

II. Sustaining peace: the new overarching United Nations framework

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An introduction to the concept of sustaining peace

This section examines the concept of ‘sustaining peace’, which was promoted in two influential reviews of United Nations activities concluding in 2015: the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (AGE Report); and the Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (HIPPO Report). The concept was then confirmed in 2016 as the UN’s overarching conceptual framework for building peace, through identical resolutions issued by the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly.¹ According to the resolutions, sustaining peace is both ‘a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account’ in ‘activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development’.² The concept of sustaining peace calls for better linkages between the UN’s three foundational pillars of peace and security, development, and human rights, in addition to humanitarian action. It replaces what until now has been a sequential approach to conflict that often resulted in silos—namely silos of prevention, humanitarian action, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development—and calls for better linkages and sharing of instruments across these different sets of responses.³

In sustaining peace, the imperative for a long-term vision of building a common, inclusive vision of society should be considered at all points within the conflict cycle—not only in post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, but also and no less importantly in early prevention efforts of addressing the ‘root causes of conflict’ as well as in ‘prevention of the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict’.⁴ Sustaining peace thus

¹ See United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, *The Challenge Of Sustaining Peace*, Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, A/69/968–S/2015/490, 30 June 2015; and United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, *Uniting Our Strengths For Peace: Politics, Partnerships And People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, A/70/95–S/2015/446, 17 June 2015.

² United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 70/262, 27 Apr. 2016; and United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 2282, 27 Apr. 2016, Preamble.

³ The authors would like to thank Gizem Sucuoglu for this insight.

⁴ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); and United Nations, Security Council (note 2), Preamble.

encompasses an array of interventions, including strengthening the rule of law, promoting sustainable economic growth, poverty eradication, social development, sustainable development and national reconciliation. Some of the means and principles by which these interventions are pursued are inclusive dialogue and mediation, access to justice and transitional justice, accountability, good governance, democracy, accountable institutions, respect for human rights and gender equality.⁵ Built on principles of human security, integrating an understanding of the root causes of conflict, and the protection of human rights, sustaining peace is inextricably linked with sustainable development.⁶ The recognition that sustaining peace is ‘the primary responsibility of national governments and authorities in identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities’ and an emphasis on ‘inclusivity in national peacebuilding processes and objectives’ are reinforced by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which stresses the key role of national ownership in achieving sustainable development, and which aspires to ‘peaceful, just and inclusive societies’.⁷ The process by which sustaining peace emerged as the key UN framework is examined in further detail below, as are its links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the central principle of inclusivity.

The emergence of sustaining peace as a key framework for the UN is also consistent with the concept of positive peace.⁸ On the peace–violence spectrum (see section I), sustaining peace is the action that enables ‘positive peace’. In other words, positive peace is the objective of sustaining peace, while negative peace is a useful, occasionally necessary, intermediary outcome. Ceasefires, instability, the threat of violence without the realization of violence and the ‘post-conflict’ period are all examples of a negative peace, marked by the absence of violence between actors. Meanwhile, positive peace is a self-sustaining condition, complex and multilayered, involving the constructive interaction of people and non-violent management of conflict. Sustaining peace involves restoring social relationships and building systems that respond to the needs of the population, including justice, equality and freedom from fear and want (language which was later integrated

⁵ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); and United Nations, Security Council (note 2), Preamble.

⁶ Thomson, P., President of the United Nations General Assembly, ‘Sustainable development and sustaining peace’, Statement at the opening of the High Level Dialogue on Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace, 24 Jan. 2017.

⁷ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); United Nations, Security Council (note 2), Preamble; and United Nations, General Assembly, ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, A/RES/70/1, 21 Oct. 2015, Preamble and para 74(a).

⁸ Mahmoud, Y., ‘Freeing prevention from conflict: investing in sustaining peace’, IPI Global Observatory, 21 Apr. 2016.

into the concept of human security).⁹ A positive peace is a self-sustaining equilibrium for all stakeholders where violence, structural violence and the threat of violence are not necessary. Weapon systems and peacekeepers can be used to enforce or maintain a negative peace, but they are not necessary in conditions of a truly (and perhaps unattainable or idealistic) positive peace.

