



Discussion Paper

Armed Conflict: Mediation, Conciliation, and Peacekeeping

Independent Commission on Multilateralism

May 2016

INTRODUCTION

From the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, to the rekindling of long-standing conflicts in places such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Somalia, to the desperate waves of refugees arriving in Europe, to the specter of sectarian violence in Burundi and elsewhere, recent events have challenged the international system to provide adequate responses.

The persistence of armed conflict lies at the center of each of these crises, and it motivates a growing perception that global stability is at risk. However, taking a long view of history, the world is less war-torn than in previous centuries.¹ This trend was particularly evident in the immediate post-Cold War period; between 1992 and 2005 the number of armed conflicts dropped by as much as 40 percent.² Yet this historic decline in armed conflict notwithstanding, recent years have exhibited troubling trends in the opposite direction. While the number of armed conflicts continues to decline, the number of conflict-related deaths has risen dramatically, from 56,000 fatalities in sixty-three active conflicts in 2008 to 180,000 fatalities in forty-two active conflicts in 2014.³ Since 2007, the number of high-intensity and long-lasting conflicts has in fact increased. This includes the conflicts in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic (CAR), the DRC, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine.⁴ These high-intensity conflicts have resulted in a growing number of people killed and a vast expansion of the number of people displaced by conflict. There are now more refugees and internally displaced people in the world than at any time since World War Two.

Furthermore, recent armed conflicts have proven to be particularly resistant to peaceful settlement, as the cases of Afghanistan, the CAR, Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine suggest. There are at least two contributing factors to consider here. First, conflicts that are principally intra-state have become increasingly internationalized, whether through direct intervention or indirect support for one party or another by an outside actor.⁵ The wars in the CAR, Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine, not to mention the long-standing conflict in the DRC, all involve interventions by external states in an internal armed conflict. In a recent study of UN attempts to broker peace in Syria, Raymond Hinnebusch and I. William Zartman argue that outside intervention decisively explains why the Syrian conflict has been so unreceptive to mediation.⁶

Second, the involvement of new types of armed non-state actors has made recent conflict less conducive to resolution through the traditional tools of mediation and preventive diplomacy. Such actors include violent Islamist extremist groups, like the so-called Islamic State (also called ISIS or Daesh)

¹ Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (New York: Viking, 2011).

² Andrew Mack, "Global Political Violence: Explaining the Post-Cold War Decline," Coping with Crisis Working Paper Series, International Peace Academy, March 2007; Human Security Centre, *Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

³ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Armed Conflict Survey 2015* (New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 78.

⁴ Center for Systemic Peace, "Global Conflict Trends," n.d., available at www.systemicpeace.org/conflicttrends.html. See also, Sebastian von Einsiedel, et al., "Major Recent Trends in Violent Conflict," UNU-CPR Occasional Paper 1, United Nations University, Tokyo, November 2014.

⁵ Von Einsiedel, et al., "Major Recent Trends in Violent Conflict," p. 6.

⁶ Raymond Hinnebusch and I. William Zartman, "UN Mediation in the Syrian Crisis: From Kofi Annan to Lakhdar Brahimi," International Peace Institute, March 2016, p. 8.

and Boko Haram, and transnational networks of organized crime. Unlike more traditional non-state parties to armed conflicts, such as liberation movements and separatist or leftist guerilla groups of the past, violent Islamist extremist groups, pervasive in the conflicts of the Middle East and North Africa, do not aspire to join the international system of member states; they stand in direct opposition to it. Thus, their *raison d'être* would seem to disallow any diplomatic settlement. And, moreover, many member states and international organizations have rules and policies that make engaging with such actors, usually listed as terrorist organizations, difficult or impossible.

