

# Call for Change and Early Actions to 'Save Succeeding Generations From the Scourge of War'<sup>1</sup>

## BACKGROUND PAPER

CHALLENGES ANNUAL FORUM 2015:  
Institution- and Capacity-Building for  
Peace: Implications of the UN Review  
Panels' Recommendations for Future  
Missions

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## Introduction

2015 is a particularly important year for multilateralism and for international peace and security. As peacekeeping continues to reach record levels—both in numbers and scope—the rapidly changing security dynamics require new approaches and early actions to deal with threats in a timely and effective manner. Hence, the United Nations (UN) and the international community are engaged in encompassing collective efforts to review a broad range of aspects and elements brought together in the term peace operations, in order to better address the emerging challenges and changing dynamics of contemporary conflict. The UN Secretary-General (UNSG) has appointed a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) that has delivered a comprehensive review with over 100 recommendations, which has been well received.<sup>2</sup> The UNSG has in turn published his own Report on the immediate implementation of some of those Recommendations, which sets out a clear direction for his remaining time in office with a particular focus on: i) prevention and mediation; ii) regional-global partnerships; and iii) planning and conducting faster, more responsive and more accountable peace operations to those in conflict.<sup>3</sup>

To this adds the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, which serves as a very good complement to the HIPPO Report; calling for a holistic all-system-encompassing effort to build and sustain peace based on a fundamental shift from peacebuilding to prevention and sustaining peace from the very outset of any peace and security intervention.<sup>4</sup> This is soon to be further complemented by the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, a fundamental issue that runs through both of the above mentioned

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a commissioned background paper for the Annual Challenges Forum of Peace Operations 2015. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Challenges Forum Partnership including the Hosts of the Annual Forum 2015.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *The future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *The Challenges of Sustaining Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015).

Reports. Another related important development, is the finalisation of *the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Transforming our World* and more specifically goal 16, which focuses on the importance of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development.<sup>5</sup> These agendas reinforce each other, confirming the international community's recognition of how closely intertwined sustainable peace and security are, with equal development and the protection and promotion of human rights at the centre.

What links these processes together are institutions and capacities; laying down the foundation for lasting peace and security. The success of any given peace operation should be measured by the advancement of the capacities of the institutions that serve to stabilise and maintain peace and security; and more specifically, by the acquired knowledge and expertise of the local people to populate and function in, and with the help of, those institutions. Equally important are the levels of trust and confidence of those that the institutions are set out to serve. Seen from a different angle, the goal is to create and put in place conditions and seeds for lasting peace, where the development agenda lays out the prerequisites. These are not processes that can start where peacekeeping ends just because they are traditionally put within the peacebuilding camp. Rather institution- and capacity-building have to be embedded in every peace operation from start to finish, with the local people at the centre as the natural and necessary owners and leaders of reforms, including security sector reforms.

Against this background, this paper first brings out three specific aspects that recur in each of the Reports mentioned above and that are of particular relevance to institution- and capacity-building. These are i) prevention and early warning as a permanent feature of all peace operations; ii) local ownership and participatory engagement as a priority for any peace operation; and iii) reconciliation and inclusive dialogue to build trust and confidence among all stakeholders and partners involved. Second, the paper looks at three specific areas of particular importance to achieving the above. These are i) police, justice and corrections (including oversight); ii) strategic communications and information technologies; and iii) partnerships with and between regional organizations as well as between different peacekeeping actors (including men and women) and with civil society. Third, some concluding remarks are presented together with suggestions of questions for further discussion.

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, A/69/L.85, 12 August 2015.

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## Aspects of Particular Relevance to Institution and Capacity-building

### Prevention and early warning

With taking ‘effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace’<sup>6</sup> being one of the principle purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, concerted and collective efforts of the UN system and its membership are needed to address not just the symptoms of conflict. As the Advisory Group of Experts on the peacebuilding architecture concludes, ‘[s]ustaining peace should span an essential combination of actions across the diplomatic, political, human rights, economic, social and security areas, with particular attention to addressing root causes.’<sup>7</sup> A conclusion that is echoed in the HIPPO Report, which makes four specific recommendations to this end for the UN membership, the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat respectively.

