



SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

DOHA REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON SUSTAINING PEACE

DOHA, STATE OF QATAR

18-19 JANUARY 2018

BACKGROUND

On 18 -19 January 2018, in Doha, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, under the auspices of H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly, convened a regional dialogue for the purpose of encouraging fresh reflection on what sustaining peace means at the regional level. The dialogue took place in the lead-up to the High-level Meeting on *Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace*, to be convened in April 2018 in New York, (as per General Assembly and Security Council parallel resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282), and sought to elicit and offer concrete local and regional views that could enrich the debates during the High-level meeting.

The specific objectives of the dialogue were to: (1) to reach a mutual understanding among U.N. Member States, regional organizations, civil organizations and the private sector on the relationship between sustainable development, conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and human rights; (2) propose a menu of strategic options to represent local and regional views on sustaining peace in current UN discussions on sustaining peace; (3) identify issues related to local and regional capacity; and (4) discuss options to harness the potential negative effects of technology and innovation and in support of sustaining peace.

The two-day regional dialogue included: a High-level segment, a key note speech; and thematic interactive panels covering several dimensions of sustaining peace: (1) setting the scene; (2) regional platforms and processes for sustaining peace; (3) linkages between the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and sustaining peace; (4) sustaining peace and the prevention of conflict; (5) mediation for peace: a key tool for prevention and peacemaking; (6) emerging threats: the dark side of innovation; and (7) financing the peace. The final session of the workshop included summaries of key points made during the seven sessions, and closing remarks by the Chair.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Universal concept

1. The Regional dialogue recognized sustaining peace as a Charter responsibility of the entire United Nations system and more integrated, strategic and coherent approaches to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict are urgently needed. The participants had an in-depth discussion on the concept of sustaining peace, and agreed the resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture call for a broader concept than peacebuilding, reaching across the conflict continuum, peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian

action. However, sustaining peace could be better defined through a focus on implementation at local and national levels.

2. The Regional dialogue emphasized that sustaining peace is a universal concept. Everyone, not just in conflict-affected countries, must have the ability to live peaceful lives without insecurity and violence. Ultimately, every country in the world is at risk of violent conflict, with many facing insecurity situations. Thus, all countries should aim at building resilient societies and promoting key issues like slashing corruption, ensuring political, social and economic inclusiveness, promoting human rights, providing access to security and justice, and ensuring accountability to guarantee sustainable peace.
3. Sustaining peace should not be seen as the securitization of development or an infringement on sovereignty. It should be seen as an attempt to ensure the multilateral system is able to support countries better sustain peace. Depending on their national context, some countries might need different support from the multilateral system. Those on the sharp-end of current conflicts or crises might need special and concerted action.
4. There is a need to address great power rivalry at the global and regional level which is fueling conflict, through opening up new avenues for dialogue in innovative ways.

National Ownership

5. Sustaining peace is the primary responsibility of Member States and is built upon national ownership and inclusivity. The meeting also made a case for a pragmatic approach to enhancing understanding of sustaining peace at national and local levels, for example through its inclusion in national plans of action for the SDGs. In this regard, civil society, women and youth are a crucial ally in sustaining peace and should be seen as partners.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

6. Sustainable, inclusive development is the paramount goal of the work of the United Nations in support of Member States. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is also the best defense against violent conflict and instability, as the international community has committed to leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first. The 2030 agenda commitment to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies in SDG 16 and across other 7 SDGs, is truly transformative and provides the international community with a universally agreed vision to address the complex roots that underpin today's crises. Moreover, the commitment to building peaceful, just and inclusive societies within the 2030 agenda underpins the Sustaining Peace resolutions and is a vital foundational aspect.
7. The Regional Dialogue highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace, particularly through an investment in prevention and addressing the root causes of conflict. There should not be competition between peace and development for resources, rather, the meeting reiterated that development, peace and security and human rights are **interlinked and mutually reinforcing** goals of the United Nations (e.g., peace created the conditions for development to flourish, and development ensures that peace is sustainable and just). The UN-World Bank joint study, *Pathways for Peace*, makes a strong case for the value of investing in prevention and how development, with a prevention-based approach, can contribute to sustaining

peace. The report points out that, even with cautious estimates, more investment in conflict prevention could save the international community anything from \$5 billion to \$70 billion per year for the affected country and the international community combined. The benefits would be even more significant at the national level, as prevention could save countries over \$34 billion per year in losses.

8. The comprehensive commitment to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies in the 2030 agenda accurately reflects the reality that a number of conflicts today are not about poverty and inequality – but instead about exclusion from access to power, human rights abuses, absence of inclusive institutions, and lack of access to justice – concepts which are all prominent in the framework. Fulfilling these obligations are thus vital if states are to sustain Peace and prevent violent conflict.
9. As human rights law provides a framework for conflict prevention and sustaining peace, then efforts by States, supported through the concluding observations of treaty bodies and by UN agencies working on the ground, can address potential violations and help to reduce the risk of conflict. This applies as much to social and economic development issues as it does for civil and political rights issues. The example of Tunisia teaches us that whilst many of the human development assessments in the 2000s were indicating positive trends in the country, the treaty bodies and other human rights assessments were showing levels of social and economic exclusion as well as political repression which should have been the early warning signs of what was to come.
10. Participants noted that people want to be included in decision-making and want equitable opportunities. The protection of women’s rights, youth rights, and minority rights are important factors for inclusive societies. Inclusion is a crucial element for sustaining peace and preventing conflict. The voice of young people and women as peacebuilders needs to be brought in and listened to in particular.