Similarly, the presence of organized crime in conflict settings exacerbates conflict dynamics. While some small-scale, local networks of organized crime can provide livelihoods and alternative governance in areas where the state is absent, access to the illicit funds of transnational organized crime, through trafficking and other activities, can sustain conflict longer than would be possible otherwise and can create disincentives for settlement.⁷ This interconnectivity of political objectives, the presence and incentives of crime, and the rise of violent extremism has in some cases blurred the lines between armed conflict as defined by international humanitarian law and other forms of violence, complicating the capacity of the UN and other international actors to respond with the traditional tools of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.⁸

It was in this context that the UN system set out to review key elements of its peace and security architecture in 2015 and to ask whether the traditional tools of the multilateral system are adequate to the task at hand. The year 2015 also saw other UN initiatives that contributed to the aspiration for a more peaceful, just, and inclusive world, including the negotiations leading to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Building on these reviews and related initiatives, this report asks a number of questions: How does the current context of armed conflict affect the capacity of the multilateral system to maintain international peace and security? What does it mean for peacekeeping missions to operate where there is no peace to keep? And how can mediation processes address conflict environments where armed non-state actors have broad impact but little incentive to join negotiations and where conflicts are increasingly fought by proxy? What does peace mean when more people are killed by criminal violence than armed conflict? And how can rhetoric on prevention be turned into action in order to maintain peace over the long term? To address these questions and more, this paper is divided into two chapters. Chapter One addresses the issues of “Mediation and Peacebuilding” and Chapter Two discusses “Peacekeeping.”

⁷ Von Einsiedel, “Major Recent Trends in Armed Conflict,” p. 5. See also James Cockayne and Adam Lupel, *Peace Operations and Organized Crime: Enemies or Allies?* (London: Routledge, 2011).

⁸ On “hybrid war,” see Max Boot, “Countering Hybrid Warfare,” in International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Armed Conflict Survey 2015*, pp. 11-20.

CHAPTER ONE: MEDIATION AND PEACEBUILDING

Introduction

Mediation and peacebuilding are not new. For as long as there has been war, there have been efforts to end violence and to build, strengthen, or maintain peace. What is newer, however, is the vast institutional architecture for mediation and peacebuilding. International and regional organizations, international donors, and some individual countries have developed extensive frameworks, guidelines, program plans, and policies to help support efforts to bring about peace in areas affected by violent conflict. In 2015, three panels reviewed the performance of the UN peace and security architecture in light of the changing global environment and made a number of recommendations to help make this architecture fit for purpose. These panels included the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, and the High-Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

Alongside the proliferation in the number of actors and institutions engaged in mediation and peacebuilding, there has been an increase in scholarly journals, articles, and reports focusing on the ideas, practices, successes, and failures of mediation and peacebuilding. However, this prolific literature has not resulted in consensus about what constitutes peace and how to build it when it is broken. Existing practices and institutions have been questioned in terms of their **end goals** and **legitimacy**. There has been a regionalization of peace and security issues, but this has not resolved thorny legitimacy issues. Debates about the **effectiveness** of regional and international mediation and peacebuilding focus on whether current approaches are outdated, or whether they can be adapted to respond to contemporary forms of violence. While the multilateral system tends to compartmentalize various issues and responses, current threats to global health, the environment, and security highlight the systemic and interdependent nature of the factors that drive conflict and sustain peace.

Traditional normative and institutional guideposts for mediation and peacebuilding are therefore precarious and questioned by different actors. At the same time, protest and political action by networks of people and citizen movements in many parts of the world, facilitated by more expansive communication technologies, present both opportunities and risks for mediation and peacebuilding.

This chapter is roughly divided into two sections. The first section deals with current debates in mediation and peacebuilding. The second section explores institutional challenges, gaps, and blind spots. The chapter is a starting point for discussion rather than a definitive road map for the future. It emphasizes the diversity of views on mediation and peacebuilding and uncovers some of the assumptions that inform dominant international and regional approaches. Perhaps most importantly, it questions current foundations for peacebuilding, which tend to be based upon an analysis of conflict followed by efforts to stop or reduce violence. The chapter suggests that a reframing of our understanding of what constitute peace and conflict from the perspective of those at the receiving end may provide an alternative, context-sensitive foundation for peacebuilding.