Further, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review links conflict prevention with development and calls for a change in mind-set: ‘rather than waiting until crisis breaks out and then making a default recourse to a crisis response, timely efforts to prevent conflict and then sustain peace need to be embedded across all sectors and phases of action.’<sup>8</sup> Here, the HIPPO Report makes valuable recommendations first of all proposing that the Secretary-General should convene an international forum on prevention which ‘would periodically bring together governments, regional organizations, civil society and the global business community to exchange conflict prevention experiences and agree on innovative approaches that integrate conflict prevention, governance, development and human rights.’<sup>9</sup> Second, HIPPO calls on the Security Council to engage earlier in addressing emerging threats in partnership with regional and sub-regional organizations, and ‘be open to early analysis and frank advice from the UN Secretary-General on situations that may threaten international peace and security.’<sup>10</sup> Third, it recommends that the UN Secretariat strengthen its prevention and mediation efforts and ensure greater synergy between the activities of various UN agencies, funds, programs and departments for better conflict prevention.<sup>11</sup> The UNSG in his Report fully endorses these HIPPO Recommendations and calls for a strengthening of the preventive capacities of UN Country Teams, the full implementation of UNSG’s Human Rights Up Front initiative and early action through ‘light teams’. He also underlines the Security Council’s early engagement as a prerequisite for conflict prevention, and promises to

<sup>6</sup> United Nations, *The Charter of the United Nations*, (San Francisco, 1945), Article 1(1).

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 46, para. 122.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 46, para. 123.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 21-22.

present it with a report on conflict prevention shortly.<sup>12</sup>

Conflict prevention is most effective when the international community shows a strong and united resolve to address crisis or conflict from an early stage. Even though both the HIPPO and the Peacebuilding Architecture Review clearly stress the need for early engagement, it is of paramount importance that the Security Council, in particular the five Permanent Members, demonstrate unequivocal and firm commitment to prevention and mediation. In this context, the UNSG in his Report calls on the UN membership to show their ‘commitment to prevention as the core function of the Organization’ and underlines that ‘strong Member State political support [...] can send a powerful signal that the global system is intent on reducing armed conflict.’<sup>13</sup>

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Early warning mechanisms should be envisaged from the very first signs of crisis and they should be linked to early actions. Moreover, prevention should be applied throughout the conflict cycle and not only apply when a crisis has emerged. In cases where a ceasefire and peace is fragile, international peacemaking efforts, aimed at conflict resolution, should be used also as preventive measures, including through confidence- and security-building measures. The Peacebuilding Architecture Review recommends the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to ‘actively seek opportunities where it can help bring needed attention to early conflict prevention priorities at the regional, sub-regional and country level, including through convening discussions with all stakeholders.’<sup>14</sup> Further, it recommends the PBC to ‘diversify its working methods’ which will enable this body ‘to consider with flexibility a larger and more diverse array of countries and regions, with a greater emphasis on conflict-prevention.’<sup>15</sup>

## Local ownership and Participatory Engagement

Local ownership is closely interlinked with prevention. To sustain peace and avoid conflict as well as relapse into conflict, it is key to develop and strengthen the institutions and capacities to resolve conflict by peaceful means at the national and local levels. The significance of local ownership and participatory engagement of all layers of society is acknowledged and prioritised throughout the review processes. In particular, the Report on the peacebuilding architecture concludes that ‘the UN’s approach to sustaining peace, in all phases, must be underpinned by a deep commitment to broadening inclusion and ownership on the part of all stakeholders across the societies where it works. Neither peace agreements,

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, *The future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 16, para 38.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, *The future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 15, para 35.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 50, para. 143.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 50, para. 144.

*A framework for participatory engagement has to be developed.*

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nor the implementation processes that follow, are likely to prosper unless they look beyond the narrow interests of belligerents to a framework that can engage a society's broad and emergent vision of itself.<sup>16</sup>

Sustainable Development Agenda Goal 16 calls for the 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'. In particular, it stresses the need to 'promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice'. For that purpose 'effective, accountable and transparent institutions'<sup>17</sup> should be developed and the international community should bring its valuable technical, advisory and financial contributions to reach that goal. This cannot be achieved without good governance and functioning institutions, nor without knowledgeable and capable people to carry out the necessary reforms. Especially in war-torn societies, it is a prerequisite to 'ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels'.<sup>18</sup> For that purpose the international community's assistance and cooperation are needed for strengthening relevant national institutions to build 'capacity at all levels [...] to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime'.<sup>19</sup>

