

**Summary of the key messages of the General Assembly  
Thematic Debate on “Ensuring Stable and Peaceful Societies”**

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The following is a summary of the key messages that emerged from the General Assembly Thematic Debate on “Ensuring Stable and Peaceful Societies”:

**Panel Discussion One: Nexus between sustainable development, peace and stability**

1. The post-2015 framework must address the root causes of instability, conflict and violence in order to build sustainable peace. It must recognize that it is impossible to achieve sustainable development in the context of violence, threats to the rule of law from criminal enterprises, fragility and armed conflict. To achieve the goal of peace, global stability and sustainability, collective action and partnerships are critical including those with international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), regional and sub- regional organizations, civil society, and the business sector.
2. The nature of violence and conflict is changing, with an increase in intra-state conflicts and a decrease in inter-state ones. Many pointed-out that violence is a global phenomenon, but its factors are becoming more complex and multidimensional. It is often political, economic and social challenges that drive political inequalities, civil rights exclusion, and injustices.
3. The link between the three pillars of the UN system, namely: peace and security, development and human rights remains more relevant today than ever before. In this context, a holistic approach should be developed to deal with this nexus. There cannot be peace without development or development without peace. Lasting respect for human rights cannot be achieved without peace and development.
4. The launching of the post-2015 agenda is a transformative moment that we should not miss. It (the post-2015 agenda) must address the modern needs, and the drivers of violence and war, such as inequalities, poverty, exclusion, corruption, environmental shocks and economic crises. The debate on the stable and peaceful societies is not and should not be focused on the securitization of development but on the humanization of security. Peace and good governance are development outcomes, as well as instrumental in addressing poverty and enabling sustainable development.
5. It was emphasized that there is a need to differentiate between stability and peace. Even if a country can perform well in achieving the MDGs, inequalities can persist due to weak rule of law and governance. International monitoring cannot and should not be tantamount to interference in internal affairs but needs to be advanced based national strategies. It is important to strive for universality but retain flexibility to respond to individual situations.
6. A people-centered approach to development will prove useful while emphasis should be placed on the participation of women in peace building and conflict prevention. Consideration should be given to reducing current military expenditure and channel it to education, health, and to programs to promote peace, especially policies that promote the inclusion of women and youth, as well as the protection of natural habitats. Furthermore,

the independence of justice systems and strengthening the capacity and governance at the local level will go a long way to help build trust and sustainable peace.

7. The discussion on the nexus between development and peace should not be misconstrued as an effort to redefine General Assembly Nations resolutions and/or undermine (encroach) on the work of UN bodies dealing with security. Instead, it was stressed that all relevant bodies need to work coherently for peace and stability, and not operate in silos.

#### **Panel Discussion Two: Strengthening national institutions towards achieving sustainable development**

8. The post-2015 development framework needs to be underpinned by national ownership and a solid monitoring mechanism. Responsive, transparent and strong institutions are also essential for overcoming poverty, as well as promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. In order to combat transnational crime efficient, effective, accessible, accountable and non-corrupt law enforcement agencies are vital.
9. It was stressed that corruption is a threat to both good governance and good institutions. Many criminal justice systems fall short of protecting human rights and the whole of society, especially vulnerable populations. We need to examine how institutions can contribute to peaceful societies and how this could be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda, so the international community provides support to national institutions.
10. The global institutional framework needs to adapt to the new challenges of sustainable development. At the national level, sustainability needs to be a cross-cutting theme of development plans to combat poverty and build a culture of peace. It is crucial to promote mechanisms for accountability and citizen participation. The fifth power of the state is citizen participation and social inclusion. This is the experience of Ecuador.
11. Many recognised the need to strengthen institutions at a multilateral level and define the common interest based on equilibrium, curbing excessive private accumulation of wealth and misappropriation of resources. Security is not only about defence, but we need to invest in the rule of law, civilian policing and the justice sector. Countries need to prioritize integrated socio-economic approaches to development. Conflicts cannot be solved without promoting good institutions, security, justice and employment.
12. Peacebuilding and the reduction of violence, crime and drug trafficking are relevant to sustainable development as there are benefits of citizens having access to courts, getting to work and attending schools in safety. Violence, conflict and crime reverse efforts and gains in poverty reduction.
13. Taking a development approach to security instead of a security approach to development empowers developing countries to choose their own development priorities. It will enable them to mobilize resources for reliable and transparent judiciaries or public administration, as easily as for education and health.
14. External stressors on national stability, such as demand for trafficked goods in developed countries need to be addressed through consolidated regional and international efforts. Including security in the sustainable development agenda will enable countries to enhance their development path. The agenda should focus on national capacity building to cope with violence and crime, rather than on external requirements. Institutions are the mediators