I. Current Debates in Mediation and Peacebuilding

There has been a robust debate about end goals, the appropriateness and legitimacy of actors, and the effectiveness of mediation and peacebuilding processes.

End Goals

Although diverse mediators and peacebuilders all claim to be working toward reducing violence and promoting peace, their underlying visions of peace can be quite different. Sometimes, this has been framed as a debate over whether to prioritize **negative peace** (the absence of direct physical violence) or **positive peace** (the absence of structural violence). While end goals are usually assumed rather than explicitly discussed, essential questions about politics are at stake, including issues of representation, equality, accountability, solidarity, and justice.

In the face of enduring and new forms of organized violence, stability tends to be the first priority. In mediation, this may be expressed in terms of reaching a cease-fire agreement between belligerents to create space for moving parties from violence to politics. In peacebuilding, this may be expressed in terms of building states equipped with a modicum of capacity to guarantee security and to control the expression of violent identities. Order is prioritized, even if this order is attained through coercive measures. Paradoxically, increased militarization and securitization can thus be seen as laying the foundations for peace and stability.

Prioritizing **stabilization** as a peacebuilding strategy has become increasingly prevalent since the 9/11 attacks on the United States and the subsequent “global war on terrorism.” Many mediators and peacebuilders believe that stabilization is a necessary first step. Some believe that outsiders lack legitimacy to undertake more extensive peacebuilding tasks, thus leaving them to pursue stabilization. Important international interests, including business and military interests, may converge with the interests of dominant national elites in favor of stabilization and securitization.

The limits and ethics of stabilization and securitization have been criticized. Thus, for some mediators and peacebuilders, the end goal is **liberal governance** or some kind of social contract governing the relationship between the state and its citizens. Discussions over the contours of such a governance framework are often included as part of the mediation process. Peacebuilding programming often includes elements of statebuilding and strengthening the rule of law. The “order” of peace is thus promoted through law, human rights norms, democratic representation, and (often) the privileging of the state.

Another approach to mediation and peacebuilding prioritizes an end goal of **social justice**, rather than order through stabilization or liberal governance. If this is the desired end goal, mediation and peacebuilding must include a discussion of global and national inequalities. This view of peace requires a change in institutions and frameworks through which people express their views and grievances so that all types of knowledge and experience are equally privileged. Implementing this end goal is perhaps the

most difficult, because it requires radically reconstituted identities and veritable shifts in power, which go against the interests of dominant global and national actors.⁹

Mediators and peacebuilders may hold a normative commitment to all three of these end goals, but at times they may be in tension with one another. Adopting a stabilization approach, for instance through prioritizing a cease-fire and bolstering the state security forces, may limit the chances for certain social justice ends in the future.

Actors

A wide range of international, regional, national, and community actors are involved in mediation and peacebuilding. Current approaches frame the problem in terms of finding the appropriate **division of labor** between different actors, but this glosses over some of the more difficult dilemmas.

One dilemma is that different actors have different normative commitments and goals, as described above. Mediators must be accepted, credible, and well-supported, but they always have their own set of interests, whether they are international organizations, states, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or private individuals. This may translate into mediators' desire to reach an agreement for organizational/bureaucratic reasons or for prestige. Or mediators may desire to reach a particular kind of agreement due to normative concerns or security and economic considerations. Likewise, peacebuilders have a range of different interests. If peacebuilding frameworks are built from the starting point of conflict resolution, stabilization, and pacification, then outsiders and national elites are going to have the upper hand. On the other hand, if community ideas about peace and social justice are the starting points, then internal actors are the key players.

There are also important debates about the legitimacy of international actors. In particular, some people have voiced concerns over the perceived erosion of state sovereignty under the guise of international peacebuilding. Indeed, some people question the very premise that outside intervention can be characterized as peacebuilding. There are also criticisms that international peacebuilding frameworks are ineffective due to the disjuncture between the peacebuilding requirements of local communities and the goals of external mediators and peacebuilders. One possibility is to look toward continental and regional bodies, but these institutions have tended to adopt mediation and peacebuilding logic similar to their international counterparts, relying heavily upon liberal governance or securitization and stabilization packages.

