been possible.

We commend this report to the international community for its consideration.

Terje Rød-Larsen

President, International Peace Institute

Kevin Rudd

Chair, Independent Commission on Multilateralism

Priorities for the Next Secretary-General

The Independent Commission on Multilateralism (ICM) makes the following ten priority recommendations for the next UN secretary-general. A full list of recommendations for the secretary-general, member states, and civil society is included in Part II of this report and further detailed in fifteen issue-specific ICM policy papers that will be published separately.

1. **Produce a new “Agenda for Peace”:** The year 2017 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s seminal report “An Agenda for Peace.” Taking into account the myriad changes in the past quarter century and the new realities facing the UN and its member states, the secretary-general should produce a new “Agenda for Peace.” Drawing on the work of the ICM and bringing together the wealth of recent reform initiatives into a single document, this agenda should lay out a strategic vision and plan of action to provide focused leadership to cope with the challenges of change and realize sustainable development and peace.
2. **Fundraise for prevention:** New commitments to prioritize prevention should be matched by corresponding commitments to provide resources. The secretary-general should launch a fundraising drive for preventive initiatives. These initiatives should be considered an investment rather than a cost. Indeed, in the long term, a commitment to prevention would significantly reduce costs.
3. **Continue peace operations reform:** In consultation with member states, the secretary-general should propose ways to carry forward those recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations that were not taken up by the current secretary-general or on which member states remain undecided. These include restructuring the relevant Secretariat entities, developing new approaches for the financing and administration of peace operations, enhancing leadership of peace operations, and prioritizing unarmed strategies for the protection of civilians.
4. **Centralize leadership on counterterrorism and the prevention of violent extremism:** The secretary-general should appoint an under-secretary-general to lead and coordinate implementation of the UN’s Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its work on preventing violent extremism.

5. **Commit to Human Rights Up Front:** As part of its commitment to strengthen the UN's capacity for early warning and conflict prevention, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General should formalize and maintain a dedicated team to lead, expand, and more systematically apply the Human Rights Up Front initiative established under Ban Ki-moon. This should be part of a broader commitment to exert strong leadership on respect for international law and human rights.
6. **Improve gender balance:** The secretary-general should redouble efforts to improve the gender composition of UN staff, both in headquarters and in the field. This is particularly critical for leadership positions in peace operations and for the secretary-general's good offices.
7. **Jointly implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement:** The Chief Executives Board, under the leadership of the secretary-general and the Office of the Special Adviser on the 2030 Agenda and Climate Change, should develop a plan to institute interagency cooperation according to the principle that "no agency owns any of the goals." Such cooperation would assist member states in implementing these complementary agreements.
8. **Focus on the links between health and conflict:** The secretary-general should follow up on the report of the High-Level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises by examining areas it leaves out, especially the specific challenges of delivering healthcare during armed conflict. An interagency framework should be developed to define strategies and policies to address these challenges.
9. **Support a Global Compact on Migration and fill the gap on internally displaced persons:** The secretary-general should ensure resources to provide adequate support for the negotiation of a Global Compact for Safe, Regular, and Orderly Migration. Also, a special representative for internal displacement should be appointed to foster cooperation and fill the institutional gap in this area.
10. **Strengthen accountability mechanisms:** To ensure UN management and staff are accountable for their performance, evaluation mechanisms should be periodic, transparent, independent, based on clear objectives, and tied to well-defined targets.

Introduction

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace. This presents both great opportunities and dire challenges. Around the world, governments and multilateral institutions are struggling to adapt. The United Nations, in particular, is under stress.

Seventy years after its founding, the UN is regarded by some as old: shopworn, in some cases threadbare, marginalized, and increasingly irrelevant.

Yet the UN has now lasted almost three times as long as its predecessor, the League of Nations. It has survived a four-decade-long Cold War that froze its critical decision-making processes. And it has managed to contribute to avoiding another global war, which many had predicted was inevitable in the years after 1945. The UN represents a body of international laws that create the framework for world order. It is a forum for mobilizing collective action to reduce poverty and promote human rights. Its institutions help resolve disputes, reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and ensure the delivery of global goods and services. While the UN's track record is not unblemished, even its harshest critics would have to admit that, without it, the world would be a more dangerous place.

Just last year, the UN system achieved a series of landmark agreements. In June 2015, the General Assembly endorsed the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In July, UN member states adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development. In September, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. And in December, the Twenty-First Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change concluded with an agreement by 195 countries to keep the global temperature rise "well below" two degrees Celsius.

These are remarkable achievements. Yet many perceive the UN to be in decline. Some argue this is due to an exponential increase in the demand for new forms of global governance that could not have been anticipated by those who framed the UN Charter back in 1945. Indeed, the drafters would be amazed to see the need for the UN to address cybersecurity or the affairs of outer space. In order to remain relevant, multilateral institutions must adapt.

Others argue that the UN has failed to evolve fast enough to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. It is instead locked in the internal discourse of its own self-contained universe, increasingly out of touch with the real needs of people, and bypassed by governments making the "real decisions."

The truth lies somewhere in between. But recent phenomena such as the rise of ISIS, the unprecedented global wave of refugees and migrants, and the spread of Ebola clearly demonstrate the need for the international system to provide quick responses to an increasingly complex and interconnected set of challenges. Either the UN adapts, or it dies the death of a thousand cuts.

Those of us who care about the UN's future want to prevent this from happening.

That is the inspiration behind the creation of the Independent Commission on Multilateralism (ICM). Launched in September 2014, the ICM has aimed to analyze the major drivers of global change in the twenty-first century; examine whether the functions, structures, and resources of the current UN-based international system are "fit for purpose"; and, if not, propose how the UN system could best be adapted to cope with these new demands. In a nutshell, the Commission's purpose is to help close the growing gap in international governance.

Since the Commission wants its work to have maximum impact, it has avoided dabbling in idealistic scenarios of global governance that have no chance of being implemented. Rather, conscious of the constraints of international politics, conflicting national interests, institutional inertia, and limited public funds, the report suggests modest but practical steps forward. How can we improve the current system for the common good?

Furthermore, the Commission starts from the premise that multilateralism is a necessity rather than an idealistic ambition. In our global age, crises seldom remain contained within a single country. They cross borders frequently, whether through forced displacement, the spread of conflict, crime, pandemics, and terrorism, or the rippling outward of economic consequences. As a result, the fundamental challenges of the twenty-first century are beyond the capacity of any single state or region to respond alone. By necessity, the interconnected and diverse challenges of the twenty-first century require global solutions through effective, robust, and revitalized multilateralism. Indeed, this report contends that the forces driving changes to the global order will increase the demand for effective global governance, not decrease it.

This report is written with a sense of urgency. Business as usual will not suffice. Reform cannot be kicked down the road for another day.

Anyone who watches the news will see that our world is in trouble. There is concern that crises are outpacing the ability of leaders and institutions to respond. Following this trend, the situation will become even more complex and precarious. The fate of the UN is at stake. Even worse, global order is in jeopardy. States and peoples have both a self-interest and a common interest in making

the UN more effective. This report is designed to contribute to that end.

This report reviews the work of the Commission across fifteen issue areas.¹ Each issue area will be covered in depth in a final policy paper published separately. This report contains two main parts. First, it suggests general principles to guide a revitalized multilateral system. And second, it makes concrete recommendations about how to address the specific challenges of our times based upon the ICM's review of each issue area:

1. Armed Conflict: Mediation, Peacebuilding, and Peacekeeping
2. Women, Peace, and Security
3. Terrorism and Organized Crime
4. Humanitarian Engagements
5. Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Migration
6. Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
7. Justice and Human Rights
8. Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance
9. Fragile States and Fragile Cities
10. Impact of New Technologies on Peace, Security, and Development
11. The UN, Regional Organizations, Civil Society, and the Private Sector
12. Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Global Youth
13. Weapons of Mass Destruction: Non-proliferation and Disarmament
14. Global Pandemics and Global Public Health
15. Communication Strategy for the UN Multilateral System

¹ The ICM investigated sixteen issue areas, but the first of these, "New Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities for the Multilateral System," served as a mapping exercise to situate the work of the ICM.



Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning
Amina Mohammed speaks at the 2015 Global Citizen
Festival, New York, September 26, 2015.
UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe.

Part I: General Principles of Change

Given the complex and interconnected set of challenges facing the multilateral system, what should be done? The following ten general principles of change emerged from the ICM's research and consultations.

1. Recommit to Multilateralism

Multilateralism is more needed now than ever. Strong states are sometimes tempted to act unilaterally. This can exacerbate rather than improve international peace and security and set back efforts to achieve sustainable development and ensure respect for human rights. Indeed, some of today's biggest crises are the result of decisions by states to take unilateral action. A recommitment by member states to operate within multilateral structures and rules can help protect against the disorder caused by states going it alone. As US President Barack Obama recently said, "Multilateralism regulates hubris."¹

For small and less powerful states, multilateralism represents an insurance policy and a preferred framework within which they can build issue-based coalitions. Multilateral approaches can be more legitimate and efficient and bring a broader range of localized knowledge and expertise. They also generally come with a lower price tag.

However, one obstacle in particular stands in the way of a revitalized commitment to multilateralism. Repeatedly, the Commission heard reports of a deep lack of trust. There is a lack of trust both among states and between states and the UN Secretariat. There is a lack of trust between governments and their citizens. There is a feeling that leaders and institutions are unable to cope with the

challenges of change. And there is a lack of trust within the UN itself among the various departments, agencies, funds, and programs. Furthermore, there is distrust between the people and UN actors in the field. People no longer automatically trust the UN flag. They want to know what the UN can deliver for them.

This sense of mistrust can lead to inaction, or a feeling of helplessness. It can also create cynicism about the way organizations like the UN are used. For example, many perceive a tendency for powerful countries to use the UN to pursue narrow national interests instead of the global common good. And some argue that the most powerful states too often use the UN to make demands on the domestic affairs of the less powerful while hypocritically ignoring this advice within their own borders. This breaks down solidarity and creates resistance to international action. It also undermines attempts to mobilize collective responses to transnational problems.

Restoring trust in the international system and between states should be one of the principal goals of the new secretary-general.

Reaffirming the "benefits" of working through the multilateral system could serve as a useful entry point to boost the credibility and relevance of global governance institutions. One way of pursuing this would be to promote the concept of a "peace dividend" as a reward for social stability.

As the world confronts more and more challenges that do not respect borders and cannot be tackled unilaterally or even bilaterally, multilateral institutions such as the UN have a critical role to play in organizing collective action. Increasingly, this is not a luxury—it is a necessity.