Sustaining peace seeks to shift actors away from structural violence and towards collaborative solutions and development, and thus towards positive peace outcomes. Sustaining peace demands more effective coordinated responses among the key pillars of the UN—peace and security, development, and human rights, as well as humanitarian action— and overcoming institutional and sectoral silos to develop collaborative and complementary solutions across the conflict cycle. This is reinforced by the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all, and effective and accountable institutions at all levels, which underscores its location at the nexus of security and development.

While the move towards sustaining peace marks an emerging multilateral consensus around the value of building a positive peace to avoid future conflict, the terminology is not without cost. The rebranding of various existing activities under the new nomenclature of sustaining peace risks contributing to conceptual muddle and confusion. Indeed, it is not clear in common usage how sustaining peace differs from the previous concept of peacebuilding. With the reviews and dual resolutions discussed further below, sustaining peace has become the preferred term that UN actors will henceforth use to refer to what the rest of the world has called (and likely will continue to call) peacebuilding. Although it does not replace peacebuilding, sustaining peace is an umbrella framework that subsumes and incorporates a refined and expanded definition of peacebuilding.

According to some UN observers, peacebuilding has been lifted out of the largely technical, post-conflict project-focused frame that came to enclose it. The AGE Report and the sustaining peace resolutions have endowed peacebuilding with an explicitly preventive focus, and appear to support elevating peacebuilding to the strategic level should the Peacebuilding Commission come to play a key role in coordinating the sustaining peace agenda across the entire UN system.¹⁰ Furthermore, some UN member states find

⁹ See e.g. Galtung, J., *Theories of Peace: A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking* (International Peace Research Institute: Oslo, Sep. 1967), pp. 14–17. Although freedom from fear and want was originally articulated by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the ‘Four Freedoms’, it has recently been reintroduced into contemporary United Nations thinking, as exemplified by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), ‘Towards freedom from fear and want: human rights in the post-2015 agenda’ (OHCHR: Geneva, May 2012).

¹⁰ Mahmoud, Y. and Ó Súilleabháin, A., ‘With new resolutions: sustaining peace sits at heart of UN architecture’, IPI Global Observatory, 29 Apr. 2016.

the language around sustaining peace less onerous, as it suggests a peace to be maintained, rather than one that needs to be built. The emphasis that sustaining peace places on linking prevention to national ownership also proved reassuring to countries that have been sensitive to potential intervention in domestic affairs under the label of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, a major challenge will be harmonizing and achieving coherence in the use of the term by global actors working to promote peace, security and development in dangerous places and beyond. The high-level meeting ‘Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace’ to be convened by the General Assembly in September 2017, and a preceding report by the Secretary-General on the same topic, will provide important opportunities to clarify the meaning and implications of the UN’s new sustaining peace agenda.

A fragile world: dangerous places

The concept of ‘dangerous places’ was introduced in *SIPRI Yearbook 2016* as an alternative designation to ‘fragile states’.¹¹ Countries were categorized as dangerous places if their rates of violent death put them in the top 25 per cent of countries (46 countries) or if their numbers per capita as sources of refugees and/or internally displaced persons (IDPs) put them in the top 40 per cent of countries (78 countries, 24 of which had high levels of violent death), yielding a list of 100 dangerous places.¹² Due to their size, China and India are typically considered independently for this analysis. This volume similarly defines dangerous places as countries with high rates of violent death or which are major sources of refugees and/or IDPs, using the same criteria. The advantage of using these criteria to classify countries is that the data is nearly universally available and not the result of a subjective assessment (unlike many other fragile states criteria), so the designation of dangerous places is objective and based on replicable data.¹³ This section reproduces the list of countries for 2016 with updated data.

¹¹ Milante, G. et al., ‘The challenges of relief and development in dangerous places’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2016*, pp. 343–88.

