

CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Forum on Culture of Peace

9 September 2015

Trusteeship Council Chamber

Background

On 13 September 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, by consensus, its landmark, pioneering and norm-setting resolution 53/243 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. It contributed, inter alia, towards the effective observance and realization of the objectives of the UN-declared International Decade for Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). Asserting and re-affirming the commitment of the totality of the UN membership for building the culture of peace, the UNGA has adopted resolutions on the subject every year.

The General Assembly, through these annual substantive resolutions, continues to highlight the priority it attaches to the full and effective implementation of these forward-looking decisions which are universally applicable and sought after by the vast majority of all peoples in every nation.

Following the successful first High Level Forum (HLF) on The Culture of Peace held on 14 September 2012, and also during the second and third HLF in 2013 and 2014 respectively, the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 69/139 on “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace” on 15 December 2015, which was co-sponsored by 97 Member States.

The resolution requests the President of the General Assembly to consider convening a high-level forum, as appropriate and within existing resources, devoted to the implementation of the Programme of Action on the occasion of the anniversary of its adoption, on or around 13 September.”

The resolution also expressed the Assembly’s positive support to the Forum by welcoming the successful holding on 9 September 2014 of the General Assembly High-level Forum on The Culture of Peace, convened by the President of the Assembly, and the high-level participation, wide-ranging partnership and inclusive collaboration among Member States, international organizations and civil society, as evidenced at the Forum. It also welcomed with appreciation the observance of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace by the Forum.

Since adoption of resolution 67/106 in 2012 requesting the President of the General Assembly to consider convening the High Level Forum, the Assembly has reiterated this decision every year and, in pursuance, the President has convened the Forum annually.

Objective

As the international community moves toward the adoption of a transformative post-2015 development agenda by world leaders at a Summit in September 2015 in New York, the critical linkage between peace and development has been underscored in the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs. Goal 4 is on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, and its targets include “promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence”. Goal 16 is on promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Recognizing the need for strengthening further the global movement to promote the Culture of Peace, particularly in the current global context, the one day High Level Forum will provide an opportunity for Member States, UN system entities, civil society, Non-governmental organizations, media, private sector, and other stakeholders to exchange views on this important issue. It will also highlight emerging trends that impact on the implementation process.

Some of the guiding questions on key issues to be discussed on Panel One on: “Promotion of the Culture of Peace in the context of the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda”, include:

1. What roles can specific actors and sectors of societies, such as educators, women and youth, play in promoting inclusive approaches to a culture of non-violence and peace?
2. What practical strategies can be devised to promote the culture of peace in the context of Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, and how can Member States, the UN system and other stakeholders ensure their effective implementation?
3. What measures can be taken in national education systems to help educate a future generation that embraces diversity and a culture of peace?
4. What roles can local community leaders play in promoting a culture of peace?
5. How the objective of global citizenship as envisaged in the Global Education First Initiative and the culture of peace are interconnected and could be incorporated in the educational curricula at all levels?

Some of the guiding questions on key issues to be discussed on Panel Two on: “Role of the media in the promotion of the culture of peace”, include:

1. What are the practical and pro-active steps the media can take to contribute towards building sustainable peace, given the worrying trends of rising intolerance and violent extremism?
2. How can media, using its wide network of viewers and readers, promote peace, development and social stability?
3. In this age of global connectivity through the internet and social media, among other networks, what are the opportunities and challenges to the peoples of the world, particularly for the young generation, to integrate the culture of peace in their lives and societies, and to counter intolerance, hatred and bigotry?
4. How can the important role the media plays in reaching people at the community level be utilised to promote a more tolerant and peaceful world?

Format and Outcome

The High-level Forum will consist of an opening segment and two consecutive interactive panels in the afternoon. One panel will discuss “Promotion of the Culture of Peace in the context of the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda”. The second panel will discuss the “Role of media in the promotion of the Culture of Peace”.

The outcome will be a President's summary, which will be circulated to all Member States, Observers and other stakeholders.

Participation

Member States will be invited to participate at the highest possible level, U.N agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders will also be invited.

Further information on the High-level Forum, including Programme details will be availed in due course.