Recently, there have been calls to open up space for participation by a broader range of actors, including faith-based leaders, representatives of ethnic communities, women's groups, youth organizations, civil society groups, and citizen networks. This requires different forms of engagement, such as moving mediation and peacebuilding away from international hotels and heavily fortified compounds and into the places where people actually live. It also relies upon local capacity for negotiation and the assumption that socially-embedded forms of governance are more likely to result in peaceful relations. While there is something to be learned from so-called "local" alternatives, enthusiasm for local or

⁹ See Devon Curtis, "The Contested Politics of Peacebuilding in Africa," in *Peacebuilding, Power, and Politics in Africa*, edited by Devon Curtis and Gwinyayi A Dzinesa (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012).

indigenous “solutions” could mask serious shortcomings. Much of the literature on “local” approaches to peace reproduces a flawed distinction between a liberal, rational, and modern West and a culturally distinct “local” space. In addition, focusing on local alternatives may overlook the shortcomings of local governance systems, which are not necessarily legitimate or accountable to those who live under them.¹⁰

Process

Mediation Processes

The trend in international and regional mediation has been to **professionalize** the process and draw upon a cadre of experts who have experience and knowledge of best practices. There is an increasing insistence on process design and analysis. There are still questions, however, about how to professionalize and set standards while still allowing for contextual variation and different requirements in various communities.

Mediation typically includes **track I** (formal, official, governmental) processes and **track II** (informal, unofficial, nongovernmental) processes. These efforts sometimes occur simultaneously. Sometimes track II mediation takes the lead when the context does not lend itself to third-party external intervention. In this context, there are debates about whether coordination is desirable or feasible and about the best mechanisms for dialogue to help ensure that processes do not contradict one another.

Another issue relates to the main focus of mediation activities. Much attention is given to the actual mediation and the issues discussed around the negotiation table. The focus is on reaching an agreement at that table, with less attention on the wider process. Focusing on negotiations at the table obscures some of the wider issues, such as representation and inclusivity. In other words, some people argue that there should be a greater focus on longer-term processes rather than agreement.

One of the most difficult decisions in the mediation process is the question of whom to engage and with which instruments. When and why are carrots appropriate and effective, as opposed to sticks? It is usually deemed necessary to involve non-state armed groups in mediation processes, as they are often parties to the conflict and have the capacity to wreak violence and spoil any peace agreement that does not include them. The UN secretary-general, in his report on the recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), concurred with the panel’s recommendation that peace processes should not exclude anyone. The question is who should approach these groups to understand their worldview and mindset, even though some national laws or UN sanctions proscribe contact with them? Were it possible to reach out to them, how could this be done without appeasing them or appearing to reward violence, thereby providing an incentive for other aggrieved groups to take up arms?

It is also generally seen as important to involve *unarmed* non-state actors, such as civil society groups or political opposition groups. Yet there remain questions about the representativeness of such groups.

¹⁰ Devon Curtis, “The Limits of Statebuilding for Peace in Africa,” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 20, no. 1 (2013).

How can mediators be sure that these organizations and groups represent a significant segment of society?

The gendered dimensions of mediation have also been increasingly acknowledged, but there is still much work to do in this area. It has become clear that it is important to involve women in both track I and track II processes, as participants and as mediators. Yet the precise mechanisms through which the participation of women will bring about a more sustainable peace are debated. Furthermore, an increase in the number of women does not necessarily guarantee that gender issues will be adequately addressed, so other systems need to be established to ensure an integrated gender perspective in analyzing the context and devising mediation responses. In Colombia, for example, the way in which women from the warring parties organized themselves to actively participate in the ongoing peace process in Havana seems to have helped overcome some of the impediments associated with integrating gender in peace processes. Observers have credited Colombian women peacemakers and those who were members of victim delegations to the peace process for the meaningful gendered results achieved thus far.