¹² Specifically for the list in *SIPRI Yearbook 2016*, countries were included if the violent death rate per 100 000 people was greater than 10.84—the top quartile of global violent deaths for all countries with data in the Global Burden of Armed Violence Database (GBAVD) for 2015. A country was also considered a dangerous place if the number of refugees/persons in refugee-like situations and IDPs was greater than 63.55 per 100 000 people—the upper two quintiles (highest 40 per cent) for this statistic. Annual violent deaths are derived using homicide data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and battle deaths data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). Refugees by origin are reported in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Population Statistics Database (accessed Jan. 2017). Global figures for internal displacement are regularly reported through best estimates by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). See Melander, E., Pettersson, T. and Themnér, L., ‘Organized violence, 1989–2015’, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 53, no. 5 (2016); and IDMC, ‘Global figures’, <<http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/>>.

¹³ Milante et al. (note 11).

Table 6.1. Descriptive statistics: dangerous places, China, India and the rest of the world, 2015–16

	Year	No. of countries	Total population, (b.)	Violent deaths (per 100 000 people)	Refugees (th.)	Displaced persons (th.)
Dangerous places ^a	2016	90 (-10)	2.108 (-18)	18.6 (+31)	15 402	32 430
	2015	100	2.582	14.2	14 511	47 225
China	2016	1	1.371	1.1	213	0
	2015	1	1.364	0.8	210	0
India	2016	1	1.311	3.0	10	0
	2015	1	1.295	1.04	10	1 205
Rest of the world ^a	2016	120 (+9)	2.532 (+26)	2.8 (+16)	324	0
	2015	110	1.996	2.5	96	140

b. = billion; th. = thousand.

^a Bracketed figures show the change (%) in 2016 compared to 2015.

Sources: Authors' calculations based on data from the World Bank, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). The most recent available data is used: 2014 data for the 2015 list; 2015 data for the 2016 list.

Applying the same cut-offs from 2016 (homicide rates greater than 10.84 per 100 000 people; displaced rates greater than 63.5 per 100 000 people) yields a new list of 90 countries that would qualify as dangerous places (see table 6.1). This reflects an improvement from the list of 100 countries in *SIPRI Yearbook 2016*: a net of 10 countries experienced improvements that reduced violent deaths and displacement.

Notably, the number of displaced persons and refugees originating from Bangladesh, Cyprus, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Timor-Leste and Turkmenistan improved. Meanwhile, rates of violent death below 10 per 100 000 people improved in Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Turkmenistan. Russia improved on both the levels of violent death and displacement. Among the improvers, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay experienced the highest reductions in absolute numbers of violent deaths.

Not all countries improved when measuring violent death and displacement. Increases in refugees and displacement from Ghana and Moldova and violent deaths in Costa Rica resulted in these countries being added to this year's dangerous places list.¹⁴ In Afghanistan, Brazil, El Salvador, Venezuela and Yemen there were increases in violent deaths.

The reduction in the number of dangerous places to 90 countries represents a shift from 2.6 billion to 2.1 billion people living in dangerous places,

¹⁴ Three small states were also added to the list (population less than 500 000).

a reduction of 18 per cent. Increasingly, violent deaths are concentrated in the world's dangerous places. While the 90 countries considered dangerous places now constitute less than a third of the world's population, they account for 78 per cent of global violent deaths and are the source of 98 per cent of global refugees and displaced persons. The average violent death rate in the 90 dangerous places in the 2016 list was 18.6 per 100 000 people, versus an average violent death rate of 14.2 in 100 dangerous places in the 2015 list. The violent death rate for China and India and the average for the 120 countries in the rest of the world increased as well. However, because violent death rates were concentrated in a few very high violence countries (Afghanistan, Brazil, Nigeria, Syria and Venezuela alone account for nearly 40 per cent of global violent deaths), the global violent death rate (total global violent deaths over global population) actually improved from 6.96 to 6.52.

