

Proposals of the Peacemaking Reflection Group:

Utilising UN Charter Article 99, Global Resilience Council, Unarmed Observer Corps and People's Peace Fund.

On behalf of the "Peacemaking Reflection Group" (PRG) of former UN system staff that my organization, FOGGS, is supporting, I would like to introduce to you some key proposals that the PRG recently submitted to the UN Secretariat for possible inclusion into the New Agenda for Peace that is under preparation.

We try to respond to four questions/observations that arise from the post-World War II experience of dealing with international peace and security issues, the lessons learnt from the first Agenda for Peace put forward by UNSG Boutros-Ghali in 1992, and recent developments from new threats to human security to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and all instances of veto and other abuses by major powers in previous decades:

1. How does the UN address a conflict that involves as aggressor a major power, especially a nuclear power, even more so when the latter is a permanent member of the Security Council (see current Russia-Ukraine war but also earlier conflicts involving other permanent members of the Security Council)?

Our initial answer:

Transferring veto-blocked Security Council agenda items to the UN General Assembly for debate and action should become a routine under the New Agenda for Peace, as should implementation of UNGA resolution A/RES/76/262 that foresees that each time the veto is used the P5 who used it should explain their reasons / position to the UN membership for the whole world to know.

Moreover, we need a much more pro-active stance on the part of the UN Secretary-General for conflict prevention and resolution. Article 99 of the UN Charter authorizes the UNSG to bring an issue that in his/her opinion threatens international peace and security to the attention of the Security Council and ask for action to be taken. **Article 99 should be used more frequently and assertively by the UNSG**, possibly through a **monthly or quarterly review of the state of world peace**, which the Secretary-General would present to joint sessions of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly, indicating the situations where Article 99 might apply, also as an early warning / preventive measure. **Fact finding missions** should be used by the UNSG and/or the intergovernmental organs to objectively determine the state of affairs, as soon as a potential breach of the peace was detected, with escalation of response measures afterwards, depending on the findings.

2. How does the UN address new threats to human security that are not of direct military nature but may also have devastating consequences and may eventually lead to actual military confrontation? In this category one can include climate change and its impacts, pandemics, as well as cybersecurity, and the effects of organized criminal networks and rogue corporate behaviours that inflict large-scale harm (e.g. some extractive mining, environmental damage, excessive energy and water surges, and other systemic shocks).

Our initial answer:

Beyond the Security Council and instead of attempting to de facto expand its mandate by bringing before it also non-traditional threats to human security, like climate change and pandemics, a new body should be established to deal with threats to human security. It could be a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC, and eventually of other UN system bodies, from which it would extract its legitimacy and to which it would report. This body could be called "**Global Resilience Council**" (**GRC**) and would have a representative intergovernmental core with major states and regions as members, as well as states representing the major regional and functional groups, in the latter case groups like the small island developing states, least developed states, etc. A number of key non-state actors organized in self-governing constituencies would be institutionally connected to the GRC, for the provision of advice and the best possible implementation of decisions made.

3. The concept of *unarmed civilian protection (UCP)*, meaning protection of vulnerable groups and individuals, such as human rights activists, by unarmed civilian monitors, as distinct from uniformed personnel (military or police). It has been pioneered by NGOs, most particularly, Nonviolent Peaceforce (a coalition of various NGOs), and has been piloted successfully in Mindanao in the Philippines, and elsewhere.

Our initial answer:

As part of its broader peacekeeping tradition, which was devised out of necessity in practice and is not foreseen in the UN Charter, the UN has deployed unarmed and uniformed military personnel to monitor implementation of agreements between belligerents, like respect of ceasefires (see UNTSO in the Middle East and UNMOGIP between India and Pakistan). In recent months a somewhat similar arrangement was agreed, even if at a very small scale, regarding the Ukrainian nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia, involving unarmed civilian personnel of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Civil society organizations have declared and already demonstrated in practice their interest in being involved in unarmed civilian protection (UCP) in conflict zones, independently or in conjunction with UN personnel.

The UN could more proactively deploy primarily unarmed monitors of its own, with the agreement of the warring parties, of course. A standing unit of qualified and well-trained individuals, an **Unarmed Observer Corps**, could be established under the auspices of the UN for quick deployment where necessary to protect not only civilian nuclear installations, as in the case of Zaporizhzhia, but also civilian settlements, world heritage sites, etc. The extent to which such a corps would deploy or work with unarmed civilian monitors or unarmed military observers would probably be case-specific.

4. Securing and sustaining peace requires *building a partnership of people and governments/intergovernmental organizations working closely together at all levels. Top-down peace solutions have serious limitations, with conflict festering and ready to reignite even in the event of a peace agreement. It is time for a new, more holistic, inclusive, people-centered approach to conflict resolution, peace-building and sustainment, through concepts, strategies and practices that engage and channel the power of people to these ends.*

Our initial answer:

Securing and sustaining peace requires building a partnership of people and governments working closely together at all levels. The New Agenda for Peace should pay more attention to the **Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding Nexus (HDPN)**; should bring women to the table across the entire spectrum of issues and all stages of a conflict/peace process (before-during-after); ensure youth participation and that the voice of young people is heard.

To these ends, civil society organizations, local communities and governments (central/local) should work in tandem, with decentralized authority, decision-making, finances and accountability. Elements of such an approach have already been introduced, de facto, in the work of the UN in the peace and security sector, including through the Women Peace & Security Agenda (UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000), the 2030 Agenda-Sustainable Development Goals (2015 – see in particular Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and strong Institutions), the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace Agenda (2016), and the World Humanitarian Summit (2016). Resources to take it further can be provided through a **Peoples' Peace Fund** (funded by the people worldwide), supplemented by IFI funds and multilateral contributions.

Education for peace and sustainable development should also be a core foundation of the New Agenda for Peace, that the PRG proposes should be renamed to "**Agenda of Innovative Action for Peace**".

Apologies for duplications with proposals already suggested by colleagues in this e-consultation. I tried to give you relatively briefly the whole framework of the PRG proposals. My PRG colleagues copied above and I look forward to further engaging in this discussion, including at the two Zoom consultations later in February.

Best regards,

Georgios