Human Rights

11. There is no need to ‘reinvent the wheel’ and devise some new ‘frameworks to sustain peace’. Instead, it would make sense to better use the prevention framework given to the international community by the founders of the UN: international human rights law and its mechanisms that the Member States have tirelessly developed over the years. There is a need to make sure that human rights are at the core of the approach from start to finish, and not only once the conflict has ended or development has been achieved.
12. Peace and security cannot be achieved without human rights: “we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed.”
13. HR underpins both SDGs and the sustaining peace agenda. If we follow the logic of our assertion that human rights are inherently about preventing conflict and crisis, then the rights-based development which has been the norm for the past 20 years in the UN system, is really about injecting prevention into sustainable development. And if we say that you can’t have peace without development, then by extension adopting a human rights-based approach to sustaining peace is also about injecting prevention into sustaining peace, and henceforth a guarantee to sustain peace.

Emerging threats

14. Participants noted that information and exponential technologies are increasingly transforming international coexistence by generating both risks in terms of security, defense and crime capable of creating strong tensions and even destabilization in international relations. However, they also fuel innovation and development, in certain instances representing opportunities for significant economic growth and equitable development that can reinforce stability.
15. It was pointed out that state sponsored cyber-attacks are a threat to international peace and security. Resorting to invasive action without international sanction, ignoring the principle of settling disputes peacefully, disrespecting the borders or the laws and norms established by states and civil society – each can, have an immense impact on peace.
16. Overall participants noted emerging opportunities for the United Nations when addressing fundamental security and legal challenges to the UN's sustaining peace effort stemming from innovations in the areas of cyber-security and artificial intelligence. Attention should be given to raising greater awareness, knowledge, and understanding across political leaders in UN Member States – as well as within the Security Council and General Assembly – about the need to better equip the international community with additional tools to prevent, mitigate, and manage risks to international security posed by innovations in science and technology.
17. The establishment of a new stand-by roster of cyber-security and cyber-crime experts to assist countries in the Global South in developing critical cybersecurity and cybercrime fighting capabilities by pulling information and encouraging joint analysis and coordination, was suggested.
18. To ensure that new technologies (such as lethal autonomous weapons, artificial intelligence, and digital communications) are developed, transferred and used in line with international law was also advocated. Weapons are instrumental in contributing to violations of most human rights in conflict and non-conflict situations.
19. Finally, it was also noted that as scientific and technological development surge ahead, constant advances in artificial intelligence, automation, among others, seem to challenge assumptions about what it means to be human.

Financing the peace

20. The Regional Dialogue also highlighted the importance of ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding, including through the exploration of innovative financing solutions, as well as options for assessed and voluntary funding as requested by the resolutions. The Peacebuilding Fund is a central component of the Secretary-General's vision of prevention, a driver for coherence in peacebuilding activities and a key tool in the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office as a "hinge" connecting different parts of the UN system.
21. The vital thing is also to design funding mechanisms to focus on addressing drivers of conflict and monitor their success in doing so, as well as to make financial mechanisms accessible to support the inclusive vision underpinning 'sustaining peace'.

Focus on regional and sub-regional organizations

22. The importance of regional and sub-regional organizations in efforts to sustain peace was highlighted (African Union and ECOWAS were considered great examples). They play a key role in sustaining peace; through preventive diplomacy, confidence-building and mediation efforts, preventing violent extremism, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Regional partners share knowledge, analytical capacity and strong local networks. There should be a focus on regular dialogue, enhanced information-sharing, improved coordination and joint approaches and activities.

Middle East

23. The region is host to conflicts and occupation. Conflicts in the region are composed of “layers of conflict”, superimposed one upon the other, involving geopolitical interests, escalating regional and major power rivalries, fragmentation and proliferation of non-state actors/armed groups, but also includes outside involvement, which complicates mediation and efforts to reach comprehensive and inclusive peace settlements.
24. Counterterrorism has come to dominate foreign policy in theory and in practice. It has given license to governments to first label their armed opponents as terrorist and then treat them as such. At times this has led to the neglect of efforts to address the complex drivers of conflict effectively. Furthermore, most current counter-terrorism policies and strategies have no longer term vision on how to build peace, or how actions/approaches are contributing to the idea of sustaining peace.
25. Given the increasing number of conflicts the region suffers from, it is time for the Arab world to start thinking and acting as a region. The region’s problems reflect the lack of sustained investment in structural prevention. Participants noted that they’ve seen early-warning signs in almost every case, but, as a region and as an international community, have not had the tools to prevent the crises escalating. Corruption, injustice and exclusionary government policies are quite often the root causes for conflict.
26. Institutional reform was noted as the most vital priority for prevention in the region. Institutions - from those dealing with human rights, to justice, to security, to employment and livelihoods – should be open, transparent, and responsive to citizen’s needs. In some instances, institutions might need to be completely reinvented.
27. The region has an urgent need for a long-term rights-based sustainable development strategy: national and regional strategies should be contextually-relevant but founded in the commitments to build peace, provide access to justice, and promote inclusive, accountable, and transparent institutions made in the 2030 agenda.
28. Access to justice was viewed a key challenge and supporting the process of building accountable, legitimate institutions that respect human rights as a key element of conflict prevention and sustaining peace. Access to justice, and legitimate avenues to address grievances is a fundamental part of an inclusive society, and the absence of these dynamics fuels grievances and can lead to conflict at a number of different levels. Moreover, it is necessary to challenge power and justice

structures that reinforce social, political and economic injustices – such as, providing access to justice for marginalized groups, including women and ethnic minorities.

29. The region lacks dedicated investment in mediation, training of diplomats who can manage negotiations, and institutions for handling dialogue and mediation efforts effectively – whether unilaterally or through partnerships with regional and international organizations or with states that have established track records in mediation. Enhancing capacity for mediation should include local actors, women and youth. Greater engagement in mediation by regional organizations is needed as well.
 - I. There is a clear connection between accountability and sustainability of peace efforts. There are links between impunity and resurgence of crisis and violence. Accountability mechanisms, including as part of transitional justice processes, play an important role in providing victims and affected communities with opportunities to reclaim a space in society.