¹ Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine," *The Atlantic* 317, no. 3 (April 2016).

Due to its uniquely global membership and broad focus on threats to human welfare, the UN has a comparative advantage as a norm-setting entity that has filled significant normative gaps that have arisen as the international community confronts new, complex challenges. The challenge of climate change in particular has highlighted this comparative advantage. Principled leadership in support of the international system will be critical to fostering a broad-based recommitment to multilateralism.

2. Put Prevention into Practice

Prevention should be at the center of the UN's work. The need to invest more in prevention was also a central theme behind the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the World Humanitarian Summit. Indeed, in the wake of spiraling crises—from Syria and South Sudan to Yemen, Ukraine, and Nagorno-Karabakh—the need to prevent crises is once again high on the agenda.

The concept of prevention is not new. It is at the very foundation of the UN Charter, which was inspired by the desire “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” Yet proper political and financial investment in prevention has been lacking for far too long. With regards to preventing armed conflict, the charter provides a useful toolbox in Chapter VI, Article 33. It requires countries to seek solutions through “negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.”

While there has been plenty of lip service paid to conflict prevention, there has been little action. This needs to change. Those not convinced by a moral argument should at least consider prevention as a way of cutting costs—in terms of lives, humanitarian campaigns, peacekeeping, and rebuilding after conflict. Could some of the crises of today have been avoided if we had invested in prevention at a fraction of the cost we are now paying for humanitarian action?

Another way of looking at prevention is to ask: What sustains peace? Reframing the question in this way can help move from short-term policies of prevent-

ing conflict to long-term strategies of building peaceful, inclusive, well-governed, and economically sustainable countries. In this way, the emphasis is on building long-term resilience rather than reducing short-term risk.

On April 27, 2016, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2282 aimed at revitalizing the UN peacebuilding architecture. The resolution, simultaneously adopted by the General Assembly, recognizes the concept of *sustaining peace* as encompassing “activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation, and recurrence of conflict.” It emphasizes that “sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders, and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations’ engagement at all stages of conflict, and in all its dimensions, and needs sustained international attention and assistance.”²

It is time to put this shared task into practice at all levels: international, regional, national, and local.

3. Include the People

Strengthening the multilateral system is not only about states. It must also address “we the peoples.” A more “people-centered” approach that actively engages local populations and civil society would enhance the system’s legitimacy. It could also help inspire and support collective and citizen-oriented action to confront complex, interconnected, and fast-evolving transnational problems.

Governance is a partnership between the state and its people. Effective and legitimate governance works best within a participatory, inclusive system that allows all members of the community to give inputs and therefore feel like they “have a say.”

Many countries and communities have a long history of citizen participation. Others are developing new techniques. The UN system should better understand and catalogue effective practices to help states build useful models. It should also make a more concerted effort to recognize civil society and other local actors as potential partners for peace.

2 Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

Engaging with these actors could provide opportunities for peacebuilding, conciliation, healthier state-society relations, and, ultimately, more stable inter-state relations.

Multilateral decision making and policy discussions are often too far removed from the places where these decisions and policies need to be implemented. To deliver sustainable peace and development, reduce the risk of disasters, ensure respect for the rule of law, and respond effectively to humanitarian crises, there is a clear need to both involve and empower local actors. Only through such meaningful local-level engagement and partnership can the multilateral system deliver on its ambitions and stay connected and responsive to the people it is supposed to serve and protect.

4. Empower Women and Youth

No commitment to inclusion would be complete without a concerted effort to further empower women and engage with youth. Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security has yet to be fully understood and implemented. The slow but steady progress on women's participation in the state and in society serves as a key example of the transformative power of inclusion in building responsive states and effective governance. Implementing and building on past and present successes should remain at the heart of multilateral priorities.

Much can also be gained through empowering, supporting, and engaging global youth. Multilateral institutions are not configured in a way that encourages youth engagement; communication channels are limited and ineffective, the bureaucratic "language" of the UN is largely alien, and internships are often unpaid and exclusive.

Youth are potential partners in working for peace, human rights, and sustainable development and should be engaged as such. The implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women, peace, and security (Resolution 2242) and youth, peace, and security (Resolution 2250) could go a long way in addressing some of the obstacles that still stand in the way of genuine inclusion of these critical stakeholders. Detailed recommendations on both these areas are further elaborated below.

5. Bridge the Silos

The work of the United Nations is divided among three pillars: peace and security, development, and human rights. Over the course of its seventy-year history, the UN has developed new institutions and programs within these pillars and divided its activities into further areas like health, humanitarian action, and environmental management.

However, since many of the issues the UN addresses are interconnected, they require engagement from several parts of the system. For example, transnational security threats, such as terrorism or organized crime, have policy implications across the UN's pillars. Drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime in a conflict or post-conflict setting can require responses from the Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN Development Programme, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to name a few.³

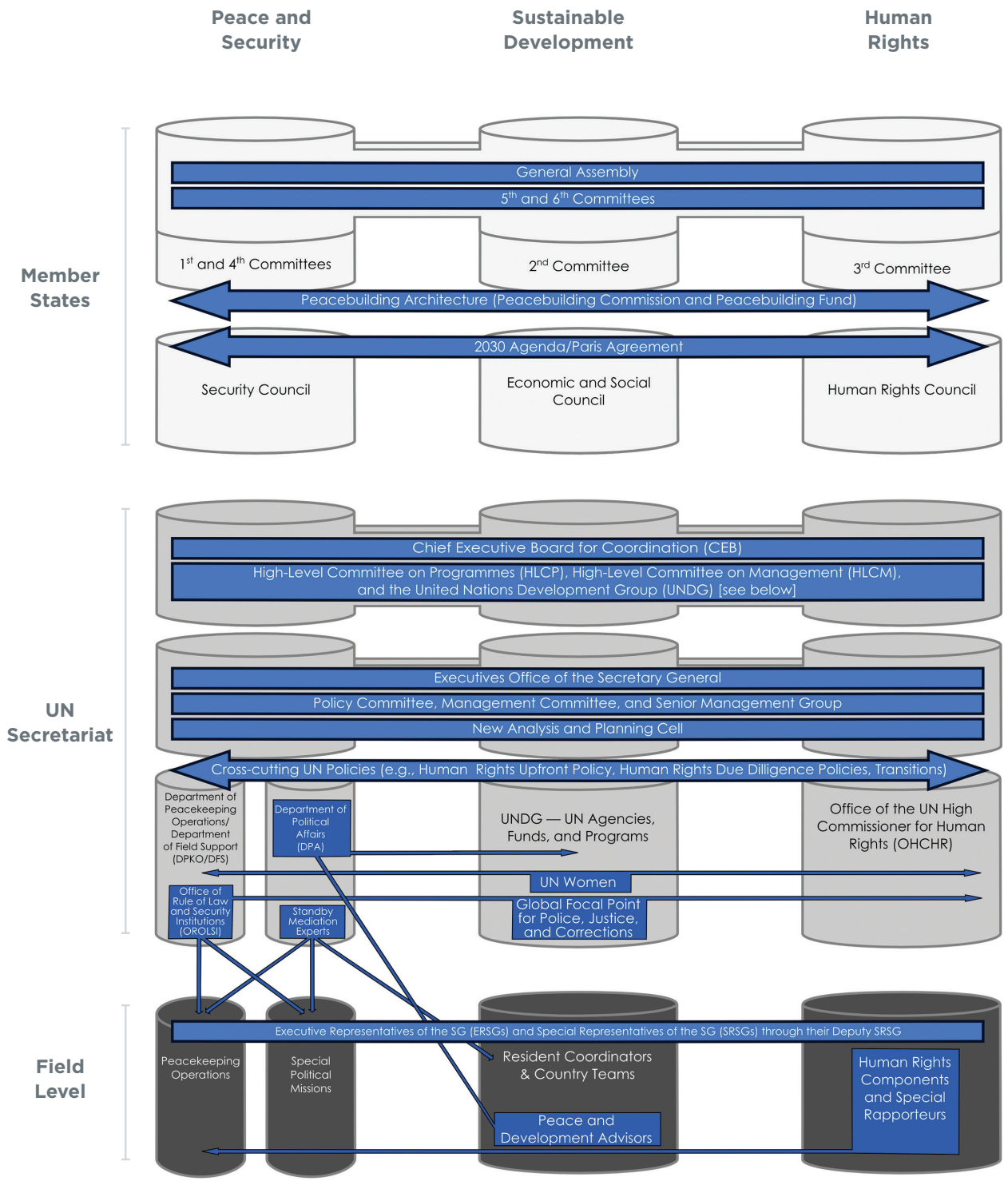
Meanwhile, more than thirty-eight UN entities are involved in one or more aspects of the UN's work on counterterrorism.⁴ The UN's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force was established to coordinate their work but was not empowered to do so effectively. As is often remarked, while coordination is essential, not everyone likes to be coordinated. And while not including all relevant actors can cause offense, involving them all can result in too many cooks in the kitchen.

Fragmentation, or lack of coherence, affects the UN's work in multiple ways and is evident not just in divisions among the three main pillars but also within the pillars. The notorious rivalries between the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations are a clear example. Such competition results in duplication of tasks, excessive bureaucracy, miscommunication, unnecessary turf wars, and competition for resources, among other maladies.

³ James Cockayne and Christoph Mikulaschek, "Transnational Security Challenges and the United Nations: Overcoming Sovereign Walls and Institutional Silos," *International Peace Academy*, February 2008, pp. 3-4.

⁴ See www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/structure.

Figure 1. Bridging UN silos



Thong Nguyen

Source: Arthur Boutellis and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, “Working Together for Peace and Security: Synergies and Connectors for Implementing the 2015 UN Reviews,” International Peace Institute, May 2016.

Sustaining peace depends upon work flowing “through all three pillars” of the UN. The UN needs to pull together. A concerted effort will have to be made to bridge the silos to bring greater coherence to the UN’s activities. Doing so will require much deeper engagement among the UN’s development, human rights, and peace and security communities. Such engagement has been discussed for years. It is time for action.

Implementation of recent initiatives could stimulate a more cohesive approach. For example, full implementation of the joint resolution on the peacebuilding architecture would allow the Peacebuilding Commission to play an important bridging role among the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), General Assembly, and Security Council. This could help bring a more holistic approach to conflict prevention in the pursuit of sustaining peace. The landmark 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a perfect frame for understanding how the pursuit of peace and security, development, and human rights are all intimately related. The delineation of concrete policies to implement the 2030 Agenda will provide opportunities to institutionalize integrated approaches. Indeed, the success of the Sustainable Development Goals depends upon it.