It is important to ensure broad participation of all layers and major stakeholders of society in the institution- and capacity-building process, including civil society representatives/NGOs, women groups and youth, ethnic groups and national minorities and the private sector. People living in conflict-affected areas may understand certain particularities of the conflict and the possible way forward better than international mediators do. Moreover, local stakeholders' ownership from the outset is a prerequisite for the success of any given peace operation. The UN System, international financial institutions and regional organisations should advise, train and assist local stakeholders to build and strengthen institutions and capacities that can enable them to sustain peace by applying a status-neutral approach where necessary. A framework for participatory engagement has to be developed and as HIPPO stresses, the UN 'must be committed to open and impartial dialogue with all parties, states and non-state actors.' In situations of armed conflict 'it must explore every avenue to find alternatives to violence, minimize the suffering of civilians, and promote respect by all actors for the human rights of the local people and the combatants themselves, irrespective of their political, ethnic, religious or military affiliation'.<sup>20</sup>

In its turn, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review calls for broad and inclusive participation of all domestic stakeholders, public and private, in the peacebuilding process. It repeats the general understanding among

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 47, para. 127.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, A/69/L.85, 12 August 2015, para. 16:3 & 16:6.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, A/69/L.85, 12 August 2015, para. 16:7.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, A/69/L.85, 12 August 2015, para. 16a.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 11.



scholars that the success of peacebuilding primarily depends on ‘local ownership’. Further, the Advisory Group in its Report argues ‘in favour of “inclusive national ownership” in peacebuilding, whereby the national responsibility to drive and direct efforts is broadly shared by the national government across all key social strata and divides, across a spectrum of political opinions and domestic actors, including minorities.’<sup>21</sup> However, local ownership does not mean that the international community cannot support conflict-affected people and areas in the institution and capacity-building processes. To the contrary, the UN system together with international financial institutions should facilitate and provide technical and financial assistance to this end.

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## Reconciliation and Inclusive Dialogue

Reconciliation and confidence-building are cornerstones and key to sustainable peace. Measures should be undertaken to build confidence and trust among different conflicting parties to respect each other’s rights and shape common values and a vision of a common future. An environment of mutual trust and understanding can spread a sense of good neighbourhood that is free of threats. Further, reconciliation and mutual compromise can be achieved through inclusive dialogue and interactions among all conflicting parties. The significance of reconciliation and inclusive dialogue is emphasised both in the HIPPO and the Peacebuilding Architecture Review, as fundamental pillars and elements of sustainable peace. HIPPO recommends that ‘UN peace operations should provide political and operational support to processes of inclusion and national reconciliation.’<sup>22</sup>

The Peacebuilding Architecture Review recommends that ‘the PBF [Peacebuilding Fund] should consider ways to use its leverage to encourage the UN system to empower and include civil society in all activities related to sustaining peace, and that civil society receives significant capacity-building support.’<sup>23</sup> It recommends that the UN, together with its partners ‘consider a new emphasis on building national leadership as an integral part of a reconciliation and nation-building agenda, working to shift the focus away from personal ambitions of protagonists to engaging in a common vision for the country.’<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review calls on UN mediators and facilitators to ‘strive to support the crafting of peace agreements that reflect the broad aspirations of all stakeholders in conflict-affected societies and that integrate an agreed framework for sustaining peace.’ Crafted peace agreements should ensure the establishment of dialogue mechanisms that ‘will progressively ensure the broadening of

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 21, para. 44.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 40.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 55, para. 173.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 56, para. 179.

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narrow peace deals into inclusive processes implicating wider groups of domestic actors, communities and civil society, including women and youth organizations.<sup>25</sup>

As the Advisory Group on the peacebuilding architecture rightly notes ‘reaching reconciliation and sustainable peace requires broad and inclusive participation, involving state and civil society stakeholders all the way down to the grass-roots level’ and ‘addressing the root causes of conflict requires long-term commitment and long-term access to regular, predictable and adequate financing’.<sup>26</sup>

## **Areas of Particular Relevance to Institution- and Capacity-Building**

### **Police, Justice and Corrections**

Police, justice and corrections are three closely inter-linked institutions that are crucial to keeping as well as preventing, building and sustaining peace, and closely intertwined with the triangular relationship between peace, development and human rights. Having the adequate capacities to uphold the rule of law, accountability and human rights are absolutely paramount to any state that strives to be stable, secure and peaceful; whilst injustices and impunities are often if not the, then at least one, of the main causes of conflict.

All of the Reports referred to in this paper speak about the need for integrated approaches, in particular with regards to police, justice and corrections. The HIPPO Reports tries to specify this further by stating that there needs to be ‘a significant change in policing approaches’ to on the one hand, better support national efforts, and on the other, be closer linked to the ‘justice chain’. However, it also points out that a UN operation cannot address all areas of the justice system. What is unfortunately not addressed to the same extent is the need for political oversight and governance to ensure the sustainability of any such integrated effort.