Looking ahead

30. The Regional Dialogue looked forward to the Secretary-General's forthcoming report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace and the upcoming High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace to be convened by the President of the General Assembly on 24-25 April 2018. Participants highlighted the need to take a longer-term view of the High-level Meeting and sustaining peace for the United Nations. There was a call for an outcome from the High-level Meeting that ensures continued interaction between the UN system, Member States, civil society and private sector on sustaining peace.
31. The State of Qatar proposed to hold and host a **global conference on preventive diplomacy** to sort out outstanding issues and usher in permanent peace and stability across the region. Qatar's willingness to host such an event is out of its belief in the importance of the firm role that preventive diplomacy plays as a main pillar in the vision of the UN Secretary-General and Doha's sense of responsibility to support the Secretary-General's reform and to empower the UN system to prevent conflict and to sustain peace.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

H.E. Mr. Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, noted that the global community is facing unprecedented threats, which test the United Nations ability to achieving peace in the world. In order to support the Secretary-General's reform efforts, Qatar proposes to host a global conference on preventive diplomacy.

His Excellency noted that peace is much more than the absence of conflict. It is about investing in structural prevention and institutional reform. We need institutions - from those dealing with rule of law, human rights, corruption, addressing inequalities, infrastructure, education, to employment – to be open and transparent. His Excellency also stated that we should seek out inclusive solutions to conflict drivers. Corruption, injustice and exclusionary government policies are quite often the root causes for a conflict. When justice is not met the results are conflict and instability. Peace is only achieved with justice and balance in meeting the interests of different countries, regardless of the size of their wealth or their

geographical area. Moreover, peace will not be achieved if there is greed and if international legitimacy is not met.

Moreover, His Excellency observed that it is extremely important to observe freedom of speech, the right to participate in decision making, and handling rising tensions that often are a result of conflicts that haven't been fairly settled - resorting to repression and forceful and heavily armed responses without a wider peace strategy make the situation worst. Regional organizations should be the platform in which constructive ways of avoiding conflict – and if violence has taken its hold – should be discussed, as affirmed in the UN Charter.

His Excellency noted that Qatar has made a case for the urgency and priority of human development, not only as a moral good in itself, but as a fundamental precondition of peace, security and tolerance. Education is a key tool in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. This is why Qatar has a commitment to educate seven million children and provide economic empowerment to nearly a half million young men and women in the region. The importance of mediation at the national, regional and international levels was stressed out and noted that the State of Qatar has focused on mediation as a key instrument for achieving peace and resolving disputes, which has enabled it to resolve many conflicts in the region.

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly (PGA), noted that conflict is not always linear, with a clear beginning, middle and end. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a new approach to peace that takes into account at all stages of the conflict cycle. He noted that other factors, such as terrorism, growing internal violence, new technology and climate change, have transformed the nature of conflict.

The President stressed that action is needed when there are warning signs of conflict, when political tensions are on the rise, when human rights are being violated, when there is some hope for peace, amid conflict, when warring parties show any kind of willingness to talk, when a peace deal has been signed, when infrastructure needs to be rebuilt, and when a society is trying to patch itself back together. “Sometimes we separate these into stages of prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. Other times we refer to them all as the peace continuum. But the magic of ‘Sustaining Peace’ is that all of them are brought together, under one umbrella, and one new approach,” he said.

The President noted that at the moment, UN resources for peace are concentrated on military peacekeeping missions, and there is a chronic shortfall of funding to build or preserve peace, and this affects activities for conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. He expressed hope that the high-level meeting in April can provide a platform for discussions on this matter, as leaders from all over the world will voice their commitment to making financing for Sustaining Peace stronger, and more predictable. The President also stressed that within the UN system, silos between humanitarian and development work must be torn down, and there is a need for partnerships between the UN and other actors, including civil society, academia, regional and sub-regional organizations, regional development banks, and international financial institutions.

Ms. Ana Maria Menéndez, Under-Secretary-General and Secretary-General’s Senior Adviser on Policy, stressed that sustaining peace is not a task limited in time or limited to one set of actors, it is a “shared task and responsibility” of all of us and at all the time. She noted that gender-related issues should be considered in all discussion pertinent to sustaining peace. Women’s meaningful participation measurably strengthens

protection efforts and deepens the effectiveness of peacebuilding. Yet too little effort is made to support women's inclusion or their efforts. She stressed out the importance of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development as a road-map for the years ahead, and that prevention has been declared a priority for the UN. This includes not just the prevention of violent conflict, but the prevention of crises and human suffering, including through actions such as combatting climate change and ensuring disaster preparedness.

She noted that the Secretary-General report on progress made on the implementation of the resolutions on sustaining peace (Secretary-General Report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, to be released on 23 February 2018), will address progress made on operational and policy coherence within the UN but also look at issues of leadership, accountability and capacities as well as partnerships. It also presents options on increasing, restructuring and better prioritizing financing dedicated to UN peacebuilding activities. She highlighted the importance of regional partners in efforts to sustain peace and the critical contribution of women and youth as peacebuilders. She also noted the importance of International Financial Institutions, such as the World Bank and the regional Development Banks.

PANEL DISCUSSION SUMMARY

H.E. Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations in New York, chaired the regional dialogue. Ms. Sarah Cliffe; Director of the Center on International Cooperation at the New York University; Dr. Sultan Barakat, Director of the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies; Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, former UN Under-Secretary General, Chairman and Founder of the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development in Nigeria; and Dr. Brian Finlay, President and CEO of the Stimson Center, moderated the discussions.

The interactive panel discussions were held under Chatham House Rule; there is therefore no-attribution of comments and/or recommendations.