In addition, existing connectors that bring together various entities of the UN system should be further leveraged, including the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the Senior Management Group, and UN Women, to name a few (see Figure 1). Leadership from the new secretary-general will be critical to make integration work. Deeper integration of the UN’s foundational pillars in the work of its various agencies, funds, and programs should be high on her or his priorities for the first year.

6. Follow Through on Implementation

Policies are only as good as their implementation. This is true for the Secretariat, as well as for member states. The cultivation of a culture and practice of implementing decisions taken by member states and an effective system of performance auditing of this implementation should be a top priority.

The final eighteen months of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s term in office have witnessed a wealth of policy proposals and landmark resolutions. With a new secretary-general arriving in 2017, the focus should shift to implementing them. Getting implementation “right” for the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents an excellent starting point.

There is widespread recognition that one of the great successes of the UN system has been the production of a multifaceted framework of norms since 1945. The UN Charter, international law, and widespread normative mechanisms are broadly supported by member states and civil society. However, the implementation of those norms has been much less successful. The unauthorized use of force and the widespread violation of international humanitarian, refugee, and human rights laws are not only stains on the international community’s reputation; they are also root causes of armed conflict, violent extremism, forced displacement, and underdevelopment.

Norm-setting institutions such as the UN gain legitimacy when those who fail to implement these norms are held accountable. Failure to respond effectively to international crises or blatant flouting of norms with impunity undermines the UN’s legitimacy. Promotion of wider and more robust implementation of UN norms and policies is thus the basis for rebuilding trust in the system and the credibility of member states.

7. Enhance Partnerships

To revitalize its role at the center of multilateral governance, the UN must strengthen its capacity to engage with local, national, regional, and international partners. The UN remains the best-placed and most legitimate vehicle for international action. Its greatest asset is its universality. Nonetheless, greater cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, civil society actors, and the private sector would help bolster its standing as an effective leader in setting norms, coordinating responses, delivering services, and providing assistance. While the UN does not have to “be” everywhere, it needs to be able to rely on functional regional partnerships and

a holistic approach to regional governance, in conjunction with national- and local-level actors.

Enhanced cooperation with regional and subregional organizations can also: (1) improve legitimacy; (2) consolidate or amplify voices that might not otherwise be heard; (3) leverage regional and local knowledge; (4) directly support the capacity of “first responders”; (5) pool resources and share costs; and (6) act as a force of stability in times of crisis.

Improved partnerships with local groups, civil society, and the private sector are equally indispensable. Such groups could be particularly helpful in assessing the needs and impact of UN operations on the ground. Through local partnerships, the multilateral system could better diagnose problems, strengthen local capacities for implementation, create greater buy-in, and better gauge the impact of its policies. In order to address the real needs of the people it aims to serve, the UN must engage affected populations in the design and delivery of operational activities. Enhanced partnerships would help toward that end.

8. Promote Accountability

There is a growing demand for improved accountability within the UN system. This demand relates to issues ranging from the performance of individual field personnel to the accountability of member states for living up to their obligations under international law.

In particular, sexual exploitation and abuse by troops serving under the UN flag and the tragic origins of the ongoing cholera epidemic in Haiti have brought the issue of accountability to wide attention. Efforts to improve conduct and discipline of UN peacekeeping personnel have been ongoing since at least 2005, including through the Integrated Conduct and Discipline Framework of 2012.⁵ While most UN personnel serve with honor and distinction, enforcement of discipline remains inconsistent, and cases of sexual exploitation and abuse continue to mar the record of the UN’s achievements.

5 United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnership, and People: Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, June 16, 2015, para. 280.

Notwithstanding the gravity of the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, the problem of accountability is partly rooted in more mundane matters of human resource management. It is notoriously difficult to hire someone quickly at the UN. Once hired, it is equally difficult to fire someone for poor performance. This lack of a structure of accountability affects the system from the entry-level employee up to the highest levels of leadership. Indeed, each of the three major UN reviews in 2015 made connections between the need for greater accountability and leadership.⁶ Too often, high-ranking officials with great operational responsibilities are selected based on politics rather than merit. Political considerations will always play a part, but the pathologies inherent to such a system are only exacerbated when appointments are not connected to structures of accountability based on performance indicators.

To ensure UN management and staff are accountable for their performance, evaluation mechanisms should be periodic, transparent, independent, based on clear objectives, and tied to well-defined targets.

In particular, UN personnel must be held accountable in the case of abuse. Taking concrete measures to hold those responsible to account will be critical to improving the legitimacy of the UN in the field. It is hoped that the measures recently announced by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and endorsed by the Security Council will go a long way in stemming this endemic problem.⁷

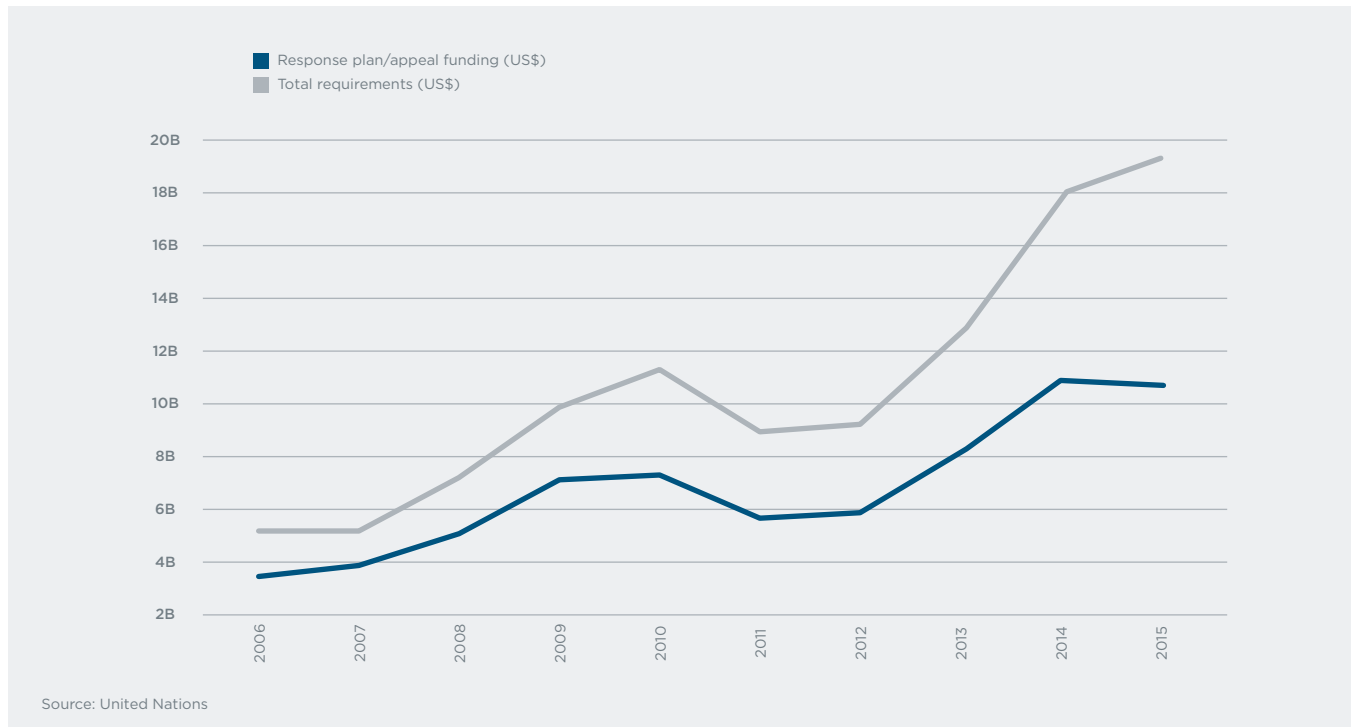
9. Develop Sustainable and Predictable Financing

The problem of adequate financing for UN activities is perennial. Funding for the UN comes from two sources: assessed contributions and voluntary contributions. Assessed contributions are obligatory payments made by all member states to finance the budget for peacekeeping operations and the

6 Arthur Boutellis and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, “Working Together for Peace and Security: Synergies and Connectors for Implementing the 2015 UN Reviews,” International Peace Institute, May 2016.

7 UN Secretary-General, *Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, UN Doc. A/70/729, February 16, 2016; Security Council Resolution 2272 (March 11, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2272.

Figure 2. UN humanitarian funding appeals (2000-2015)



regular budget of the UN’s “core” institutions.⁸ Voluntary contributions are left to the discretion of each member state. These contributions, which account for more than half of total funding, finance most of the UN’s humanitarian, development, and rule of law activities.

The General Assembly approved a biennial regular budget of \$5.4 billion for 2016–2017 in December 2015. This was \$170 million less than the budget proposed by the secretary-general and approximately \$400 million lower than the previous biennial budget. The budgets of UN agencies, funds, and programs financed by voluntary contributions are also experiencing critical shortfalls. And yet the number of challenges and demands on the system are increasing. Upon approval of the new budget, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon remarked that “funding continues to shrink, while demands on the United Nations grow.”⁹

⁸ These include those institutions established by the UN Charter: the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, International Court of Justice, Trusteeship Council, and Secretariat. The regular budget also provides funding support, ranging from full assistance to token amounts for some humanitarian and development activities.

⁹ Ban Ki-moon, “Remarks to the General Assembly Following

The growing gap between accessible funding and expanding needs is starkly evident in humanitarian affairs, particularly in relation to Syria and the refugee crisis (see Figure 2). In 2015, UN coordinated appeals for humanitarian funding amounted to \$19.9 billion. By December 30th, only 52 percent of that money had been raised.¹⁰ Responses to some of the direst humanitarian crises, such as those affecting the Central African Republic and South Sudan, are critically underfunded, resulting in operational shortcomings. While more money is being raised than ever before, it is not keeping pace with needs. More troubling still, this gap is expected to widen.

Sustainable financial capacity could allow the UN to fulfill its mandates more effectively across all policy domains. As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Measures to peacefully prevent conflict through dialogue and mediation cost on average just 10 percent as much

Adoption of the Programme Budget for the 2016–2017 Biennium,” New York, December 23, 2015.

¹⁰ ReliefWeb, “Humanitarian Funding Update,” December 2015, available at http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Humanitarian%20Funding%20Update_%28GHO%29_30Dec2015.pdf.

as post-conflict recovery efforts.¹¹ Similarly, adequate investment in disaster risk reduction, community resilience, public health, and the defense of human rights would be more cost-effective than responding to humanitarian needs that often result from failures of prevention. While maintaining operational capacity and funds to respond to crises, the secretary-general should prioritize a new fundraising drive to make resources available for preventive initiatives rather than only for emergency responses. This should be considered an investment rather than a cost. Indeed, in the long term, it should significantly reduce costs. For the same purpose, it will be important to deliver on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and the “Grand Bargain” for humanitarian financing.