Peacebuilding Processes

There are questions regarding sequencing, timing, and coordination of peacebuilding processes. The problem with a sequenced approach is that conflict changes, and processes therefore must remain flexible and adaptable. Peacebuilders have to deal with rapidly changing contexts and shifts in power dynamics within countries and regions. How can peacebuilders' programmatic requirements and timelines be reconciled with changing peacebuilding environments and contexts? How can diverse approaches to peacebuilding be accommodated within a single coordinated strategy without limiting voices and privileging powerful actors?

The current trend is to recognize the importance of both top-down peacebuilding processes based upon international and regional programs and national elites, as well as bottom-up peacebuilding processes based upon the coping strategies and resources of affected communities and peoples. Although the mechanisms to connect these different processes are underdeveloped, the 2015 review of the UN's peacebuilding architecture recommended principles and practices to move forward.

For example, where the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) facilitates strategic frameworks with countries affected by conflict, it can ensure the participation of civil society, including women's organizations and youth groups. The PBC can advocate for national leaders to include diverse perspectives and local representatives in setting national peacebuilding priorities and action plans.¹¹ In addition to approaches based on convening, such as national dialogues or local peace committees, new technologies and social media can also be leveraged to foster dialogue and broaden participation in political processes.¹²

As with mediation processes, the importance of adopting a gender perspective in peacebuilding is widely recognized. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, aims to ensure

¹¹ United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture*, UN Doc. A/69/968-S/2015/490, June 30, 2015, p. 57.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

that peacebuilding efforts are sensitive to gendered violence and gendered inequalities. Nonetheless, there is still a gap between the discourse on gender and actual practices when dealing with military, economic, political, and socio-legal aspects of peacebuilding. Security Council Resolution 2242 on Women, Peace, and Security, adopted in 2015, seeks to address this gap for both mediation and peacebuilding processes. This is reflected in the Global Study on the Implementation of Resolution 1325, which recommends that the UN and member states support women’s engagement not only in a particular round of peace negotiations but throughout every phase of a peace or transition process—including implementation and peacebuilding.¹³

II. Institutional Challenges and Gaps

The debates described above highlight the normative contestation and practical dilemmas and tensions in the fields of mediation and peacebuilding. At the institutional level, these debates are reflected in a number of gaps, including political gaps, bureaucratic gaps, and an ideas gap.

Power and Political Challenges

Part of the problem in reforming mediation and peacebuilding practices and shifting from approaches that focus on conflict and stabilization toward approaches that draw on peace and social justice can be explained through power dynamics. Put simply, there are enormous vested interests at the international, regional, and national levels in maintaining the status quo, which favors a particular world order with its inherent inequalities and privileges. Dominant groups, particularly those steeped in the certainty that they stand for universal goods, may allow for some institutional tinkering around the edges, but they are unlikely to advocate changes that will lead to a reversal of their power. Thus, understanding the geopolitics of mediation and peacebuilding, as well as the politics within individual countries and regions, is of paramount importance.

The challenge of financing mediation and peacebuilding reflects these political shortcomings. Most UN funds for mediation support come from ever-shrinking extra-budgetary resources. The recent normative advances in mediation have not been matched by financial commitments. This trend is somewhat offset by some regional and national efforts that devote more time and resources to promoting mediation as a function of governance and conflict prevention. But financing for peacebuilding activities is greatly overshadowed by budgets for peacekeeping and peace enforcement, on the one hand, and development, on the other. In the case of peacekeeping, the limited funds dedicated to peacebuilding components tend to dry up when the mission exits or morphs into another type of presence. The HIPPO report made a number of recommendation to help address financing gaps.

Institutional/Bureaucratic Challenges

Partly in response to calls for increased professionalization, new institutional structures for mediation have been established. The **UN Mediation Support Unit** was established in 2006 within the UN Department of Political Affairs, and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and Southern

¹³ Radhika Coomaraswamy, et al., “Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, and Securing the Peace: Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,” UN Women, 2015, pp. 58-59.

African Development Community (SADC) have also placed greater institutional emphasis on their mediation activities.