1. Setting the Scene Panel

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Juan Jose Gómez Camacho, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the UN, Chair Group of Friends on Sustaining Peace; Mr. Tegegnetwork Gettu, Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Mr. Tamrat Samuel, Assistant Secretary-General, Senior Coordinator for Peace and Security Reform of the UN Secretariat; and Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Former United Nations Under Secretary-General and Former Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

A debate on the concept of sustaining peace was an important theme of the discussion: speaker after speaker broadly affirmed the importance of sustaining peace. It was noted that its practical understanding and implementation should be a focus. Numerous participants noted the need to differentiate “peacebuilding” from “sustaining peace” – as sustaining peace is a broader concept. Sustaining peace should be an aspiration for all countries (as it would take away the suspicion this is an agenda to justify intervention), similar to the focus of SDG 16.

It was highlighted that sustainable peace has to be translated into actionable items that Member States and the UN can work with. A participant noted that a key challenge would be to translate these concepts into a reality for the different regions and countries. It was suggested that countries could develop national

plans for sustaining peace, along the lines of national plans for implementation of the SDGs. The centrality of national and inclusive ownership of sustaining peace was unequivocally stated.

Participants also heard from Assistant Secretary-General and Senior Coordinator for Peace and Security Reform of the UN Secretariat, Tamrat Samuel that the Secretary-General is working to improve the structure and operation of the peace and security pillar at the UN to better prevent and alleviate crises and develop a global response that addresses the root causes of conflict, and integrates peace, sustainable development, human rights, and humanitarian action in a holistic way.

A participant noted that World War II was a “War of Ideas”, and that today we are once again threatened by rising xenophobia, discrimination, and racism. Thus, creating a culture of peace means winning the “War of Ideas” in order to avoid a deterioration in global stability.

Military solutions alone, were noted, to be insufficient to sustain peace. Almost half of the conflict-specific items on the Security Council agenda can be considered cases of conflict relapse. Sustaining peace requires inclusive political processes, social and economic rights, attention to justice and accountability, reconciliation and a commitment to human rights to shape a fairer and more inclusive future. A participant noted that SCR 1325 addresses the changing nature of conflicts, highlights serious problems of justice and exclusion, and offers practical solutions to deal with fragile peace and recovery. This means promoting the human rights of women, addressing sexual violence and the underlying inequalities that render women and girls vulnerable. Post conflict recovery should be a period to transform societies towards greater inclusion and gender equality, and women’s participation is crucial to this process.

Without exception, participants acknowledged the critical role that development plays in sustaining peace. The 2030 agenda provides the tools to tackle poverty, inequality and other global challenges such climate change, food security, migration, reduce vulnerabilities and pursue peace, justice and equality. At the heart of the SDGs is their promise to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first, which ties it to sustaining peace. Moreover, it was pointed out that today’s prolonged crisis of forced displacement has become a crisis of education and employment, a health crisis and a crises of hopelessness as young girls are forced into early marriage and women are trafficked. However, the empowerment of women cannot be done without supporting men in the communities to understand the importance of protecting the rights and dignity of women and girls. The protection of these rights must be seen to be in the interest of the community as a whole.

It was noted that the Middle East is fraught with tensions and all of its conflicts are interlinked. Arab countries are in the midst of violent convulsions that are fundamentally reshaping the region. Revitalizing peace in the region is fundamental - in this the Arab world must start to think and act as a region and governments must work with civil society actors to map out new, inclusive political systems that revamp institutions and decentralize power structures, reinstate citizenship rights, uphold and cherish societal diversity, harness societal creativity, and address long-held grievances.

2. Platforms and Processes for Sustaining Peace

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High-Representative, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations; Mr. Mohamed Ali Alhakim, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); H.E. Ms. Hessa Al-Thani, Special Envoy of

the Arab League Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs; Mr. Tarik Yousef, Director, Brookings Doha Center; and Mr. George Abu Al Zulof, Head of the UN Training and Documentation Centre for South West Asia and the Arab region at OHCHR

It was pointed out that actors for sustaining peace and preventing conflict need to take into account the following:

- Sustaining peace entails building upon existing resilient peace capacities and exploring how these can be leveraged to support peaceful societies;
- Sustaining peace emphasizes inclusive dialogue, mediation, accountable institutions, good governance, access to justice, and gender equality;
- Sustaining peace encourages utilizing existing societal mechanisms and capacities to build resilience and drive positive peace;
- Protecting peace and resilience requires stimulating early action on prevention.
- The focus should be on the factors associated with positive, inclusive peace rather than solely on the causes that drive and sustain violent conflict.

Participants noted that the drivers of conflict in the MENA region are at two levels: at the local level – the issue of exclusion; and at the regional level – power politics. Conflicts in the region are composed of “layers of conflict” superimposed one upon the other. Although the MENA region is extremely integrated is also one of the most polarized regions of the world in terms of very strong political and ideological divisions among countries – compounded by inequality and lack of access to justice within countries. Respect for human rights was deemed essential for peace in the region. Participants noted that taking human rights seriously does not imply intervening in countries sovereignty, and that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the best tool available.

It was pointed out that human rights violations are often both a symptom and a driver of conflict. Preventing and addressing such violations is therefore a key integral part of the sustaining peace agenda.

The region was understood as suffering from a lack of effective and concrete regionally-designed and owned mechanisms for sustaining peace, like those under the umbrella of the Africa Union. In other parts of the world, the Pacific Island Forum, Organization of American States (OAS) and the High Commission for National Minorities within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have been engaged in sustaining peace.

Governmental and regional actors were considered central to prevention, particularly where it may involve direct intervention. Given their proximity to the countries in question, they have more credibility and a vested interest in avoiding outbreaks of violence. However, to be a positive actor for sustaining peace, governments in the region need to speak with one voice in favor of peace. Clear, united and constant engagement for peace is a sine qua non condition. A participant noted that regional interventions can also cause problems and is not always the solution.