Whilst the recommendations fall short in clarifying what exactly this new integrated approach might mean in practice, the HIPPO Report explains that this will require a combined UN effort within the country teams where justice and police are integrated with human rights work. The HIPPO Report goes on to among other things suggest an examination of the chain of institutions that must work together ranging from courts, to prosecutors and police and correction services, as well as a review of

<sup>25</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 56, para. 180.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustainable Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), p. 13, para. 7.

what capacities are needed for these institutions to work effectively. It also recognises the importance of the Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF) for Policing in Peacekeeping and calls upon the Secretariat to complete the process including soliciting the necessary resources for implementation.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the UN is called upon to prepare its missions, when requested, to play a convening and coordinating role in security sector reform.

The UNSG has responded to this request by focusing on delivering coherent responses by accelerating the establishment of platforms for coordinated work in cross-cutting areas such as the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections, which already brings together a range of UN departments, agencies and organizations. He has also instructed senior management to propose a mechanism that brings together the UN and international as well as national financial institutions to coherently engage in crisis to strengthen cooperation across security and justice sectors. While not specified in the UNSG's Report, this has to include corrections. However, as we have seen in the paper, any such effort must be guided by the need to ensure a contextualisation of all responses to the needs and opportunities on the ground. Unfortunately the UNSG did not provide any further clarity on how he intends to take forward the SGF for police in peacekeeping and ensure their implementation at mission level.

Furthermore, the HIPPO Report states that in order to ensure the rule of law and human rights, the UN should not be foreign to addressing impunity through supporting alternative mechanisms—that is capacities and institutions—of transitional justice where appropriate. Many questions follow this statement which the peacebuilding review problematises by speaking of difficult dilemmas related to the timing of these processes. What institutional and 'apolitical' approaches to transitional justice will be considered both home-grown and thereby locally owned, and meet international norms and standards? These are all important questions to consider in relation to institution and capacity-building for peace.

## Strategic communication and information technologies

Strategic communication and information technologies are separate yet closely interlinked tools for achieving more cost-effective and efficient peace operations that operate closer to the ground and with more proximity to the people. We therefore need to think innovatively of how we can better use these two means for supporting the important work of preventing as well as keeping, building and sustaining peace.

Building on the Report of the Expert Panel on Technology and

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<sup>27</sup> See United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, *Guidelines on Police Capacity-Building and Development*, Ref: 2015:08 (New York, 2015); and United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, *Policy-United Nations Police in Peacekeeping operations and Special Political Missions*, Ref. 2014.01 (1 February 2014).



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Innovation in UN Peacekeeping,<sup>28</sup> the HIPPO Reports makes one recommendation in both of these respective areas. The UNSG returns to this in his Report, communicating strategically to and with the local people on the ground is considered a critical component of an effective political strategy; for which information technology is one of the main enablers. Here there is ample room to develop more concrete considerations of how strategic communication and information technologies can be used to support capacity- and institution building for peace.

The review of the peacebuilding architecture takes us one step closer to how that might look as it notes that 'new social media can be harnessed to draw people together, to foster inter-group dialogue, to promote conflict management and resolution and to create the public will to change attitudes and behaviour. Social media can support political reforms and broaden participatory governance.'<sup>29</sup> It continues by explaining that we should learn from experiences with conventional media and its role in peacebuilding programming, turning our attention to what is referred to as the 'transformative promise of the new technologies'.<sup>30</sup> The review comes back to a point that is also emphasised in the HIPPO Report namely the potential of interactive communication for helping peace operations to broaden inclusion and national ownership, allowing senior mission leaders civil, military and police, to engage directly and proactively with people across the countries where they operate. This also underlines the essential role that communication plays in peace operations fostering public support. The role that technology may have in enhancing knowledge sharing and thereby facilitating partnerships and coordination for better governance is also mentioned in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

An additional point is that using information technologies to engage in, and monitor and evaluate, interactive communication is key to both increased situational awareness and addressing the so-called data gap that the HIPPO Report calls for. This is essential for being able to help local people in conflict to build institutions and acquire the type of capacities that they need to build a peaceful and secure society beyond the lifespan of a UN peace operation. And this is what institution- and capacity building for peace is ultimately all about, helping states to foster the conditions that will allow them to move away from instability to building sustainable peace. Much work remains to be done in this regard.

## Partnerships

<sup>28</sup> United Nations, Performance Peacekeeping, Final Report of the Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping (December 2015).