Sustaining peace: the origins of the new UN framework

The AGE Report process

To mark the tenth anniversary of the 2005 establishment of the three institutions that collectively constitute the 'UN Peacebuilding Architecture'—the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund—the Security Council and the General Assembly initiated a comprehensive two-stage review process. A group of seven international experts (the Advisory Group of Experts, AGE) was mandated to engage in consultations and discussions with key stakeholders, including the parallel panels conducting the reviews on peace operations and Resolution 1325, to conduct a review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.¹⁵ The resulting report was completed in June 2015.¹⁶

From January until March 2016 the findings and recommendations of the AGE Report were examined in an intense intergovernmental process aimed at transforming the report's recommendations into identical resolutions by the General Assembly and the Security Council.¹⁷ The intergovernmental process involved consultations and negotiations with states, and engagement by the co-facilitators with various Peacebuilding Committee caucuses such as the European Union (EU), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the African Group and others, as well as with groups such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to ensure that the process was inclusive. Negotiations on a draft

¹⁵ The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) was appointed in Oct. 2014 and presented its report to the Secretary-General on 16 June 2015. See United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/70/95-S/2015/446 (note 1); and chapter 5 in this volume.

¹⁶ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968-S/2015/490 (note 1).

¹⁷ See the account by the co-facilitators, Gaspar Martins, I. A. and Gillian Bird, G., 'A global consensus on Sustaining Peace', *Global Peace Operations Review*, 27 Apr. 2016.

resolution mostly took place in the General Assembly. A Security Council expert-level meeting subsequently met to endorse the finalized text of the General Assembly version and transform it into a Security Council resolution.¹⁸ On 27 April 2016 the General Assembly and the Security Council acted in a rare concurrent action to adopt by consensus their highly detailed and substantively identical resolutions, which constituted ‘the most comprehensive UN peacebuilding resolutions to date’.¹⁹

The main recommendations of the AGE Report

The experts involved in producing the AGE Report stated that they interpreted their mandate as much broader than simply reviewing the roles of the Peacebuilding Commission, the PBSO and the Peacebuilding Fund, in addition to other UN actors involved in peacebuilding. In their view, peacebuilding is a shared responsibility of the entire UN system, and systemic factors—including a ‘generalized misunderstanding of the nature of peacebuilding’ in which it functioned largely as a post-conflict afterthought, and the fragmentation of the UN into separate ‘silos’—were essential to understanding the shortcomings in the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.²⁰ Therefore, the group of experts sought to take ‘a fresh look not only at the specialized architecture itself, but at the whole approach to peacebuilding taken by the United Nations at large’.²¹ The more coherent and effective approach to peacebuilding that they identify as a shared responsibility of the UN system is ‘sustaining peace’, which ‘looks to shift peace and security responses from linear and sequential activities to a more comprehensive and strategic approach aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict’.²² The overarching finding of the AGE Report was that ‘the key Charter task of sustaining peace remains critically under-recognized, under-prioritized and under-resourced globally and within the United Nations system’.²³

The AGE Report argued that violent conflict has become more complex, and international responses have tended to be militarized and short term, addressing symptoms rather than root causes.²⁴ The report suggested that activities before, during and after conflict collectively contribute to a sus-

¹⁸ What’s in Blue, ‘Resolution on the review of the UN peacebuilding architecture’, What’s in Blue: Insights on the work of the UN Security Council, 26 Apr. 2016.

¹⁹ Martins and Bird (note 17).

²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968–S/2015/490 (note 1), Executive summary, p. 7.

²¹ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968–S/2015/490 (note 1), para. 5.

²² Martins and Bird (note 17).

²³ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968–S/2015/490 (note 1), para. 5.

²⁴ Militarized, short-term, non-sustainable responses that address symptoms while ignoring root causes can lead to violence or negative peace outcomes.

tainable peace (a positive peace, though that language was not used in the AGE Report). According to the Security Council resolution adopting the AGE Report, ‘sustaining peace should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development’.²⁵ Accordingly, sustaining peace should be approached in a comprehensive manner that combines actions across the entire UN system, including diplomatic, political, peacekeeping and security, human rights, economic, social and security areas, with a focus on addressing root causes, and at the intergovernmental level, within the Security Council, General Assembly and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).²⁶