A participant noted that the League of Arab States (LAS) within its 8-year long project on “Strengthening crisis response capacities of the League of Arab States”, with EU support, has reiterated its commitment to enhanced early warning and crisis management capacities, in particular through the following: (a) establishment of the LAS Crisis Response Centre; (b) enhancement of relevant technical knowledge and

skills of LAS staff; and (c) institutional dialogue and networking with relevant stakeholders. However, this Early Warning Center, must be supported and its capacities enhanced.

It was also stated that efforts should be made to enhance credible and effective partnerships between the UN and regional and sub-regional actors.

Existing formal non-UN mechanisms need much more visibility and should be able to reach out to different communities, social groups, youth and women. Such measures would give existing formal structures more legitimacy in the eyes of people and, more importantly, effectiveness. A participant noted that within traditional customs in the region there were conflict resolution mechanisms which disappeared or were supplemented by imported mechanisms and that instead of cooperating with local customs ended up competing with each other.

The UN and the LAS should encourage local peace initiatives or agents of peace similar to the role played by the professional syndicates and labor unions of Tunisia.

Local actors, CSOs, and private sector are extremely important, particularly at the local level. Several NGOs are working on peace or conflict prevention in the region with varied knowledge and capacities. As such there is a need to increase efforts to support CSOs, in particular those that support women and youth organizations that are capable of acting as actors for resilience, in part through civic education. Social movement are also important to ensure respect of the people's voice through genuine consultation and effective participation. Good governance and opening space for political debate are also essential for building a durable and just peace.

Regional commissions were considered to have the knowledge, technical know-how and network of experts to develop regional frameworks to addresses the challenges to peace and they play an important role in building resilience towards sustaining peace and preventing conflict. Their engagement with Member States and all groups within crisis situations, keep them above the fray of polarization, positioning them to fill gaps at the regional level and provide objective, impartial and evidence based technical assistance. Through their specialized inter-governmental bodies, they drive regional cooperation on priority issues. These inter-governmental bodies could be more actively geared towards sustaining peace.

It was pointed out that a number of UN Secretary-General's envoys are active in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Palestine and other crisis countries that strive to secure peace among divergent groups. These UN Special Envoys are supported by UN regional and country teams. However, it was stressed that frequently the UN is faced with competing peace initiatives which reduces the effectiveness of all peace processes.

3. Linkages with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Adikalie Foday Sumah, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations; Mr. Mohammed Ali Alhakim, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); Ms. Irene Khan, Director-General, International Development Law Organization (IDLO); H.E. Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Member of the Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation, Chair of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, former Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations; and Ms. Anna Paolini, Director, UNESCO Regional Office Doha.

The linkages with the 2030 agenda were throughout the dialogue discussed. Attention may however be drawn to the following salient points:

- If there is one overriding linkage between sustaining peace and the 2030 agenda, it is that the latter incorporates the concept of sustaining peace into the SDGs– especially in the form of SDG16. Moreover, the 2030 agenda was both a source of inspiration and a framework for the peace resolutions - there can be no peace without development, and no development without peace. The 2030 agenda is the best defense against violent conflict and instability.
- Sustaining peace breaks down the silo between peace and development – promoting the rule of law, access to justice, inclusive institutions not only for post-conflict situations, not only a preventive measure but a continuous, context specific endeavor that is relevant and essential at all stages - prevention, escalation and resolution of conflicts. The explicit recognition that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.
- Constitutional and legal reforms, effective judicial and administrative institutions are essential for addressing root causes and drivers of violent conflict: as part of preventive measures or peace deals – to help economic development, jobs and investment; to protect minorities’ rights and encourage inclusion; help balance competing interests; provide peaceful means of dispute resolution.
- Participants noted the economic dimension of sustaining peace– increased attention for conflict affected countries but the relevance of support to build capacity is often forgotten.
- It was noted that is a need for greater participation of women in the justice sector as it improves women’s access to justice. Justice by women improves justice for women. Women lawyers and judges may understand better the situation that women victims and petitioners face. Also, in traditional settings, women who are seeking justice are more comfortable dealing with other women as judges, lawyers and court officials, so they are more likely to approach the court. It was pointed out that in the Arab world there is great variance on women’s participation in the justice sector: from 4% in Palestine to 44% in Tunisia. The latest available comparative data (2010) show that at the magistrates’ levels there has been progress over time in Tunisia (44%), Morocco (26%) and Lebanon at 20% respectively.
- Sustaining peace requires coherence, sustained engagement, and coordination at the intergovernmental level between the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council, consistent with their respective mandates. The fragmentation of the United Nations, dividing the different pillars in “silos” must be overcome. In this regard, strong coordination, coherence and cooperation must also exist between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.
- The United Nations can play a role of facilitation, but peacebuilding depends on national ownership and leadership, shared by the Government and all other national stakeholders. Ownership must be inclusive and development strategies must be context specific.
- Sustaining peace also requires partnerships between the United Nations and other external stakeholders in supporting domestic stakeholders.

4. Sustaining Peace and the Prevention of Conflict

Panelists: Ms. Maha Yahya, Director Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Middle East Center; Dr. Majed Al-Ansari, Professor of Political Sociology at Qatar University; Mr. Yehia Khalil, Deputy Regional Director for GCC and Yemen, ICRC; Mr. Larry Attree, Head of Policy, Saferworld; and Prof. Erik Melander, Director, Uppsala Conflict Data Programme.

The session provided an in-depth opportunity to discuss best practices and approaches to conflict prevention in an era of renewed geopolitical division, and when the social contract between states and citizens have collapsed in several countries and the legitimacy of leaders has been challenged. The following is an illustration of the many observations and recommendations made.