Within these institutions, there are problems of financing and questions about coordination and complementarity. There are also institutional structural questions. The *UN Guidance for Effective Mediation*, published in 2012, is premised on the fact that these processes are intergovernmental. Yet some of the new and emerging violent conflicts do not lend themselves to external third-party mediation. Where regional or local mediation efforts take place, they tend to be led by partial, insider mediators.

The peacebuilding institutional architecture is even more diffuse. The **UN Peacebuilding Commission** (PBC) was established in 2005 in an attempt to provide an intergovernmental forum for peacebuilding. Nonetheless, the PBC has been plagued by bureaucratic disagreements and structural limitations. Likewise, at the field level peacebuilding activities remain fragmented and insignificant. The return of violence in Burundi and the CAR have raised questions about the continued relevance and credibility of the peacebuilding architecture, since both these countries had benefited from a PBC country-specific configuration. As a result, the UN peacebuilding architecture is perceived as lacking power, and the PBC is not always consulted when peace operations with significant peacebuilding components are conceived.

The **2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture** provided a good diagnosis of the challenges facing this intergovernmental structure.¹⁴ The Review called for the reframing of peacebuilding as an enterprise to sustain peace that should not be confined to post-conflict situations, and it urged the PBC to attempt to break down the structural silos that separate the peace and security, development, and human rights pillars of its work. This call is reflected in a new vision for the UN's peacebuilding architecture adopted in identical resolutions by the Security Council and the General Assembly in April 2016, which establishes sustaining peace as a new system-wide framework for the UN.¹⁵

In these resolutions, sustaining peace is both a goal and a process—one that is inherently political and that spans prevention, mediation, conflict management and resolution, and peacebuilding. There is hope that the sustaining peace framework will empower the PBC to engage in prevention, a needed departure from its past mandate and programming. The PBC is also called upon to realize its bridging role among the UN's principal organs by sharing advice on coherence and priorities, broadening its strategic convening role, and working in greater cooperation with the Security Council, General Assembly, and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Overall, the resolutions elevate the responsibility for peacebuilding to include all parts of the UN and feature strong links to the development system and a strengthened role for the leadership of UN country teams in taking on peacebuilding.¹⁶

¹⁴ United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture*.

¹⁵ Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

¹⁶ Arthur Boutellis and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, "Working Together for Peace: Synergies and Connectors for Implementing the 2015 UN Reviews," International Peace Institute, May 2016, p. 27.

There has also been an increase in **regional institutional structures** for peacebuilding. For instance, in 2006, the AU adopted a Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework (AU-PCRD), and some African subregional organizations have also developed peacebuilding units and initiatives. Yet these structures tend to suffer from the same kind of bureaucratic impediments as their international counterparts.

More generally, there is the question of whether the current architecture is equipped to deal with contemporary forms of violence. The institutional system is state-centric and is well-equipped to respond to disputes between or within states, and their aftermath. However, health, environmental, and security challenges have local, regional, and international dimensions. While scholarship has long shown that networks of violence and peace are overlapping and interlinked locally, regionally, and globally, policy responses to violence largely remain in separate silos. Thus, there are questions about whether current institutional structures are appropriate for peacebuilding challenges resulting from urban violence and protest, religious or communally-inspired localized violence, transnational organized crime, and networks for arms trafficking or resource transfers. The various reviews make a number of recommendations seeking to address this point.

The Challenge of Vision and Ideas

Institutional challenges are not only the result of political and bureaucratic gaps; there has also been a gap in ideas and vision. The 2015 reviews helped to stimulate and collect new ideas and innovations in peacebuilding, but there is still a need to feed these ideas into the policy sphere. The resolutions on sustaining peace adopted in April 2016 require the secretary-general to report progress on a range of peacebuilding issues in September 2017—from more sustainable funding to better support for women and youth—and this should be viewed as an opportunity for the UN to test new models and turn successful and cooperative precedents into regular practice.¹⁷ In the past, the UN has introduced initiatives to become a “learning organization,” but it has had difficulty putting these into practice. In part, this is because existing relations of power and existing institutional structures heavily circumscribe the boundaries of the debate.