Recognizing that sustaining peace is ‘in essence, about individuals and different groups learning to live together without resorting to violence to resolve conflicts or disputes’, the AGE Report emphasized that sustaining peace must be ‘people-centred and inclusive in approach, and provide a vision of a common future to domestic stakeholders, public and private’; to this end, the UN’s approach ‘must be underpinned by a deep commitment to broadening inclusion and ownership on the part of all stakeholders across the societies where it works’.²⁷ This emphasis on inclusion and national ownership connected the AGE Report strongly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The parallel resolutions reflected these concerns, endorsing a comprehensive approach to the concept of sustaining peace that was put forward in the AGE Report as ‘a goal and a process to build a common vision of society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account’ and that should include ‘activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict’.²⁸ Some member states, especially the UN’s largest financial contributors, disagreed with the AGE Report’s recommendation that 1 per cent of UN peace operation budgets or \$100 million, whichever is greater, be provided from assessed contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund; instead, the resolutions called for ‘predictable

²⁵ United Nations, Security Council (note 2).

²⁶ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968-S/2015/490 (note 1), paras 121–29.

²⁷ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968-S/2015/490 (note 1), para. 127.

²⁸ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); and United Nations, Security Council (note 2), Preamble.

and sustained financing'.²⁹ The assessed contribution suggestion was not entirely rejected but was postponed to a later stage, specifically after the Secretary-General presents a report on sustaining peace to the General Assembly in 2017–18 that would include options, such as using assessed and voluntary contributions 'to increase, restructure and better prioritize funding to United Nations peacebuilding'.³⁰

The twin resolutions strengthen the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body and call for it to enhance its efficiency and flexibility in support of sustaining peace. This includes by (a) providing advice about mission mandates and transitions, (b) playing a bridging role to facilitate strategic and operational partnerships between the UN and regional groups and donors, and (c) developing closer collaboration with the World Bank in conflict-affected contexts.³¹ Further, the Peacebuilding Commission is to play a stronger convening role in bringing input from all relevant stakeholders, particularly from the field, to New York level discussions.³²

The then Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, described the parallel resolutions as a 'shift' in the UN's 'strategy and mindset' in sustaining peace, including a greater emphasis on prevention and working in partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions.³³

Links to the SDGs: sustaining peace and sustainable development

The sustaining peace resolutions and the 2030 Agenda are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and together are shaping a common global vision of a sustainable peaceful future, including the values of national ownership, inclusivity, people-centred and transformative approaches, and long-term perspectives.³⁴ Both the sustaining peace resolutions and the SDGs represent

²⁹ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); and United Nations, Security Council (note 2), para. 24.

³⁰ Martins and Bird (note 17).

³¹ United Nations, General Assembly (note 2); and United Nations, Security Council (note 2), paras 5, 9, 18–20.

³² E.g. Sweden has used the Peacebuilding Commission in this format in its role as the Chair of the Liberia Configuration, by hosting a comprehensive discussion in Monrovia on the peacebuilding dimensions of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) transition, and bringing inputs from that meeting to meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council in New York. See Sucuoglu, G. and Connolly, L., 'Sustaining peace in security transitions: the Liberian opportunity', International Peace Institute, 30 Jan. 2017.

³³ United Nations, Secretary-General, Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on the Adoption of Resolutions on the Peacebuilding Architecture in the General Assembly and the Security Council, 27 Apr. 2016, <<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2016-04-27/statement-attributable-spokesman-secretary-general-adoption>>.

³⁴ Roesch, J. L. et al., *The SDGs and Prevention for Sustaining Peace: Exploring the Transformative Potential of the Goal on Gender Equality* (International Peace Institute: Vienna, 2016).

system-wide frameworks that recalibrate towards long-term approaches that focus on root causes and building societal resilience.

The 2030 Agenda, fundamentally a framework for development, differed from its predecessor the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in its universality and explicit recognition of peace as a necessary goal and condition for development.³⁵ Conversely, the sustaining peace resolutions for the first time put greater emphasis on conflict prevention than the traditional focus on responding to conflict.