Participants noted a number of challenges impacting on the UN and regional organizations ability to be effective in prevention and sustaining peace:

- *Geopolitical aggression and intransigence* whereby conflicts are becoming protracted by intense rivalries between global powers and regional powers (as in Syria and Yemen).
- *Labeling conflicts as counter-terror struggles* which is leading to neglect of the factors and actors driving conflict & the erosion of peacebuilding space.
- *Legacies of military intervention and regime change:* interventions to counter terror, save civilians or remove rogue regimes have failed to bring lasting stability or to defeat fundamentalist groups in case after case. This has brought deep distrust of interventionism on the one hand – but at the same time there are huge risks in simply giving up on supporting constructive peaceful change in the face of repression.
- *Panic over forced displacement*, with neighboring countries the hardest hit. Meanwhile, Western governments support border and security forces in transit countries to close their borders and shut the problem out. However, this approach is a long way from addressing the roots of the problem.
- *Underperforming humanitarianism*, the UN and others are exerting enormous efforts with inadequate resources to assist the victims of conflict. But the current aid system is not good enough yet at defending humanitarian values, working for prevention during crisis or empowering local actors to take the initiative.

Participants noted that there is a need for new ideas and initiatives not only on how to mediate conflict but also in terms of fixing the relationships between the parties that stand behind those who are fighting. Sustaining peace should also be a moment to reclaim the policy space that has been taken by framing conflicts as ‘terror’ threats and a ‘migration’ crisis which exacerbates the problem. In this regard, prevention and peacemaking tools represent important answers to these problems. At the same time, it was noted that the international community must not be satisfied with a technocratic approach focused only on building capacity. The core of the SDG agenda is a drive for peaceful change with more peaceful, just and inclusive societies helping to shape stronger and more inclusive institutions. Living up to the 2030 agenda requires supporting and engaging with agents for change – in and out of government, including women and youth.

In practice, this would mean:

- Need to localize peace initiatives – though national ownership was considered to be difficult in many countries in the MENA region, particularly when the governing elite is at the heart of the conflict. In these type of situation, it was noted that any kind of localization of initiatives will only reinforce local power structures, which might create challenges for refugee return and marginalization of communities.
- Build up conflict analyses rooted in *people's* priorities;
- Build up resilience by supporting local and cross border communities;
- Build up support for countries willing to support and develop their civil society and provide more support for countries that are trying to foster a social contract with their people (e.g. Iraq). However, it was noted that there is a closing space for civil societal dialogue across the MENA region – the space for people to come together is closing down, and this is particularly evident in countries such as Egypt. A participant noted that bridging the state and community institutions for resolving disputes is not easy as state institutions feel challenged and it is hard to work with community systems, often hardened by conflict or lack of confidence. However, engagement is crucial so that change can come from within and not be imposed.
- Work in solidarity with people to help them;
- Work to rebuild their lives and their institutions after the guns fall silent and be involved fully and meaningfully in peace and reconciliation processes so that they can influence and live with the peace settlements that emerge;
- Reducing and managing the sources of tension among different parties by fostering a relationship of trust is an important requirement for conflict prevention. However, there is a need to understand what trust really means and the type of measures that may have to be adopted. Participants stressed out that is an issue that requires time and space - “trust is not built in one day.”

Participants also highlighted that lack of decisive political leadership, to act early and commit to invest in risk analysis, to create political unity to prevent and not just manage crisis and to make successful conflict prevention visible, is absent in the MENA region (and other regions) and therefore is a challenge to conflict prevention.

Finally, it was concluded that there is a need to highlight and scale up successful initiatives, the so-called “islands of peace”; local mediation initiatives which have thrived in the absence of national direction. For example, in Lebanon, a number of initiatives aimed at creating social cohesion and resilience have been developed by a very active civil society.

5. Mediation for Peace

Panelists: H.E. Dr. Mutlaq Al-Qahtani, Ambassador and Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar for Counterterrorism and Mediation; Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, former Member of the SG High-level Advisory Board on Mediation; Mr. Romain Grandjean, Director Near East and North Africa, Center for Humanitarian Dialogue; Mr. Enrico Formica, Senior Mediation Officer, Mediation Team and Head DPA Geneva; and Ms. Rachel Dore-Weeks, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Advisor, UN Women Arab States.

Mediation and dialogue at the international, regional and local levels were emphasized as an important tool for diplomacy for peace. There is a need to support, build and mobilize the capacities of local, national and regional actors, as they are often linked to regional or community level organizations and know the root causes of different types of conflict and the complex political dynamics experienced on the ground. These actors are key to support UN envoys and official mediators and they know better ways to support community groups to prevent wars, to build fairer, resilient and more inclusive societies. Therefore, different categories of mediators working together are necessary.

It was pointed out that in many parts of the world, communities in conflict prefer to deal with “insider mediators” who have deep knowledge of their contexts, established relationships of trust, and are therefore more acceptable and capable than “outsider mediators” who are not always desired. For these reasons, sustainable peace often depends on the involvement of people who are part of the conflicted society’s fabrics rather than individuals, states or organizations which are of different identity and nationality from the conflicting parties. The Tunisian national dialogue quartet, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015, was given as an example of successful insider mediator for keeping the Tunisian fragile transition on track at a critical time.

Participants noted that in very tense and polarized contexts, local mediators can also be more exposed to physical threats and intimidation than their international colleagues. Impartiality is not always well understood, and sometimes not even welcomed by local or regional stakeholders. And risk of manipulation and instrumentalization exist. It requires a lot of courage and commitment from local mediators to do their job and maintain their impartiality and integrity when they face such moral and sometimes physical pressures.

It was recognized that women have a key role to play in building and sustaining peace, and unfortunately, they have been systematically denied the space to fully exercise this role. and support for women engaging in peace talks must be included in the terms of reference of every single mediator, envoy, and leader of peace missions. There is an urgent need to resist using observer status as a substitute for real participation. Women should not be on the side-line observing. It was recommended, that international guarantors can get gender equality and women’s rights issues as a stipulation of their engagement, include a formal women’s rights committee within the structure of the talks, and provide incentives to parties to the conflict to bring women within their delegations.