Apart from increases in funding, the quality of funding is also of crucial importance. Predictability and flexibility of funding are key to making programs and activities efficient and sustainable. Donors should also shift toward using financing mechanisms that encourage joint initiatives and cooperation among multilateral agencies and departments, rather than competition and fragmentation. Funding pools and “matching funds” should be open not only to governments but also to foundations, companies, charities, and individuals. A good example of a pool mechanism is the Central Emergency Response Fund of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which supports rapid humanitarian response to natural disasters and armed conflict.

10. Communicate Success

Strategic communication is critical for any organization. Good messaging can help promote core values,

advance progress toward specific goals, establish lasting partnerships, and provide positive rationale for mobilizing funding. In the information age, when a message can cover the globe in an instant, good communications are more important than ever.

While the UN has a vast communications architecture, including the Department of Public Information and its network of sixty-three information centers around the globe, it struggles to tell its story. The United Nations is a unique institution that provides essential services to millions of men, women, and children around the world. It provides food to 80 million people in eighty countries. It vaccinates 40 percent of the world’s children. And in the past year, it orchestrated the most comprehensive agreement to tackle climate change ever. The United Nations has a power to bring the world’s people together that is unmatched in human history. Never before has such an organization been established and endured through so many challenges. Yet the organization is often maligned or ignored.

While the United Nations may receive due criticism for its failings, its positive achievements all too often go uncredited. This is not just a matter of achieving appropriate publicity; it is a matter of achieving maximum effectiveness. If the UN is to remain at the center of a multilateral system oriented toward action in support of universal norms, it must be trusted, respected, and appreciated. To do this, communication is key. At all levels of action, the UN must be able to effectively communicate its purpose based on clear goals, clear messages, and clear results. This is imperative in order for the UN to sustain its legitimacy and funding base among member states, as well as its reputation and image in the eyes of the world. The UN has a good story to tell, but it needs to tell it better.

¹¹ UN Development Programme, “Fast Facts on Conflict Prevention,” February 2013, available at www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/FF_conflict_prevention.pdf.



Peacekeepers from the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) await the arrival of UN Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support Aameera Haq, El Fasher, Sudan, November 7, 2012. UNAMID/Albert González Farran.

Part II: Recommendations on Specific Issue Areas

As part of its program of work, the ICM investigated sixteen issue areas. The first issue area, “New Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities for the Multilateral System,” served as a mapping exercise to situate the work of the ICM. What follows are summary recommendations from the remaining fifteen issue areas. Full reports are available on each topic.

1. **Armed Conflict: Mediation, Peacebuilding, and Peacekeeping**¹²

Peacebuilding and mediation are among the many political tools for peacefully settling disputes enshrined in Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Last year’s three global policy reviews on peace and security called for greater focus on prevention and mediation. This is a shift from the usual reliance on military and other coercive measures to address threats to international peace and security.

In its report, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) made a number of recommendations to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and credibility of peace operations. In particular, it recommended that the full spectrum of peace operations be used more flexibly. They should be field-oriented and people-centered. They should have a renewed focus on prevention and mediation, including a greater push for strategic partnerships with regional organizations. And above all, they should be principally guided by the search for political solutions. The report also advocated the concept of “sustaining peace” as the overarching strategic framework under which the UN should pursue its peace and security agenda.

Under the UN Charter, the paramount body on questions of peace and security is the Security Council,

but the council has not been reformed in more than fifty years. In the years since, some have argued that the composition of the permanent membership no longer reflects geoeconomic, geopolitical, or geo-strategic realities. There have also been concerns about permanent members’ veto power and the conditions under which it might be used.¹³ It is fully recognized that the form and shape of Security Council reform is exclusively a matter for the member states themselves to resolve.

Building on the HIPPO report and taking into account views expressed in the ICM process, the following are among the ICM’s recommendations on armed conflict:

- **Develop a global agenda on prevention:** A summit of world leaders should be convened to launch the development of a global agenda on prevention. This summit, organized by the president of the General Assembly with the support of the secretary-general and the help of independent experts, should be organized on the margins of the high-level segment of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly in 2017.
- **Produce a road map for implementing recommendations on the peacebuilding architecture:** A road map for the implementation of the new joint Security Council/General Assembly resolution on the UN peacebuilding architecture should be drawn up. It should include modalities for predictable and sustainable financing for peacebuilding and mediation activities. Member states

¹² During the ICM consultations, the full title of this issue area was “Armed Conflict: Mediation, Conciliation, and Peacekeeping.”

¹³ Specific reform proposals have included expanding the permanent and/or nonpermanent members of the Security Council; creating a new category of semipermanent members; and removing the veto or expanding it to other permanent or semipermanent members. A number of proposals, including recent proposals from France and Mexico, a proposal from the “Elders,” and the “ACT” code of conduct, focus on constraining use of the veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

should lead the process and aim to produce a result by the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. The process should be initiated by the chair of the Peacebuilding Commission with the assistance of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

- **Support mediation at the multilateral, national, and local levels:** The Department of Political Affairs should support the UN system in devising practical programs to help member states integrate prevention and mediation into the mainstream of national governance and development programs. It should develop a strategy to better take into account and support locally and nationally driven mediation processes. And it should work to include these processes in multilateral mediation and efforts at preventive diplomacy. It should also further engage civil society to create domestic constituencies supportive of negotiations. Finally, in consultation with key member states, the secretary-general should create more positions for senior mediators.
- **Carry forward the HIPPO's recommendations on peace operations:** In consultation with key member states in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping, and the Fifth Committee, the secretary-general should appoint a small team within the executive office to propose ways to carry forward those HIPPO recommendations that were not taken up by the current secretary-general or on which member states remain undecided. These include: (1) restructuring the Secretariat entities entrusted with peace and security; (2) financing UN special political missions and Security Council-authorized AU peace support missions from assessed contributions; (3) changing UN administrative and budgetary decision-making processes to put a stronger emphasis on field

operations; (4) revising the recruitment, development, and performance management of peace mission leadership teams, with due regard to gender equality; and (5) putting unarmed strategies at the center of efforts to protect civilians.

2. Women, Peace, and Security

Women continue to be poorly represented in formal peacemaking activities. Yet they suffer disproportionately as a result of conflict. There is compelling evidence that women's physical security and gender equality in society are associated with broader peace and stability in states. Furthermore, there is growing recognition that inclusive societies that provide equal opportunity for all are more likely to be peaceful and stable. So greater inclusion of women in peace processes not only helps women, it helps sustain peace for all.

Increased awareness of violence against women, growing support for women's empowerment, and more understanding about the links between inclusivity and development offer a unique opportunity to accelerate action toward bringing more women into the mainstream of making and sustaining peace at all levels.

The following are among the ICM's recommendations on women, peace, and security:

- **Adopt a unified, holistic, and coherent approach:** The UN and member states can break the women, peace, and security agenda out of its silo by integrating it with the development, human rights, humanitarian action, and peace and security agendas at large. In this respect, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents a significant opportunity. The inclusion of a target on eliminating all forms of violence against women

within Goal 5 on gender equality, as well as Goal 16 on “peaceful and inclusive societies,” can unify national and international efforts to improve women’s security. They also send a clear signal that gender equality matters for both peace and development.

- **Prioritize women’s inclusion in multilateral processes:** Amid widespread calls for a return to the foundational principle of “we the peoples,” states and the organizations they create cannot ignore the priorities of the women who make up half their populations. Multilateral actors should evaluate whether people in conflict-affected communities are routinely consulted and their perspectives taken into account. They should continually reexamine their understanding and operational definitions of ownership and inclusivity in mediation, peace processes, and peacebuilding initiatives.
- **Increase accountability for gender equality programming:** Accountability for women’s participation affects the legitimacy of the UN system as a whole, from headquarters to the community level. Special representatives of the secretary-general should be required to routinely report on issues related to women, peace, and security when addressing the Security Council, as the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the HIPPO have recommended.
- **Translate normative frameworks, both literally and culturally:** From skilled civil servants in capitals around the world to religious leaders in traditional communities, many people still do not understand the agenda of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security or the actions it requires. Translating the policies and practices of the women, peace, and security agenda into accessible resources in many languages would allow them to reach a broader audience. Further, by interpreting the agenda according to local customs or through the lens of religious norms, community leaders can better harness the potential of the women, peace, and security framework in their work for progressive change.

3. Terrorism and Organized Crime¹⁴

The idea that terrorism and organized crime can be defeated primarily by military force, law enforcement measures, and intelligence operations is losing currency. A paradigm shift is taking place from “counterterrorism” to “countering violent extremism” toward “preventing violent extremism.” Furthermore, organized crime is now being considered in a broader context of development, governance, and justice. But while terrorism and organized crime have both become serious threats to international peace and security, the current multilateral architecture to cope with them is insufficient. As a result, the inter-state system is struggling to cope with dangerous non-state actors and transnational threats.

Among the ICM’s recommendations on terrorism and organized crime are the following:

- **Centralize leadership on terrorism and violent extremism:** The secretary-general should appoint an under-secretary-general to lead and coordinate the UN’s work on implementing its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the prevention of violent extremism.
- **Produce and communicate a counter-narrative:** As part of a concerted multilateral approach to countering and preventing violent extremism, a new narrative needs to be produced to neutralize and dilute extremist ideologies. Such messages can be developed by a new taskforce or ad hoc committee comprising religious leaders, individuals from civil society and the private sector, and, above all, youth actors from around the globe. It should be led by an organization or institution that can provide adequate political space for such a discussion.
- **Clarify concepts related to terrorism and violent extremism:** Member states and the UN Secretariat must step up efforts to clarify the core concepts at the heart of international and domestic strategies to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. This would bring greater consistency and coherence to programming. Such clarification should include assurances that this programming

¹⁴ During the ICM consultations, the full title of this issue area was “Terrorism, Including Issues Related to Ideology, Identity Politics, and Organized Crime.”

fully conforms to international humanitarian and human rights law and avoids hampering principled humanitarian action.

- **Reaffirm norms and negotiate a “new compact”:** While a universal UN definition of terrorism remains elusive, a universal zero-tolerance norm, as adopted by the Security Council in 2011, should be more strictly implemented. Through an intergovernmental process, member states should reaffirm their political will to implement the zero-tolerance strategy and pledge not to engage in arming or supporting terrorist groups and networks.
- **Devise a global crime control strategy:** A global crime control strategy should be devised on the model of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Such a strategy would strengthen implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Palermo Convention) and its three protocols, enhance coordination among the relevant parts of the UN family, and enable member states to engage a broader spectrum of partners, including regional organizations, the private sector, and civil society.

