VISION OF THE UN PEACE AND SECURITY PILLAR

A unified peace and security pillar

The UN peace and security pillar is at the heart of the Charter's commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Seven decades after the founding of the UN, that goal remains as relevant and urgent as ever. Today's conflicts cause immense human suffering; they are more complex and more difficult to resolve than at any other time in human history. A surge in violent conflict in recent years has drastically increased human casualties, displacement, and humanitarian needs, often reversing hard-fought political, human rights and development gains and putting the Sustainable Development Goals at risk.[1] Moreover, the geopolitical context has become less conducive to the settlement of disputes, as deep divisions amongst major powers have led to paralysis on catastrophic wars and contributed to a steadily declining faith in multilateralism.[2] What the Secretary-General has termed a global "trust deficit disorder" points to challenges to our collective ability to manage today's risks.[3]

This rapidly shifting global landscape prompted the Secretary-General to lead a series of inter-related reforms, including a restructuring of the peace and security pillar. This was designed to make the pillar more coherent, pragmatic, nimble and effective, capable of collaboration with partners across the UN system and outside it to prevent violent conflict. It brought together the core UN peace and security capacities around a single political-operational structure with regional responsibilities and facilitated the integration of peacebuilding across the pillar.

Within the pillar, the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Peace Operations (DPO) share common goals: to prevent violent conflict and its negative impacts; to contribute to its transformation and resolution; and to help build strong, inclusive and resilient societies that will deepen peace outcomes for generations to come. While the departments retain discrete mandates, plans, and sources of funding[4] the pillar draws on a range of tools and resources that are employed flexibly in mission and non-mission settings. Through political expertise, technical capacities, and a wide array of advisory and specialized support, we are focused on maximising our impact in the field.

A renewed commitment to prevention and sustaining peace

Today, as a result of its restructuring, the peace and security pillar can better fulfil its central role in helping to prevent violent conflict and reduce large-scale human suffering.

First, the pillar has an overriding focus on effective conflict prevention and sustaining peace. This is bolstered by the Secretary-General's call for a "surge in diplomacy for peace." With early warning capacities spread globally and a breadth of partners, the pillar is able to analyse and respond quickly to the risks of outbreak or escalation of conflicts, bringing its full range of political, technical, and programmatic capacities to bear.

Second, a unified pillar is already enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of its field presences – from peacekeeping to special political missions – placing political solutions at the

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[1] United Nations and World Bank, Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict, 2018; UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016).

[2] International Crisis Group, Seven Opportunities for the UN in 2019-2020, 2019.

[3] UN Secretary General, Address to the General Assembly, 2018.

[4] DPPA has developed a 2020-2022 Strategic Plan, while DPO's forward work is guided by the Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

heart of its work. The reformed single shared political-operational structure, now guided by regional approaches that draw on the various resources of the UN, is supported by a variety of shared services and is able to develop and deploy flexible responses tailored to the needs of each context. The Action for Peacekeeping initiative is a crucial aspect of this, pushing the UN and its partners to tangibly improve the impact of peacekeeping operations. In addition, strengthened support to our field presences and delegated authority is bringing decision-making closer to the point of delivery.

Third, we are pursuing a "whole of pillar" approach to our work, with a particular emphasis on supporting mission transitions in settings where the UN is undergoing a significant reconfiguration, and providing support to UN presences in the field through a range of capacities such as electoral assistance, and mediation, rule of law and peacebuilding support. Across the pillar, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda retains a central place; we are determined to ensure that a gender perspective and women's participation, protection and rights are reflected in all our work. We equally emphasize the inclusion of youth – recognizing the growing importance of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda – and other marginalized groups.

Finally, we are committed to the Secretary-General's vision of alignment between peace and security, human rights, and development. The new structure and capacities allow us to strengthen our ties to these other pillars, especially via the peacebuilding work of the Organization, and to connect more deeply with the reformed Resident Coordinator system as well.

Our shared priorities

Our ability to achieve these goals will be strengthened by deepening our commitment to a number of shared priorities. These include:

- *Politics:* We work towards the promotion of political solutions to conflicts, which are a prerequisite to a sustainable peace.

- *People*: We work to engage societies beyond political elites and ground our action in a deep knowledge of socio-economic, environmental, and structural aspects of the communities and peoples we serve.

- *Impact*: We support effective and efficient field presences, working to maximize their impact and deliver positive change on the ground.

- *Partnerships:* We engage in partnerships across the United Nations system, with member states, and with international, regional, sub-regional, and local institutions and actors.

- *Innovation*: We prioritize innovation--in our approach, our partnerships, and in integrating new technologies—to enhance our work, while also committing to better understanding and managing the new risks posed by technological advancements.

- *Learning*: Our most crucial resource is our staff, who carry the vision into action. We will rely on and invest in them to build a culture of mutual learning, creativity, growth, and ownership.