Participants noted that the partnership between the UN and regional and sub- regional organizations in the field of mediation should be strengthened. This should include joint mapping of mediation training services and, more generally, exchanges regarding the establishment of institutional mediation-support capacities. Moreover, the UN and regional organizations should jointly stress the importance of securing predictable, sustainable and adequate funding of mediation engagements. Finally, their respective comparative advantages should be leveraged when establishing mediation teams.

It was noted that regional organizations in the Middle East need to develop their capacity for conducting preventive and diplomacy, dialogue facilitation and mediation activities, and that the emergence of a community of mediation support professionals has been more modest than in other regions such as the EU, OSCE, African Union, ECOWAs, IGAD. There was a call for the UN to increase its mediation presence in the Middle East, and a center for mediation and conflict prevention was suggested as well.

6. Emerging Threats: the dark side of innovation

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Sukhbold Sukhee, Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the UN; Mr. Neil Walsh, Chief of Cyber and Emerging Crime at UNODC; and Ms. Kerstin Vignard, Chief of Operations and Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

The Secretary-General, during his address to the seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September 2017, outlined several grave threats facing humanity. He noted that technology and innovation, which are the heart of shared progress, have also a dark side and have become a threat that must be confronted. Therefore, the session was conceptualized as a response to the SG's call for a new generation of strategic thinking, ethical reflection and regulation. It explored ways in which the international community can *maximize* the potential positive benefits of these new technologies, while *minimizing* their risks, particularly in connection to overcoming the challenges to sustaining peace and preventing violent conflict.

Participants noted that information and exponential technologies are increasingly transforming international coexistence by generating both risks in terms of security, defense and crime capable of creating strong tensions and even destabilization in international relations, and also fueling innovation and development, with a substantive impact in the creation of jobs, and in certain instances representing opportunities for significant economic growth.

It was pointed out that state sponsored cyber-attacks are a threat to international peace and security. Resorting to invasive action without international sanction, ignoring the principle of settling disputes peacefully, and ignoring the rule of law they have an immense impact on peace.

Participants noted how cyber-governance and cyber-security challenges today's increasingly interconnected global economy. They agreed that cybercrime and sustaining peace are interrelated. Cybercriminals undermine national and international prosperity, economic stability and SDG delivery. The challenge is, however, beyond the linear concept of "crime". One of the most challenging aspects is "cybercrime-as-a-service" where highly technically skilled cybercriminals offer their services to others. Sometimes they work for drug traffickers, terrorists, weapons traffickers or people traffickers. Other times they work for intelligence agencies and other State-aligned actors in a space known as "Advanced Persistent Threats" (APTs).

Unfortunately, there is no internationally agreed definition of cybercrime and some Member States feel that this presents challenges to their ability to share digital evidence and cooperate internationally. Some Member States have ratified the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, whilst others feel that the Convention presents a challenge to their sovereignty, thereby precluding their accession. Many Member States remarked about the deep political challenges facing cybercrime convention implementation and, in this context, they questioned why this issue was often raised in debate as the likelihood of resolution is slim.

In 2017, global ransomware attacks such as #Wannacry and #NotPetya, impacted homes and hospitals, businesses and governments around the world. These attacks suggested that cybercriminals, possibly working on behalf of a Member State, had further weaponised an attack vector which was possibly created

by another Member State. This showed the risks from compromised intelligence tools and the wide vulnerabilities of software and hardware.

Sustainable development and sustaining peace rely on numerous measures of stability. Cybercrime techniques and cybercriminals enable many of these norms to be compromised, both covertly and overtly. UNODC Education for Justice Initiative was given as an example of prevention by helping primary, secondary and tertiary-age students to understand online risk, counter the threat and make better judgment using attuned critical thinking skills. Teaching children about online safety from a very early age will help ensure that, together, we minimize the risk of falling victim to cybercrime and, ultimately, helping to sustain peace.

Participants also recommended ways to strengthen INTERPOL's new Cyber Fusion Centre, based in Singapore, to build a stronger global framework to combat cybercrime and other threats to cybersecurity. For example, one participant suggested establishing a new stand-by roster of cyber-security and cyber-crime experts to assist countries in the Global South in developing critical cybersecurity and cybercrime fighting capabilities by pulling information and encouraging joint analysis and coordination, because several of the panelists demonstrated in their remarks, the burgeoning security threats in cyberspace do not respect borders or the laws and norms established by states and civil societies.

Regarding innovation and technological advance, it was noted that great progress has been made in the field of innovation and technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI). AI will affect healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, customer service and finance, military systems, in addition to the multitude of newly digitized services. AI systems that can be trained, learn, and think independently will dominate the field of AI. These technological advances will be a driver of economic growth and improvement in living standards. However, they will also have a tremendous impact on job creation, as they will replace more jobs than the ones they might create. It was pointed out that the rate of return for investments into high tech and financial instruments is so much greater than investment in labor, which will increase income gaps, making the world increasingly unstable.

Furthermore, a number of disruptive and threatening characteristics were pointed out: (a) the private sector leads innovation in these areas; (b) these are technologies and knowledge systems, that to a greater or lesser extent, are accessible to states and individuals, criminals and corporations; and (c) all are dual use. These innovations permit the radical expansion of conflict, aggression and interference in the internal affairs of States, in ways that fall below the level of an armed attack, and this might directly or indirectly impact on sustaining peace.

Participants agreed that long-term and large-scale strategies are needed locally, nationally, and globally to address the potential scope and spectrum of unemployment and income gaps due to acceleration, globalization, and integration of technological capacities, population growth, among others. It was also agreed that traditional forms of regulation do not apply any more.