4. Humanitarian Engagements

Never before has the international community witnessed humanitarian needs on such an epic scale and in so many simultaneous crises around the world. And never before has the gap between those needs and international humanitarian capacity to respond appeared greater than it does today. Contemporary challenges for humanitarian action relate primarily to the international community’s capacity to do three things: (1) stem the needs arising from humanitarian crises; (2) reach the victims of these crises and deliver relief; and (3) ensure an adequate, timely, effective, and sustainable response to humanitarian needs.

Among the ICM’s recommendations on humanitarian engagements are the following:

- **Implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction:** Member states, regional organizations, and international financial institutions should provide resources, and the UN Office for

Disaster Risk Reduction should provide technical expertise, to enable countries to integrate disaster cost and risk analysis into core government planning and budgets. These should be separate from humanitarian programs and budgets, which should be reserved for crisis response. The private sector should be incentivized to engage in partnerships to diversify the funding basis for disaster risk reduction and to integrate it into its operations, research, and development.

- **Strengthen the UN’s capacity to prevent and resolve conflict:** The UN Secretariat should better integrate human rights monitoring into conflict risk analysis. Systematic violations of human rights should trigger the activation of conflict prevention or resolution mechanisms. Furthermore, ways should be identified to meaningfully engage with armed non-state actors that are or could become parties to armed conflicts or that have an impact on the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- **Enhance compliance with international law:** Member states should deliver on existing obligations by using all available means to ensure respect for international humanitarian, human rights, refugee, and criminal law. Furthermore, they should constructively engage in the process established by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent aimed at establishing a complementary mechanism to enhance respect for international humanitarian law. Member states should avoid criminalizing engagement with non-state armed actors when done for strictly humanitarian purposes or to enhance their compliance with international humanitarian law.
- **Facilitate humanitarian access and delivery of humanitarian responses:** Member states must fully respect existing rules of international humanitarian law on humanitarian relief operations, in particular those aimed at humanitarian access and the protection of humanitarian personnel. Moreover, they should embrace the diversity of humanitarian relief actors as an opportunity to maximize the delivery and impact of humanitarian responses to growing needs. At the same time, they should safeguard a distinct operational space for principled humanitarian action.

- **Support local crisis response:** The UN and other international humanitarian actors should support rather than lead humanitarian responses. This can be encouraged by giving local crisis responders access to training, technology, technical assistance, direct funding, and humanitarian coordination mechanisms. At the same time, an effective international operational capacity must be maintained to respond where and when there is insufficient local capacity to deliver a comprehensive, principled, and adequate humanitarian response.
- **Integrate protection strategies into humanitarian response:** Humanitarian actors should strengthen efforts to improve the protection of people affected by armed conflict or disaster by fully integrating protection strategies and respect for international law throughout humanitarian planning, programming, and budgeting.
- **Improve humanitarian financing:** Member states and humanitarian actors should implement the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing to ensure long-term, flexible, and predictable funding.

5. Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Migration

The massive rise of forced displacement and refugee and migration flows has shocked people's consciences and unsettled governments and institutions worldwide. Many people on the move today are increasingly desperate and seeking protection. The number and capacity of countries willing to welcome and support refugees and migrants is shrinking at the same time that the number of people looking for safety and security is expanding. This is a major test for states and world order.

Among the ICM's recommendations on forced displacement, refugees, and migration, are the following:

- **Comply with existing international legal obligations:** In managing large-scale flows of people, particularly refugees, states should fully comply with their existing legal obligations. Any policy designed to tackle the challenges arising out of forced displacement and desperate migration should fully respect the human rights and dignity of the people affected by these policies. In particular, states should respect the principle of *non-refoulement* as enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and customary international law. This principle guarantees that individuals are not returned "in any manner whatsoever" to places where their life or freedom is threatened.
- **Strengthen and complement legal frameworks:** Given today's challenging environment, the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees need to be better operationalized. Moreover, these legal frameworks should be complemented by a serious discussion on revisiting and strengthening normative frameworks and policies to protect other people on the move. The secretary-general should ensure resources to provide adequate support for the negotiation of a Global Compact for Safe, Regular, and Orderly Migration.
- **Address the root causes of forced displacement and desperate migration:** If there were fewer conflicts, less persecution, greater socioeconomic equality, and better governance, people would be less inclined to leave their homes in order to survive. Moreover, full respect for international human rights and humanitarian law would go a long way in preventing both forced displacement and desperate migration. Therefore, there should be greater focus on preventing and mediating conflict, ensuring respect for international law, promoting sustainable development, and putting an end to systematic political oppression.
- **Provide more avenues for legal migration:** If there were more ways to migrate legally, as called for in the 2030 Agenda, flows of people would be more orderly and safer. Therefore, member states should take practical steps like providing more seasonal visas and short- or medium-term work permits, facilitating family reunification, and creating educational or work exchange programs.
- **Change the narrative around migration:** Politicians, the media, and other leaders should reduce fears about strangers in need, not fuel them. They should help demythologize and re-humanize refugees, migrants, and internally displaced persons. They should also stress basic values of human dignity, solidarity, and empathy. Refugees and migrants should be provided the opportunity to

learn the language and skills needed to fully integrate into host communities and become self-reliant rather than dependent on aid.

- **Fill the institutional gap on internally displaced persons:** The secretary-general should appoint a special representative for internal displacement to foster closer cooperation among UN agencies, funds, and programs and to fill the current institutional gap in this area. The special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons only covers one aspect of the challenges these people face. The new special representative would liaise with relevant stakeholders and advise the secretary-general on the full range of challenges related to internal displacement.

6. Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is groundbreaking in a number of ways. First, it integrates the three fundamental dimensions of development—economic, social, and environmental—instead of separating them in “silos.” Second, it is universally applicable; all countries signed up to implement it. Third, it includes issues that had previously been outside the scope of development, particularly peace and climate change. The implementation of such an innovative framework is an opportunity for the UN to renew the way it works and to expand its partnerships. The implementation of seventeen universal goals requires a change of mindset that must permeate the entire UN system.

The Paris Agreement on climate change is another universal and ambitious multilateral agreement. It seeks to hold the global average temperature increase to well below two degrees Celsius and commits to achieving net zero emissions in the second half of this century. The Paris Agreement is also comprehensive: it includes specific goals not only on mitigating climate change but also in other key areas such as adaptation and finance flows.

Among the ICM’s recommendations on climate change and sustainable development are the following:

- **Implement development and climate targets jointly:** The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement

should be implemented jointly. Although these two outcomes have different international legal statuses and timeframes, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) should be jointly implemented at the national level to maximize synergies and reduce the risk of their working at cross-purposes.

- **Adopt a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach:** The holistic approach used in drafting the SDGs should be maintained in implementing them. Several member states are putting in place inter-ministerial arrangements to encourage integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the government level. Involvement of ministries of finance is key to unlocking domestic resources. Bridging institutional divisions is a challenge not only for the UN but also at the national level.
- **Bridge “siloes” structures:** The 2030 Agenda recognizes that the UN can no longer work in separate silos. To that end, the work of the six committees of the General Assembly should be evaluated to reduce duplication, augment impact on the ground, and support the implementation of the new outcomes.
- **UN top leadership must show the way:** Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement should be a top priority for the new secretary-general. The principle that “no agency owns any of the goals” is an important reminder that the seventeen SDGs are to be implemented systematically across the UN. The Chief Executives Board and the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda and Climate Change have unique capacities to align the system toward effective implementation.
- **Create a dynamic and inclusive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda:** The High-Level Political Forum has the universal participation of all member states. It should also include participation of civil society and the private sector. The High-Level Political Forum should be the bridge between communities of policymakers and practitioners, for example to discuss the links between the SDGs and INDCs. This year, the first twenty-two countries have volunteered to present national reviews

of their progress toward achieving the SDGs. By the end of the first cycle in 2019, all countries should have volunteered to review their progress.

- **Review funding strategies:** The UN's development work is largely dictated by the funding it receives. The lack of core and flexible funding in the UN development system has increased fragmentation and competition.¹⁵ Assessed contributions from member states should reflect greater balance between the three main pillars of the UN: peace and security, human rights, and development.

7. Justice and Human Rights¹⁶

The primary responsibility and capacity to ensure full respect and accountability for human rights lie with member states. However, a variety of UN organs, agencies, and programs play an important role in ensuring full compliance with human rights obligations and adequate accountability for violations. The multilateral system's main weakness in this respect is its limited capacity to enforce human rights obligations, prevent violations, and guarantee systematic access to justice and other accountability mechanisms when human rights are violated. Justice and accountability need to be better integrated as indispensable ingredients for lasting peace.

Among the ICM's recommendations on justice and human rights are the following:

- **Invest in prevention and the positive power of human rights:** Member states should increase budgets for domestic and international prevention programs that strengthen human rights compliance and accountability mechanisms. They should also strengthen support for national and local human rights architectures and capacities, recognizing and reinforcing the important role played by civil society.
- **Integrate human rights into the other UN pillars:** Member states, the UN, and civil society should

¹⁵ UN Secretary-General, *Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 67/226 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (QCPR)* (advanced unedited version, December 28, 2015).

¹⁶ During the ICM consultations, the full title of this issue area was "Justice, Human Rights, and the International Legal System."

integrate human rights into national development plans designed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To integrate human rights into peace and security, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, should train and instruct all UN-mandated mediators and negotiators on how to tackle human rights and justice in peace processes. The secretary-general should also establish a forum to exchange and document lessons learned from addressing these issues in peace processes.