Nevertheless, with 17 goals, 169 targets and more than 200 indicators (some still to be finalized), the SDG agenda is a catalogue of ambitious and, perhaps for some, unattainable goals. Many fragile and conflict-affected countries did not succeed in meeting the MDGs. Within the goals, SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice and effective institutions represents the most obvious step towards integrating peace and security into the global development agenda. However, some 24 targets from 7 other SDGs also reflect aspirations for peaceful, just and inclusive societies.³⁶ It should be noted, however, that many countries are lagging in taking the first step towards delivering on the SDGs—setting national targets based on baseline data: only 48 per cent of developing countries even have a statistical plan developed for monitoring progress against the SDGs.³⁷

Inclusivity: moving beyond national ownership

A key principle of international assistance is that governments and populations in fragile, conflict-affected states should be the primary actors in developing and implementing initiatives to build and maintain peace and development in those societies.³⁸ Referred to variously as ‘local’, ‘national’ or ‘country’ ownership, this principle emerged from the problematic development and imposition of assistance programmes by external actors who often have imported foreign models without adequate consultation or understanding of recipients’ needs and context. However, the introduction of the concept of sustaining peace does little to reconcile conceptual ambiguity in practice, especially in resolving disagreements over which local actors should be the main drivers of sustaining peace reforms and initiatives: elected and government representatives or a broader group involving civil society and community groups. Moreover, regardless of the terminology,

³⁵ On the Sustainable Development Goals see Milante et al. (note 11).

³⁶ Steven, D., ‘SDG targets for fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies’, Center on International Cooperation, New York University, 29 July 2016, p. 1.

³⁷ See Paris21, *National Strategies for the Development of Statistics: Progress Report 2016*, Jan. 2016.

³⁸ See e.g. Principles 6 and 7 on promoting inclusive societies and aligning with local priorities in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), ‘Principles for good international engagement in fragile states and situations’, Apr. 2007.

while the principle of local ownership became routinely invoked in designing interventions to build peace and sustainable development, its implementation has remained less evident in practice.³⁹

The principle of national ownership was further strengthened by the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, launched in 2011 as the first set of principles to guide peacebuilding and state-building that was explicitly set out by fragile and conflict-affected states themselves.⁴⁰ Asserting that externally imposed solutions do not work, the New Deal rests on the mutual commitment of national and international partners to ‘country-owned and country-led’ exits from fragility, and effective use of resources to build local capacities and institutions.⁴¹ While external actors such as donors, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide critical support, funding, expertise or facilitation, it is national governments that remain in the driver’s seat according to the New Deal principles.

More recently, an even broader norm of inclusivity has emerged, based on growing acknowledgement that a broad array of local perspectives must be taken into account in efforts to facilitate peace, security and development in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. The concept of inclusivity reflects a refining of the understanding of the requirements of local, country or national ownership; as noted by the recent review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, international support has focused almost exclusively on supporting government ownership, while neglecting the wider societal context of stakeholders.⁴² Inclusive national ownership in post-conflict contexts must be shared across government and all key social strata, and across a spectrum of political opinion and domestic actors, including minorities.⁴³ Even deliberate efforts to integrate local actors into sustaining peace and sustainable development design may introduce only limited local perspectives because the local actors may be those whose language and education are accessible to stakeholders or who hold elite status, and they may be too few in number to represent the array of needs and preferences in that society. Indeed, in contexts with low local capacities, a small number of local civil society institutions may evolve to play dominant roles and become exclusionary in practice.⁴⁴ Consequently, there has emerged a belief that

³⁹ McCann, J., ‘Local ownership: an imperative for inclusive peacebuilding’, *Development Dialogue*, no. 63 (Dec. 2015), p. 17.

⁴⁰ Note that, in line with a year of reflection on the previous decade of UN action, the G7+ embarked on a similar reflective exercise. See Hearn, S., *Independent Review of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States for the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding* (Center on International Cooperation, New York University: New York, 2016), p. 19.

⁴¹ International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, ‘A new deal for engagement in fragile states’, Sep. 2011.

⁴² United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968-S/2015/490 (note 1), p. 8.

⁴³ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968-S/2015/490 (note 1), para. 44.