There are emerging opportunities for the United Nations when addressing fundamental security and legal challenges to the UN's sustaining peace effort stemming from these innovations. In this, the UN should strengthen its partnership with the private sector, as it is not possible to develop new tools to mitigate the negative effects of technological innovation without its involvement. In addition, Public-Private Partnerships must be strengthened. There is an urgent need to raise greater awareness, knowledge, and

understanding across political leaders in UN Member States – as well as within the Security Council and General Assembly – about the need to better equip the international community with additional tools to prevent, mitigate, and manage risks to international security posed by innovations in science and technology.

Financing the Peace

Panelists: Mr. Khalifa bin Jassim Al Kuwari, General Manager, Qatar Fund for Development; Mr. Daniel Hyslop, Research Director, Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP); Dr. Gary Milante, Director, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI); and Ms. Chelsea Payne, Policy Officer, Policy, Planning and Application Branch, UN Peacebuilding Support Office.

Participants noted that the international community spends a lot on responding to violence and not much on prevention of violence. Moreover, peacebuilding is financed to a much smaller extent than other major interventions such as humanitarian and development spend. A participant noted that¹:

- Global cost of violence and containing it is 13.6 trillion – 13.6% of Gross World Product.
- Global Military spending was 1.69 Trillion in 2016 – Peacebuilding is 0.05% of that amount.
- For fragile states peacebuilding equals 16% of their total aid.
- The median spend on peacebuilding is \$6 per capita in 31 of the most fragile settings.
- More is spent on roads in fragile settings.

Moreover, financing Peacebuilding is extremely volatile, varying from year to year. Between 2002 and 2013 it varied between 11% and 19%. This is due to peacebuilding shocks and a strategic deficit for peacebuilding.

It was noted that Peacebuilding allocations reflect donor priorities and assumptions and is prioritized at different levels by different donors. The following was pointed out:

Apparent bias toward the hardware of peacebuilding:

- Additionally, nearly half of all peacebuilding funding is allocated to two out of 16 funding categories which are mostly focused on formal institution building. These may be traditionally called ‘statebuilding’ categories and include legal and judicial development and public-sector policy and administrative management.
- Meanwhile, civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution as well as other forms of informal institution building or civil society building are on average less than 20 per cent of the total peacebuilding spend.

Peacebuilding is highly cost-effective.:

- Even when taking into account instances where peacebuilding interventions themselves may not be wholly responsible for reducing the likelihood of conflict, peacebuilding is still cost-effective because the costs from conflict are so high.
- The cost effectiveness ratio of peacebuilding is estimated to be 1:16, meaning that for every dollar appropriately invested in peacebuilding activities, \$16 will be saved via the significantly larger costs

¹ Figures provided by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).

of violence over the ensuing decade. This underlines a critical point about peacebuilding - because the costs of conflict are so high, interventions to prevent it have to be highly inefficient and ineffective to *not* be cost-effective.

- Those countries that avoid conflict save approximately 2% of GDP per year – domestic actors and private sector (including multinationals) should be willing to invest in prevention to protect their future revenues.
- There is the moral foundation for preventing violence and loss of human life – it is the right thing to do.

It was pointed out that peacebuilding money is not “in place” of development, but rather in support of it – another way to think about Sustaining Peace is as “holistic development” or “peace-informed development” – considering the future development and economic growth in today’s decisions. Just as, “sustainable” development brings considerations of the environmental costs of the future into today’s production and consumption, so too does sustaining peace brings future impacts into today’s decisions.

Participants noted that different financing instruments are necessary and highlighted four keys to unlock funds:

- *Consultation/Dialogue processes* that promote inclusive peacebuilding and planning. They (a) demonstrate to donors that the current process accommodates many perceptions of security/insecurity and that the planning is inclusive; (b) helps to build the foundation for an “inclusive-enough” coalition to move the development planning forward; and (c) regional actors can help to facilitate these dialogues, more familiar with local issues and can facilitate exchange.
- *Honesty about risks*: (a) overemphasis on sovereignty can distract from real political risks in country or region – an honest risk assessment must be part of a credible plan going forward; and (b) this need not be through overt conflict analysis or public documents (need not be airing of political issues in public discourse) – rather could be through scenarios, contingency planning, risk frameworks and quiet/closed-door analysis.
- *Commitment devices* – planning and agreements in the presence of conflict are often complicated by lack of trust between actors. Credible commitments can be facilitated by: (a) guarantees by third party actors, including regional and international actors; (b) institutionalization of agreements (pacts, agreements, treaties, contracts) and change in agreements over time (through, for example, sunset and sunrise clauses; and (c) smart contracts (block chains and distributed ledgers and other new tech are increasingly allowing for these types of arrangements).
- *Unlocking private sector resources in support of peacebuilding*. It was noted that UN’s financial instruments should pool and coordinate their efforts in realizing the potential of innovative financing.

The discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding. The forthcoming Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding and Sustaining peace will address financing for peacebuilding including through the exploration of innovative financing solutions, as well as options for assessed and voluntary funding as requested by the resolutions. The Peacebuilding Fund is a central component of the Secretary-General’s vision of prevention, a driver for coherence in

peacebuilding activities and a key tool in the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office as a “hinge” connecting different parts of the UN system. The Secretary-General has called for a quantum leap in support of Member States to the Fund.

7. Wrap-up

The Chair, H.E. Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UN, wrapped up the Doha Regional on Sustaining Peace with a clear statement that Qatar remains committed to support the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General’s efforts on sustaining peace. The Chair also stated that it is clear that the international community has to continue this discussion well beyond the PGA High-level event on sustaining peace and she challenged the international community to be ambitious and take a longer-term view. She noted that the international community must work together to achieve a concrete outcome from the High-level Meeting that ensures continued interaction between the UN system, regional organizations and Member States on sustaining peace. The Chair reiterated Qatar’s commitment to host a global conference on preventive diplomacy to address outstanding issues and usher in a new era of durable peace and stability across the region.