- **Strengthen leadership on human rights:** The secretary-general should exert strong leadership by proactively engaging member states on respect for international humanitarian and human rights law. The secretary-general should ensure the UN sets an example by implementing a zero-tolerance policy for all violations of international law by UN personnel and representatives. Moreover, he or she should make full use of the formal and informal tools provided by or derived from Articles 98 and 99 of the UN Charter. This would help ensure the UN system makes all necessary and feasible efforts to maintain international peace and security by preventing and responding to large-scale violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.
- **Commit to Human Rights Up Front:** The UN secretary-general should maintain a dedicated team to lead and expand the Human Rights Up Front initiative and apply it more systematically. In collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, this team should train senior UN officials in advanced leadership and negotiation on operational human rights issues.
- **Systematically pursue justice:** The Security Council should systematically urge states to investigate and prosecute international crimes over which they have jurisdiction and to cooperate with other states and the International Criminal Court (ICC) where the latter have jurisdiction. Upon the request of states or the ICC, the Security Council should impose appropriate travel bans and asset freezes on those subject to such investigations. Moreover, the Security Council should engage in a strategic dialogue with the ICC to address the challenges it faces. For example, an annual retreat could be held

for Security Council members and key ICC staff. When it refers cases to the court, the Security Council should ensure the court has adequate resources to follow through. The Security Council should also adopt guidelines for ICC referrals that would decrease real or perceived selectivity. At the same time, states should be given the opportunity to adjust their response to human rights violations to avoid the need for a referral. In addition, the Security Council should build on existing proposals to constrain the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

- **Strengthen national and local justice capacity:** Member states and the UN should invest both politically and financially in enhancing the capacity of national and local justice systems. Where the international system must step in, hybrid international-national mechanisms should be preferred. Such mechanisms should be designed to maximize transfer of knowledge and expertise to domestic professionals and institutions.
- **Support alternatives to criminal justice:** Member states and the UN should ensure fact-finding commissions and commissions of inquiry have appropriate mandates, expertise, access, and political support. They should make better use of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission in contexts with serious and widespread violations of international humanitarian law.

8. Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance¹⁷

Multilateralism is based on cooperation among states. Therefore, the efficiency and legitimacy of the multilateral system is affected when states are under stress. While the United Nations does not traditionally address challenges internal to the state, international peace and security is affected by the consequences of “national” problems. Therefore, the UN’s role is to defend the norms enshrined in its charter and to be at the center of appropriate and effective multilateral responses to challenges that put states under stress.

¹⁷ During the ICM consultations, this issue area was titled “Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance in Challenging Environments.”

Among the ICM’s recommendations on social inclusion, political participation, and effective governance are the following:

- **Deliver on existing commitments to accountable governance:** In collaboration with heads of regional organizations, the secretary-general should develop an action plan to assist member states to deliver on their commitments to implement existing normative frameworks that prioritize accountable governance.
- **Engage civil society groups:** The president of the General Assembly should find more regular mechanisms for seeking and receiving input from civil society groups and local actors as partners for peace.
- **Make more effective use of new technologies:** The role of modern technological tools in transforming state-society relations should be better explored—from open government data, to the use of mobile phones for government service delivery, to citizen reporting on government abuses. The UN should commission a study to make sense of how new technology can enhance effective, inclusive, and legitimate governance and how it affects transparency and accountability.
- **Support “participatory governance” models:** From online constitution-building platforms to online civic town halls, the Office of the Secretary-General should establish a project to catalogue models of online political participation. These models should be widely shared and used in the UN’s work.

9. Fragile States and Fragile Cities

Countries big and small, and even those considered “stable,” may experience various “states of fragility.” As more than half of the world’s population now lives in urban environments, fragile cities can also have an impact on sustainable peace and development.

Fragility and vulnerability are caused by different factors in different contexts. However, general features of fragility often include limited institutional capacity, political and economic exclusion, post-conflict instability, and vulnerability to recurrent natural disasters exacerbated by climate change.

Among the ICM's recommendations on fragile states and fragile cities are the following:

- **Address fragility beyond the state level:** Not only states but also cities need support. Although the UN is an inter-state organization, it must find ways to partner with local leaders such as mayors, community leaders, local academic institutions, and religious leaders.
- **Review current funding structures:** The UN is increasingly focused on post-conflict fragile states. In 2011, it spent more than \$6 billion in development and humanitarian aid in twenty-five fragile states.¹⁸ However, aid flows to these countries are highly volatile. This further contributes to instability. International aid should put prevention into practice by investing in strategic policies that strengthen the long-term resilience of states and cities, including through disaster risk reduction and rule of law programming.
- **Focus on implementing the 2030 Agenda:** The implementation of the 2030 Agenda could be used as a framework to prevent fragility and help countries build resilience. The secretary-general, in cooperation with the administrator of the UN Development Programme, should develop an action plan to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda by leveraging peace and development advisers and UN global focal points in fragile states.
- **Develop capacity to collect and analyze local-level data:** To better understand the complexities of fragility in cities, the UN Development Programme, World Bank, and others working on this issue should increase their capacity to measure progress in cities.
- **Accentuate the positive:** Instead of focusing only on fragility, states and cities should be encouraged to envision a vibrant future that is resilient to shocks and can adapt to change in a managed way. As a follow-up to the SDGs (particularly Goal 16) and the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), and consistent with a new culture of prevention, the debate on fragility should be

transformed into policies that encourage sustainable peace and development.

10. Impact of New Technologies on Peace, Security, and Development

A new wave of technology is driving rapid global change, with enormous potential—both positive and negative—for peace, security, development, and humanitarian action. Since new technologies are revolutionizing our societies, the UN should also use them as agents of change to promote its core objectives. That said, the UN should be realistic in determining where it can be a norm setter and where it is better suited to be a user. For example, international governance of the Internet has largely taken place outside of the UN. Since most technological innovations have been developed by the private sector and civil society, it is vital to involve these actors in efforts to harness technology as an enabler for positive change.

Among the ICM's recommendations on the impact of new technologies on peace, security, and development are the following:

- **Map UN venues dealing with new technologies:** The UN Secretariat should map out the different venues within the UN system where new technologies are being used. By one count, ten different UN bodies have dealt with cyber issues since the 1990s.¹⁹ This mapping would identify good practices and needs, thereby helping streamline and consolidate efforts to more effectively use technology to achieve the UN's objectives.
- **Identify a UN focal point on cyber issues:** With ongoing efforts to improve cybersecurity through regional bodies such as NATO, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Council of Europe, there is a risk of a plurality of regional initiatives without global standards. The appointment of a

¹⁸ Bruce Jones and Ben Tortolani, "Deep Dive on Fragile States," Center on International Cooperation, August 2013, pp. 3–4.

¹⁹ Tim Maurer, "Cyber Norm Emergence at the United Nations: An Analysis of the Activities at the UN Regarding Cyber-security," Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, September 2011, available at <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/maurer-cyber-norm-dp-2011-11-final.pdf>.

UN focal point on cyber issues would consolidate the UN's currently disjointed approach and make it a more credible player in an issue that demands greater multilateral engagement.

- **Ensure coherence among new mechanisms:** The Technology Facilitation Mechanism for sustainable development, the technology bank for least-developed countries, and the Technology Framework for climate change share the common goal of facilitating access to and transfer of technology to developing countries. These new mechanisms need to be connected to one another to accelerate progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement without duplicating efforts and competing for resources.
- **Establish a UN-guaranteed depository as a safe-keeper of big data:** The UN could help collect, structure, and store data, especially from regions where the infrastructure is not safe or sufficient. Member states could give this mandate to a UN body through a multi-stakeholder process to create and implement safeguards for the data.
- **Recognize cyberspace as a “global common good”:** The UN General Assembly should pass a resolution to declare that cyberspace should be used for “peaceful purposes” in the interests of humanity.

11. The UN, Regional Organizations, Civil Society, and the Private Sector

International affairs are more complex than ever. The UN is uniquely placed at the center of the multilateral system, and it is the world's only universal organization. However, to be most effective the UN must recognize that it is part of a growing constellation of local, national, regional, and international actors. This means it must improve its capacity for partnerships.

Achieving the goals of maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, and promoting sustainable development will require working through networks of governments, regional arrangements, international organizations, private sector actors, and civil society. The UN should position itself to coordinate, convene, facilitate, and inspire such networks.

Among the ICM's recommendations on strengthening UN partnerships are the following:

- **Provide strategic vision on partnerships:** The next secretary-general should produce a strategic vision document defining the UN's commitment to partnerships at all levels. It should acknowledge that, to be relevant and effective in the twenty-first century, the UN must be at the center of a wide and dynamic network of partnerships, including with regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector.
- **Study Chapter VIII of the UN Charter:** Chapter VIII of the UN Charter (on regional arrangements) has been subject to relatively little scholarly attention. Since regional organizations have a largely untapped potential, an expert-level conference on Chapter VIII should be convened. It should study how this chapter has been interpreted in the past and how it can be better utilized for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- **Strengthen the AU-UN partnership:** Much of the focus on partnerships between the UN and the African Union (AU) has been on peacekeeping. But the AU peace and security architecture and the AU governance architecture contain tools beyond peacekeeping. The UN Secretariat should convene a working group to explore how to strengthen cooperation between the UN and the AU in these other areas. Similarly, the AU and the UN should extend the joint framework for an enhanced partnership in peace and security, which was signed between the UN Office to the African Union and the AU Commission's Peace and Security Department. Extending this framework could help incorporate cooperation throughout the AU Commission and into relations with other arms of the UN system.²⁰
- **Collect lessons learned from regional arrangements:** The UN Secretariat should systematically collect lessons learned from regional arrangements, like the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), in relation to preventing conflict and sustaining peace.

²⁰ Paul D. Williams and Solomon A. Dersso, “Saving Strangers and Neighbors: Advancing UN-AU Cooperation on Peace Operations,” New York, International Peace Institute, February 2015, p. 15.

- **Review arrangements for consultation with NGOs:** It has been twenty years since the approval of ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31, which governs the relationship between the UN and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In that time, global civil society has grown substantially, as have the technological mechanisms through which international NGOs communicate and connect to the work of the UN. As a result, the ECOSOC president should convene a general review of the arrangements for consultation with NGOs with a view to updating ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 to modernize access for NGOs and improve mechanisms for UN partnerships with NGOs, civil society, and the private sector, among other things.
- **Foster partnerships through the SDGs:** Implementation of the 2030 Agenda provides an excellent opportunity to foster partnerships among the UN, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector. Civil society played a key role in designing the agenda, including through the precedent-setting Open Working Group on the SDGs and during the intergovernmental negotiations. Civil society will also have to play a critical role in implementing the SDGs, for example through the High-Level Political Forum. Successful implementation of the SDGs will also depend on the active engagement of the private sector. A good starting point would be to further develop the SDG Fund Private Sector Advisory Group's Framework for Action. In particular, action will need to be taken to identify particular SDG targets that can be matched with specific private sector actors at the country level and to facilitate their connection.
- **Scale up innovation labs:** To better leverage private sector dynamism, the UN Innovation Network should establish a platform to connect and scale up the "innovation labs" currently being developed by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Global Pulse, and others. These labs connect corporate partners, universities, and NGOs to explore technological and design-based solutions to specific operational problems. These platforms could also improve connections between UN headquarters and field offices.

12. Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Global Youth

People under the age of twenty-four make up almost half of the world's population (48 percent). It is therefore important to ensure they are active participants in policymaking processes. In order to maximize their potential, it is essential to invest in their education and empower them to take up leadership positions within national and international structures.

The "youth question" is often dealt with as a problem to be solved. Security Council Resolution 2250 challenges this approach. It outlines the important role young people can play across the domains of peace and security, development, and human rights. The role of "youth" is a cross-cutting issue that has been integrated across all the ICM's issue areas. A similar cross-cutting approach is needed in the multilateral domain.

Among the ICM's recommendations on youth are the following:

- **Implement structured affirmative action for youth at the UN:** The UN Secretariat, agencies, funds, and programs should allocate a percentage of funding for young people and youth projects. Donors should enforce quotas on project proposals to ensure diversified youth representation in both the design and implementation stages.
- **Ensure access to education:** Member states and UN agencies, funds, and programs should make greater efforts to ensure access to education in situations of conflict and protracted displacement.
- **Build bridges with youth:** The president of the General Assembly should organize briefings for missions that include youth advisers on a regular rather than an ad hoc basis. These advisers can build bridges by bringing youth voices to the UN and bringing the UN view back to young people in their countries in a credible way.
- **Engage youth in implementing the SDGs:** Youth will be instrumental to implementing the SDGs. Based upon the model of the SDG Youth Gateway, the UN Secretariat should facilitate peer-to-peer interactions among young people worldwide to achieve the targets of the SDGs.

- **Map UN engagement with youth:** The secretary-general should solicit a public mapping of UN agencies to identify where and how each agency is engaging with youth to mobilize their comparative advantages and encourage a more collaborative approach.
- **Build regional hubs for youth:** UN agencies, funds, and programs should work with regional organizations to build regional hubs for youth empowerment and employment, similar to the AU's Agenda 2063 with its focus on science and technology for youth.
- **Develop a youth-led framework for preventing violent extremism:** A youth-led framework to prevent violent extremism by engaging the right groups locally should be developed. This framework should focus on positive messaging rather than counter-messaging, which can have a negative component. The narrative around youth in peace and security must not be limited to focusing on young people as a threat. At the same time, care should be taken not to put at risk individuals who are involved in counter-messaging. The multilateral system should support those who are already speaking out and be discrete about shedding light on new actors, as publicizing their identity might put them at risk.

13. Weapons of Mass Destruction: Non-proliferation and Disarmament

There is both scope and need to improve the current non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. The multilateral system contains vital tools to address weapons of mass destruction. These tools need to be sharpened and used to achieve workable solutions to today's challenges.

Among the ICM's recommendations on weapons of mass destruction are the following:

- **Ensure respect for the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguard system:** Member states should provide the resources necessary for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to discharge its responsibilities under the NPT in the fields of nuclear safeguards, safety, and security. The broader IAEA mandate includes, among other

areas, technical cooperation funded by voluntary contributions. Member states should consider including additional funding under the regular budget, in part to guarantee greater access to technical cooperation for developing countries.

- **Broaden nuclear discussions to include human rights and humanitarian issues:** Including human rights and humanitarian issues in the discussions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation can make them more inclusive by incorporating the views of those potentially most affected by nuclear weapons policies.
- **Fund the UN Institute for Disarmament Research through assessed contributions:** The UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has provided member states and the multilateral system with quality research. With sustainable and predictable funding, it would be better placed to carry out research pertaining to all member states and to civil society.
- **Reinstate the Department for Disarmament Affairs:** While there were good reasons to change the Department for Disarmament Affairs to the Office of Disarmament Affairs in 2007, many would admit it has lost some of its clout in the process. Disarmament remains a high priority and deserves a dedicated department.
- **Engage the Security Council in nuclear disarmament:** The secretary-general could encourage better use of multilateral institutions such as the Security Council to help resolve bilateral conflicts between nuclear-armed states. In June 1998, the Security Council took on this role by adopting Resolution 1172 condemning nuclear tests by India and Pakistan.

14. Global Pandemics and Global Public Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) remains the right organization to coordinate international policies and action in the area of global public health. But its operational capacity needs to be strengthened and complemented with new and existing partnerships, including with regional organizations and the private sector.

Similarly, the multilateral system's role in building the capacity of local and national health systems is vital, as many national health systems and local-level first responders lack the necessary response capacity and infrastructure to cope with health crises. At the national level, there is a need to implement comprehensive public health policies in line with the International Health Regulations. The multilateral system should support the development of these inclusive, inter-sectoral national health policies and systems, including by helping states implement the International Health Regulations.

Among the ICM's recommendations on global pandemics and global public health are the following:

- **Follow up on the High-Level Panel Report:** The secretary-general should follow up on the report of the High-Level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises by examining areas it leaves out, especially the specific challenges of delivering healthcare in situations of armed conflict. The secretary-general should make concrete recommendations for an interagency framework to define strategies and policies to address these challenges.
- **Strengthen accountability in the delivery of public health:** Accountability could be improved by more effectively using human rights instruments, holding citizens' hearings at the national and international levels, and giving a greater role to parliaments and parliamentarians. Furthermore, mechanisms are needed to hear local community voices when carrying out national and global responses, including to pandemics.
- **Convene a global health summit in 2018:** The secretary-general should convene an inter-ministerial forum for addressing the future of the global health architecture, with a particular focus on issues of finance and accountability.
- **Strengthen partnerships with the private sector:** There is great potential for public-private partnerships in health. These could include partnerships in research and development, such as of vaccinations, and with the transportation, airline, tourism, and insurance industries. To improve the existing

model for partnerships, agencies must devise an incentive-driven approach.

- **Build the capacity of national healthcare systems:** Member states and the UN system must work together to build robust national healthcare systems and promote better implementation of the International Health Regulations as a way to prevent health crises, including pandemics.
- **Reaffirm protection of patients and health professionals:** Increasing attacks on medical facilities in situations of armed conflict are clear violations of international humanitarian law. It is essential to more effectively protect healthcare workers in dangerous environments. At a minimum, member states should follow the example of the Hippocratic oath and "do no harm."
- **Consider increasing assessed contributions:** The lack of assessed contributions to UN agencies dealing with humanitarian and health crises hampers their ability to meet their mandate. The High-Level Panel's recommendation to increase assessed contributions to the World Health Organization by 10 percent should be given due consideration.

15. Communication Strategy for the UN Multilateral System

Seventy years after its inception, the UN continues to build upon its record of achievements, from the adoption of the historic 2030 Agenda to its spearheading of the Paris Agreement. It also has a strong and universal brand. Yet in many parts of the world, the UN's relevance and preeminence as the epicenter of global governance is taken for granted or even dismissed. It is often viewed not as a solution but as part of the problem, particularly in the domain of peace and security. The UN's positive achievements in the pillars of human rights and development are elements of a story that has not been adequately told. Too often, the UN is not getting its message across.

Among the ICM's recommendations on a communication strategy for the UN are the following:

- **Create a centralized website for integrated communication strategies:** In order to eliminate

communication silos and harmonize media cultures among UN agencies, the UN Department of Public Information should create a centralized UN website for information dissemination. Creating a pool of website- and content-development resources that are accessible to all agencies will make the UN system's messaging more efficient and coherent. Furthermore, having all UN agencies collaborate under one overarching communication strategy will prevent compartmentalization of UN messaging and help shift from process-driven to content-driven dissemination of information.

- **Simplify communications and reduce jargon:** The UN should aim to demystify complex topics by providing context to its audience. As process often dictates outcome at the UN, it is essential that the UN engage in a kind of explanatory journalism to help news consumers better understand UN processes. Furthermore, all communications should limit the amount of unnecessary jargon and acronyms in order to communicate in a more straightforward way.
- **Harness the power of social media:** The UN's communication mechanisms should harness the power of social media to maximize projection and impact.

All UN agencies, as well as the secretary-general, should strive to maintain active social media accounts, including on Twitter. Furthermore, the UN should increase its use of and reliance on podcasts, which are becoming an increasingly popular method of information dissemination.

- **Devise a "listening" body:** The UN should devise a unit to monitor and record feedback from individuals at the receiving end of UN programs. Such a unit could promote inclusivity and transparency by informing headquarters of discussions taking place on the ground. This would also enable the UN to better measure its impact.
- **Prioritize quality over quantity:** The UN should ensure constructive rather than spectacular stories are being told by involving civil society and web or media designers in the early stages of project development and negotiations. Furthermore, the UN should improve its accessibility to media, possibly inviting press officers on UN field visits and granting them access to cover stories in the field. This would help ensure the focus is not only on immediate headlines but also on quieter stories whose impact and potential are no less critical.

Conclusion: Toward a New “Agenda for Peace”

The past year has witnessed a number of multilateral triumphs. These successes point the way forward. Flawed as it may be, the multilateral system still has the capacity to deliver. In a world of complex and interlinked challenges, cooperation between states is more needed than ever before.

In many parts of the world, states are under stress. Pressure is coming from both external factors and internal vulnerabilities. Universal values are under siege or are being sacrificed in the pursuit of narrow self-interest. Challenges such as human displacement, terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity, and pandemics know no borders.

Too many states and peoples respond to these problems by turning inward, building barriers instead of bridges, and stifling dissent. Or they strike out with displays of violence. Dialogue is being replaced by belligerent monologues. Intolerance is on the rise. Mistrust within and among nations is increasing. Therefore, there is an urgent need for

states to work together to rebuild trust, identify common interests, and enable collective action to address the challenges of our times.

Many of the preceding recommendations are directed at member states or various parts of the UN system. But it is important to ask: What should be the top priority for the new secretary-general as she or he takes office in January 2017?

The past year has seen a wide range of specific recommendations made in the spirit of UN reform. The ICM has sought to complement these many official processes. The aim has been to help policy-makers pull together reform efforts across the three pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, development, and human rights. Indeed, either the UN and member states pull together, or we risk that the international system falls apart.

Among the many priorities for the next UN secretary-general, there is one that demands particular attention: delivering on the promises of the recent



Human Rights Council discusses use of sport and Olympic ideal during its thirty-second session, Geneva, Switzerland, June 29, 2016. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré.

landmark global frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development. But how?

The preamble of the 2030 Agenda states that, as a plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity, the agenda should seek to “strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.” The new secretary-general should seize the opportunity to articulate a practical and unifying vision of what this could look like.

The year 2017 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s seminal report “An Agenda for Peace,” which served to frame UN approaches to peace and security for a generation. It is time for a “New Agenda for Peace.” This new agenda can bring together the wealth of recent reform initiatives and diplomatic achievements into a single strategic vision and plan of action.