<sup>29</sup> United Nations, *The Challenges of Sustaining Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), para. 49.

<sup>30</sup> United Nations, *The Challenges of Sustaining Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (New York, 29 June 2015), para. 49, para. 50.

Throughout all of the review processes and Reports, clear calls for stronger and more inclusive peace and security partnerships are made. It is described as both a necessity and prerequisite for the UN to address the threats of tomorrow and indeed for better conflict prevention and early management. It is about different actors capitalising on their respective comparative advantages, about creating a sense of mutual responsibility and obligations, about achieving wider participation and thereby also fostering ownership; in short, about rendering peace operations more representative and more effective.

But what type of partnerships are we talking about and between who? The most obvious one are those between the UN and/or the Member States and regional organizations, the African Union in particular. Partnerships with civil society, non-governmental organizations and religious and other traditional leaders, features prominently in the review processes as well. But there are also internal partnerships that are key to improving the UN's efforts for institution- and capacity-building for peace. Partnerships and cooperation between different department and agencies, between civil-military and police components, and between missions, enables the UN to lead those integrated approaches that are being called for.

In addition to having the potential of rendering peace operations more effective, partnership is essential for the UN to achieve that more people-centred and field-oriented approach that the review processes are calling for. It goes without saying, that working with organisations that are closer to the ground will help the UN increase its own situational awareness, as well as strengthen its relations with the people on the ground, building trust and confidence. The UN can draw upon the regional organizations' early warning mechanisms and conflict prevention toolboxes where they exist to more swiftly and potentially also more effectively prevent conflict, as well as relapse to conflict. It will also help to include groups that are not so well represented at state level such as for example women, youth and national minorities. This can enhance the UN's understanding of what it can and should be doing in terms of building capacity and institutions for peace, as well as be a means for the UN to actually be doing so.

This HIPPO Reports notes that strengthening partnership will require organisational and structural changes, as well as important shifts in approach and attitude. The UN and other organizations have to not only map, but also recognise their respective comparative advantages. Regular channels of communications have to be established as well as certain norms and standards that can if not govern, than at least, guide the cooperation. This might very well need the building of both capacities and institutions in its own right to manage such partnerships. The Secretary-General has through his Report set in motion several processes to this end, in particular in relation to the African Union but also to the European Union and the Arab League. This is an aspect that will need a lot of attention in the years to come, taking into account not only the

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practical and operations questions that this involves; but also the many political and strategic questions that it raises.

## Conclusions

As HIPPO rightly points out, the 'primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict'<sup>31</sup>. Only through political solutions it is possible to achieve and sustain lasting peace, and those political solutions need to be based on 'the legitimate interests and grievances of all parties.'<sup>32</sup> Thus, as described by the UNSG in his Report, the role of the UN is to advocate 'for political settlements that promote peaceful and inclusive societies and help advance human rights'. Because '[s]ocieties with effective, inclusive and accountable institutions are more likely to withstand crisis and peacefully manage disputes.'<sup>33</sup>

For the UN to take this overarching conclusion from the ongoing review process on board, major essential shifts have to take place within the Organization as well as in the international community at large. UN peace operations have to be part of a broader strategy and wider partnership, where each peace operation benefits from thorough analysis, planning and coordination before, during and arguably also after, deployment. In order to become more field-oriented and people-centred, the UN cannot be shy to explore and use modernised, more flexible and adaptable approaches, structures and tools to engage closer, but also earlier, with communities.

Although these Reports have proposed a number of recommendations, there is a need to translate them into action and set out mechanisms for their effective implementation by taking into close consideration the needs and specificities of every given conflict or conflict-prone/conflict-affected situation. The 'culture of prevention' that so many now are calling for, has to be translated from ideal to reality. And here, institutions- and capacity building have a particularly important role to play.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 11.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace - Politics, Partnership and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (New York, 16 June 2015), p. 32.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations, *The future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, para 10.

## Questions for discussion

- How can these Reports and conclusions be effectively translated into reality? Implementation is key.
- Which recommendations in the review reports regarding education and training of peacekeepers should be prioritised and implemented first, and how?
- What might the significant change in policing approaches look like to better support capacity and institution building for peace? And how can the police contributing countries support this shift? How does this link up to the SGF?
- How can strategic communication and information technologies be better used to support capacity and institution building for peace? What resources does this require?
- What and how can partnerships help to support the development of integrated approaches connecting, security, justice and corrections from an early stage of peace operations?