between the citizen and the state and need to provide key public services. Democratic participation and the recognition of citizens' rights, including the right to protest, serve as conflict prevention.

15. There was broad agreement that the agenda needs to address root causes including economic and social inequalities. It also needs to strengthen cross regional cooperation for resolution of disputes and border security to decrease international stress that could incite violence.
16. Women's human rights and gender equality, women's participation in disarmament and redirecting military spending towards equitable social development were highlighted. Independent media, freedom of speech and availability of data from public and private sector ought to be promoted. Short-term development and peacekeeping results need to be anchored in society through long term capacity building. This requires planning and investment.
17. It was noted that there is an elaborate UN institutional framework on security and peacekeeping. Sustainable development is underfunded and no further resources should be diverted to duplicate existing structures. There is growing concern over the securitization of the development agenda leading to additional conditionality of ODA, especially for developing countries.
18. The Sustainable Development Goals will form the core of the post-2015 development agenda. The mandate was derived from Rio+20 and this template consists of three pillars, without a fourth security pillar. The democratic deficit of the UN system and international organisations needs to be addressed to give developing countries a more effective voice.

### **Panel Discussion Three: Global partnership for ensuring stable and peaceful societies**

19. Many recognised the need to move from the traditional reactive approach and rising military spending towards a constructive, preventive, inclusive and developmental approach to stability and peaceful societies. Peace and stability without inclusive economic prosperity and development will remain difficult to achieve and maintain.
20. A new development paradigm is emerging, and this paradigm will require a new toolkit for it to be successful. One of the important decisions of the Rio+20 Conference was to stress the universality of the future development goals. This universality should mean that each country can gain but also contribute to the renewed global partnership needed to achieve these new development goals.
21. Collective action and partnerships are critical for ensuring stable and peaceful societies and sustainable development both at the national and international level, with international organizations such as the UN, regional and sub-regional organizations, civil society, and business sector.
22. Partnerships need to be mutually beneficial to all actors involved, and take a people-centred approach in all actions. Value of true ownership and coherence of international support cannot be stressed enough. Chronic instability reduces the possibilities of individuals to reach their full potential and thereby hinders poverty eradication and sustainable development. Effectiveness of traditional development assistance has been considerably

weaker in countries affected by conflict. New partnerships need to provide tailored, country-specific hands on support to countries. They need to help countries to tackle root causes such as land conflict, corruption, weakness of security capacity and governance among others.

23. Development partnerships need to support national institutional building and governance in order to support countries themselves to provide employment and inclusive prosperity to their citizens. Open, participatory governance and inclusive partnerships require involvement of all actors also at the grass-root level. Partnerships should foster civil society engagement and build citizens capacity to meaningfully participate in processes relating to their everyday life.
24. Private sector can both advance and hinder the achievement of stable and peaceful societies. Enterprises can provide decent employment and economic opportunities to local citizens and abide by rule of law thereby strengthening stability of conflict-ridden areas, but they can also hinder progress through violations of human rights, detrimental environmental practices and corruption.
25. Without commitments to address external stressors that fuel violent conflict, development and peace prospects will be undermined. Stressors such as trafficking in arms, drugs, humans, or natural resources, organized crime, illicit financial flows and spill-overs from armed conflict in neighbouring countries need to be tackled.
26. Overall, it was recognised that through collective resolve, the international community can design an ambitious post-2015 agenda that truly leaves no one behind and that supports all societies, including those grappling with conflicts and instability, in their efforts to build a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous future for all. In this context, concrete targets on these issues could be considered as a universal way of taking joint responsibility of global peace and stability.