⁴⁴ McCann (note 39), p. 22.

both state and societal actors must be engaged in sustaining peace, and that only ‘multi-layered, broad-based participation’ is likely to provide a deeply rooted, collective understanding of the nature of its challenges and objectives.⁴⁵

The SDGs further sought to institutionalize the norm of inclusivity in sustaining peace and development, with the preamble declaring under the specific heading of peace: ‘We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies’. This is also directly expressed through SDG 16, which seeks to ‘promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels’.⁴⁶ Additionally, the 2030 Agenda resolution pledges no fewer than five times to ‘leave no one behind’ in development processes.⁴⁷

There remains, however, a significant lack of empirical evidence of the long-term impacts of engagement by local actors and institutions, such as whether peace outcomes are more sustainable than those led or initiated by external actors.⁴⁸ More systematic monitoring and evaluation of participatory processes in sustaining peace are needed to contribute an evidence base to the normative claims underpinning the shift towards greater inclusivity. Questions remain on how inclusive sustaining peace must be to succeed, who should be involved and what is inclusive enough.⁴⁹

In addition, while the commitments to sustaining peace are laudable in their language, realities on the ground have reflected global ambivalence to the peacebuilding agenda. First, the challenges of prevention are evident in countries that had all the warning signs of a high risk of conflict but little international appetite to engage in prevention (i.e. Syria, South Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen), but are even more complicated in cases where conflict risks and the value of prevention are less clear (i.e. Turkey, Myanmar and Mexico).⁵⁰ Second, the parallel resolutions have so far failed to secure fixed financing for sustaining peace. Financing options are being examined by a working group, and will be outlined in the Secretary-General’s report to the 72nd session of the General Assembly. However, signals throughout 2016 were mixed. At the September 2016 pledging conference, the UN Peacebuilding Fund (a small multi-donor trust fund) requested \$300 million in commitments, and received only \$151 million. On the other hand, replenish-

⁴⁵ McCann (note 39), p. 17.

⁴⁶ United Nations, General Assembly, A/RES/70/1 (note 7).

⁴⁷ United Nations, General Assembly, A/RES/70/1 (note 7).

⁴⁸ Özerdem, A. and Lee, S. Y., ‘Introduction’, eds A. Özerdem and S. Y. Lee, *Local Ownership in International Peacebuilding: Key Theoretical and Practical Issues* (Routledge: London and New York, 2015), p. 3.

⁴⁹ World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (World Bank: Washington, DC, 2011).

⁵⁰ Guéhenno, J.-M., ‘Ten conflicts to watch in 2017’, *Foreign Policy*, 5 Jan. 2017.

ment by donors of resources of the International Development Association in 2016 (referred to as 'IDA 18') resulted in increased total commitments for the IDA 18 term to \$75 billion over three years, with the World Bank committing to doubling resources to address fragility, conflict and violence to \$14 billion.⁵¹ The AGE Report recommended making assessed budget money available for programmatic purposes, and this was implemented.⁵² Moreover, a major, ongoing joint UN–World Bank study on the role of development in the prevention of conflict is considering how these two bodies can work better together to prevent conflict, and how the World Bank can channel funds more effectively, including how IDA 18 funds can be best spent.⁵³ However, bilateral donors lack clear commitments. The UK Department for International Development (DFID), for example, recently pledged to commit 50 per cent of resources to fragile states, but has not clearly defined what a fragile state is or where additional resources, if necessary, would come from.⁵⁴ It is unclear what the implications of the Trump Administration in the United States will be for US Agency for International Development (USAID) assistance to conflict-affected countries.

⁵¹ World Bank, 'Global community makes record \$75 billion commitment to end extreme poverty', Press Release 2017/129/IDA, 15 Dec. 2016.

⁵² See United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, A/69/968–S/2015/490 (note 1), para. 169.

⁵³ United Nations and World Bank, *Sustaining Peace: Making Development Work for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts*, Concept note, 13 Oct. 2016 (draft).

⁵⁴ House of Commons, International Development Committee, 'UK aid: allocation of resources—interim report', Third report of Session 2015–16, 22 Mar. 2016.