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8 September 2015

Excellency,

Further to the letters dated 27 July, 12 August and 26 August 2015 from the President of the General Assembly on the High-Level Forum of the General Assembly on Culture of Peace convened on 9 September, 2015, find attached a final programme for the event.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Arthur Kafeero
Ambassador
Chef de Cabinet

To All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

**High-Level Forum of the General Assembly on Culture of Peace
9 September 2015
Trusteeship Council Chamber**

Provisional Programme

MORNING SESSION	
10:00a.m. – 10:45a.m.	<p>Opening Session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Mr. Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland (Acting President of the General Assembly). - H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations <p>Keynote speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Arun Gandhi, The Peace Farmer, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi
10:45a.m. – 11:00a.m.	Musical Interlude : Israeli-Palestinian musicians from Philadelphia
11:00a.m. – 1:00p.m.	Plenary Segment
AFTERNOON SESSION	
3:00p.m. – 4:30p.m.	<p>Panel Discussion 1 :</p> <p>Topic: "Promotion of the Culture of Peace in the context of the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda".</p> <p>Chair and Moderator: H.E. Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professor Dr. Emil Constantinescu, Former President of Romania - Ms. Maria Emma Mejia, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Colombia - Ms. Amina Mohammed, Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning - Mr. Federico Mayor, Former Director-General of UNESCO - Ms. Barbara Adams, Advisor, Global Policy Forum and Social Watch <p>Summary of Panel Discussion presented by Ambassador Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury</p> <p>Interactive discussion and remarks by Member States and other Stakeholders (2-3 minutes)</p>
4:30p.m. – 5:45p.m.	<p>Panel Discussion 2 :</p> <p>Topic: "Role of the media in the promotion of the culture of peace".</p> <p>Chair and Moderator: H.E. Ms. Marjon V. Kamara, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Mr. Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to UN - Ms. Cristina Gallach, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information - Mr. Michael Nagler, President, Metta Center for Nonviolence - Ms. Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls, Founder-Director, FemLinkPacific, media organization based in Fiji <p>Summary of Panel Discussion presented by Ambassador Ms. Marjon V. Kamara</p> <p>Interactive discussion and remarks by Member States and other Stakeholders (2-3 minutes)</p>
5:45p.m. – 6:00p.m.	<p>Closing Segment:</p> <p>Remarks by: H.E. Mr. Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland (Acting President of the General Assembly)</p>

9 September 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace**

*Delivered by H.E. Mr. Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations,
on behalf of President Kutesa*

**Excellencies,
Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to welcome you to this High-level Forum, on the occasion of the sixteenth (16th) anniversary of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

I thank the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh for its important contribution in the organisation of this meeting and championing the culture of peace in the General Assembly.

Excellencies,

In 1945, this organisation, the United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Seventy years later, the desire for peace continues to drive nearly every facet of the Organization's work. This forum on a culture of peace, provides renewed inspiration and a platform for continued engagement on this noble aspiration.

Experience has shown us that peace is not simply the absence of conflict. Peace requires equitable societies, inclusive education and tangible actions on the ground. More importantly, peace is a distant dream without development. This is part of the core challenge in promoting a culture of peace and ensuring peaceful societies.

While there have been diligent and continuous efforts at national, regional and international level, multifaceted challenges continue to threaten international peace and security. New challenges and obstacles to human development, such as; terrorism, cybercrime, drug and human trafficking, human rights violations and climate change, continue to derail efforts to create a more peaceful world.

Excellencies,

This year, 2015, provides hope and opportunity for the future.

Last week, Member States adopted a resolution agreeing to transmit the outcome document entitled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” to the Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. The agenda, inter alia, seeks to create a more prosperous, equitable and sustainable future for people around the world.

Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addresses the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Through Goal 4, the agenda also aspires for education systems that can sustainably promote a culture of peace and non-violence. Going forward, the onus is upon us to ensure effective implementation.

In this context, a progressive, universal strategy is needed to ensure that a culture of peace takes root in people’s everyday lives. This requires the international community and all relevant stakeholders to:

- i. Promote dialogue and mutual understanding, while enhancing respect for religious and cultural diversity;
- ii. Strengthen the principles of freedom of thought, belief and expression;
- iii. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and intolerance;
- iv. Develop and extend policies that promote justice, security, the rule of law, peace-making initiatives, democratic decision-making, and humanitarian intervention;
- v. Encourage greater participation of women in the prevention of conflicts and peacebuilding activities in post-conflict situations; and
- vi. Make effective use of the media for the promotion and distribution of information on a culture of peace.

Today’s discussion is an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments in promoting a culture of peace. It is also an opportunity to focus on what we need to do on our pathway toward a more prosperous and sustainable future for all.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and thank you for your attention.