Investing in prevention should be at the heart of this vision. Indeed, prevention is the theme that has

been heard most frequently during the ICM consultative process. The challenge is to put prevention into practice. Or looked at another way, we need to make, build, and sustain peace. This is particularly urgent for the most vulnerable groups within societies and for the least resilient states. But it is also a challenge for the international community as a whole, since we all face risks that transcend borders.

The identical resolutions on the UN peacebuilding architecture passed by the Security Council and the General Assembly in April 2016—the “sustaining peace resolutions”—demonstrate a commitment from member states to work toward that end. But it will take accompanying leadership by the next secretary-general, in partnership with member states and civil society, to see that this commitment is effectively reflected in the work of the UN. Providing this leadership and vision should be the next secretary-general’s top priority.



Annex 1: ICM Personnel

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HE Ms. Hannah Tetteh, *Ghana*
HE Mr. José Manuel Ramos-Horta, *Timor-Leste*
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Youssef Mahmoud, Senior Adviser

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Hillary Saviello, Assistant Web Editor

Annex 2: ICM Issue Areas

The Independent Commission on Multilateralism analyzed the multilateral system through the lens of the following sixteen issue areas:

1. New Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities for the Multilateral System
2. Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance in Challenging Environments
3. Terrorism, Including Issues Related to Ideology, Identity Politics, and Organized Crime
4. Fragile States and Fragile Cities
5. Women, Peace, and Security
6. Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Migration
7. The Impact of New Technologies on Peace, Security, and Development
8. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Addressing Climate Change
9. The Relationship between the UN and Regional Organizations, Civil Society, NGOs, and the Private Sector
10. Justice, Human Rights, and the International Legal System
11. Humanitarian Engagements
12. Weapons of Mass Destruction, Non-proliferation, and Disarmament
13. Global Pandemics and Global Public Health
14. Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Global Youth
15. Communication Strategy for the UN Multilateral System
16. Armed Conflict: Mediation, Conciliation, and Peacekeeping

Annex 3: ICM Activities

Launches

September 22, 2014

Launch at IPI Headquarters in New York, NY

November 25, 2014

Launch at the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs in Vienna, Austria

November 27, 2014

Launch at Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland

January 29, 2015

National Launch Event at the Department of Foreign Trade and International Affairs in Ottawa, Canada

Outreach Visits

April 27-29, 2015

Outreach Visit to Madrid, Spain

July 16, 2015

Outreach Visit to Rome, Italy

October 4-5, 2015

Outreach Visit to Montevideo, Uruguay

October 6-9, 2015

Outreach Visit to Brasília and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

November 25-27, 2015

Outreach Visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

December 7, 2015

Outreach Visit to New Delhi, India
Lecture by Hardeep Puri on "UN at 70: Relevance of India and the World" at the Kota House

January 13, 2016

Outreach Visit to Berlin, Germany

January 14, 2016

Outreach Visit to Copenhagen, Denmark

Briefings

February 9, 2015

Regional Group Briefing: Latin America and Caribbean Group

February 10, 2015

Regional Group Briefing: Asia-Pacific Group

February 17, 2015

Regional Group Briefing: Eastern European Group

February 19, 2015

Regional Group Briefing: Western European and Others Group

February 26, 2015

Regional Group Briefing: African Group

April 16, 2015

Briefing for senior Canadian public service executives at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations

June 25, 2015

Civil Society Briefing

Retreats

February 20-22, 2015

New Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities for the Multilateral System (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

March 13-15, 2015

Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance in Challenging Environments (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

April 10-11, 2015

Terrorism, Including Issues Related to Ideology, Identity Politics, and Organized Crime (Asia Society, NY)

May 8–9, 2015

Fragile States and Fragile Cities (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

June 19–20, 2015

Women, Peace, and Security (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

July 20–11, 2015

Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Migration (Greentree Estate, Manhasset NY)

October 23–24, 2015

The Impact of New Technologies on Peace, Security, and Development (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

November 12–13, 2015

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Addressing Climate Change (IPI, NY)

November 20–21, 2015

The Relationship between the UN and Regional Organizations, Civil Society, NGOs, and the Private Sector (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

December 11–12, 2015

Justice, Human Rights, and the International Legal System (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

January 14–15, 2016

Humanitarian Engagements (IPI, NY)

February 4–5, 2016

Weapons of Mass Destruction, Non-proliferation, and Disarmament (Graduate Institute, Geneva)

February 8–9, 2016

Global Pandemics and Global Public Health (Graduate Institute, Geneva)

February 25–26, 2016

Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Global Youth (Harvard Club, New York; IPI NY)

March 10–11, 2016

Communication Strategy for the UN Multilateral System (IPI, NY)

March 22–23, 2016

Armed Conflict: Mediation, Conciliation, and Peacekeeping (Greentree Estate, Manhasset, NY)

Public Consultations

November 4, 2015

Women, Peace, and Security

November 18, 2015

Social Inclusion, Political Participation, and Effective Governance in Challenging Environments

Terrorism, Including Issues Related to Ideology, Identity Politics, and Organized Crime

December 16, 2015

Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Migration

Fragile States and Fragile Cities

March 16, 2016

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Addressing Climate Change

The Relationship between the UN and Regional Organizations, Civil Society, NGOs, and the Private Sector

May 12, 2016

The Impact of New Technologies on Peace, Security, and Development

May 20, 2016

Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Global Youth

May 26, 2016

Armed Conflict: Mediation, Conciliation, and Peacekeeping

June 3, 2016

Humanitarian Engagements

June 6, 2016

Global Pandemics and Global Public Health

June 8, 2016

Weapons of Mass Destruction, Non-proliferation, and Disarmament

June 14, 2016

Justice, Human Rights, and the International Legal System

Annex 4: ICM Statistical Profile

Participation at the 16 ICM Retreats

Total participants: 342

Permanent representatives, deputy permanent representatives, and government officials: 150

Academia: 46 representatives

United Nations: 54 representatives

NGOs and research institutes: 92 representatives

Participation at the 14 ICM Public Consultations

Total participants (in person and online): 612

Member states: 141 representatives

NGOs, foundations, and civil society:
214 representatives

UN system, including the Secretariat and agencies:
171 representatives

International and multilateral organizations:
22 representatives

Media: 19 representatives

Academia: 43 representatives

Participation at the UN Regional Group Outreach Meetings

Total participants: 112

Asia-Pacific Group: 25 representatives

Latin America and Caribbean Group:
19 representatives

Eastern European Group: 20 representatives

Western European and Others Group:
22 representatives

African Group: 26 representatives

Participation at the Civil Society/NGO Outreach Meeting

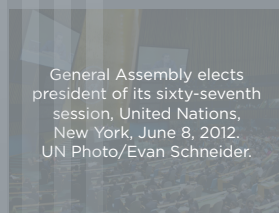
50 organizations and academic institutions

Online Outreach Statistics

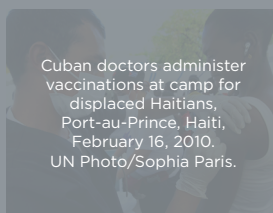
Total visits to ICM papers on website
(as of August 2016): 27,960

Engagement in Facebook Live youth consultation
(as of August 2016): 56,500 people connected to IPI on Facebook reached; 117,700 additional Facebook users reached; 12,283 views of video; 508 reactions, comments, and shares

Cover Photos



General Assembly elects president of its sixty-seventh session, United Nations, New York, June 8, 2012. UN Photo/Evan Schneider.



Cuban doctors administer vaccinations at camp for displaced Haitians, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, February 16, 2010. UN Photo/Sophia Paris.



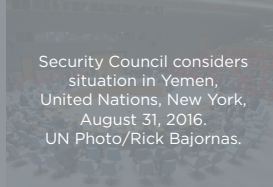
Human Rights Council discusses use of sport and Olympic ideal during its thirty-second session, Geneva, Switzerland, June 29, 2016. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré.



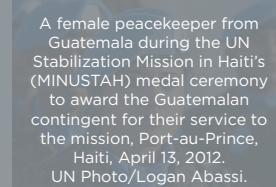
Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issues a statement on the terrorist attack at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, United Nations, New York, September 22, 2013. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas.



iStock Photo/insagostudio.



Security Council considers situation in Yemen, United Nations, New York, August 31, 2016. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas.



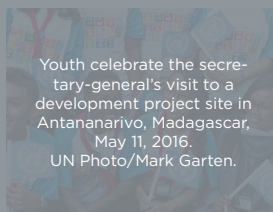
A female peacekeeper from Guatemala during the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti's (MINUSTAH) medal ceremony to award the Guatemalan contingent for their service to the mission, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, April 13, 2012. UN Photo/Logan Abassi.



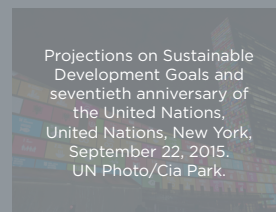
Indian peacekeepers with the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) stand guard over Congolese towns at center of conflict, Bunagana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, May 23, 2012. UN Photo/Sylvain Liechti.



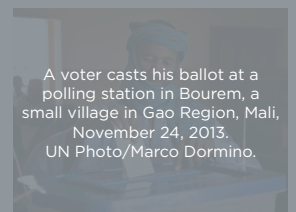
Urbanization in Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 14, 2010. UN Photo/Kibae Park.



Youth celebrate the secretary-general's visit to a development project site in Antananarivo, Madagascar, May 11, 2016. UN Photo/Mark Garten.



Projections on Sustainable Development Goals and seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, United Nations, New York, September 22, 2015. UN Photo/Cia Park.



A voter casts his ballot at a polling station in Bourem, a small village in Gao Region, Mali, November 24, 2013. UN Photo/Marco Dormino.



Thousands displaced by floods and conflict near Jowhar, Somalia, November 12, 2013. UN Photo/Tobin Jones.



A candlelight vigil for victims of the terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, and Baghdad. UCI/Steve Zylius.



World Food Programme distributes rations to flood-affected in Quetta, Pakistan, September 30, 2010. UN Photo/WFP/Amjad Jamal.



iStock Photo/ktsimage.

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777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
USA
TEL +1-212 687-4300
FAX +1-212 983-8246

Freyung 3, 1010
Vienna, Austria
TEL +43-1-533-8881
FAX +43-1-533-8881-11

51-52 Harbour House
Bahrain Financial Harbour
P.O. Box 1467
Manama, Bahrain
TEL +973-1721-1344

www.ipinst.org

www.theglobalobservatory.org