What would it mean to think more creatively about vision and ideas? At a minimum, the debate should be more inclusive and representative. It is tempting for institutions to draw on the ideas of known experts, since they already speak the requisite institutional language and know the acceptable limits of the debate. Inevitably, however, the result is well-established recommendations that, at best, will provide minimal incremental change that is unlikely to sustain peace in the long term. Indeed, the new resolutions on sustaining peace call for broader partnerships that include regional and national partners, as well as civil society organizations. This should be taken as cause to consult and learn from a much more diverse set of voices.

¹⁷ Youssef Mahmoud and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, “With New Resolutions, Sustaining Peace Sits at Heart of UN Architecture,” *Global Observatory*, April 29, 2016.

III. Conclusions

This chapter has shown that many of the key gaps and institutional challenges related to mediation and peacebuilding can be traced to normative debates about the drivers of conflict and the factors associated with peaceful and just societies. Current approaches and institutions tend to see peace through the lens of conflict, rather than taking peace itself as the starting point.

If the discussion is recalibrated toward understanding what enables peace, it may be necessary to redefine the purpose and vision of **mediation and peacebuilding**. For example, a more citizen-oriented approach to peacebuilding would put more emphasis on people's agency in describing conflict and peace and prescribing solutions. There are some interesting initiatives in that direction. For instance, researchers at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies are working to define the concept of "quality peace" and have developed a Peace Accord Matrix that provides comparable data on the content of various peace agreements.¹⁸ The Institute for Economics and Peace has developed a Global Peace Index based on twenty-two qualitative and quantitative indicators.¹⁹ They have also developed a Positive Peace Index with eight categories, which they call the Pillars of Peace, with twenty-four indicators. These pillars include factors such as the respect for the rights of others, the equitable distribution of resources, and levels of human capital. The pillars are interdependent, and the strength of the relationship between them changes depending on specific circumstances within each country.²⁰ Other attempts aim to devise peace indexes at the community level.

There are signs that people around the world are disillusioned by existing structures of power. They are using multiple forms of protest to advance claims in support of more legitimate and accountable forms of politics. While the outcome of these protests is far from certain, it is an opportune time to reconsider existing ideas and frameworks for preventing violent conflict and building sustainable peace. This chapter has shown that various approaches to mediation and peacebuilding carry with them certain assumptions about which questions and whose interests take precedence over others. The result is a fragmented and contradictory set of practices seeking to shape the nature and exercise of power in countries emerging from conflict.

Ultimately, peacebuilding is a political contest, where peace is not a universally recognized object or finishing line but a set of contested ideas and practices that play out differently in various parts of the world. At a minimum, it seems necessary to unpack the notions of peace and conflict that lie behind particular mediation and peacebuilding frameworks and processes, since these inevitably privilege some people and ideas over others. Context-sensitive analyses that include the views of those at the receiving end, particularly women and youth, will go a long way in helping with this unpacking.

¹⁸ Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, "Peace Accords Matrix," 2015, available at <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/>.

¹⁹ Institute for Economics and Peace, "2015 Global Peace Index," available at <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/our-gpi-findings>.

²⁰ Institute for Economics and Peace, "Positive Peace Report 2015," available at <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/news/1264>.

Peacebuilding and mediation are among the many political tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes enshrined in Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Last year's three global policy reviews on peace and security have called for greater focus on prevention and mediation to counter what was perceived as an overreliance on military and other coercive measures in addressing new and enduring threats to international peace and security. Despite some recent normative advances, peacebuilding remains a nebulous and contested field under the best circumstances, particularly when outsiders drive it. Mediation is equally under stress, largely due to the changing nature of contemporary conflict, where the state is at times the perpetrator of violence against civilians and where armed groups hold extremist views that do not easily lend themselves to negotiation or third-party, external mediation. Both peacebuilding and mediation suffer from severe underfunding. The Advisory Group of Experts on the review of the Peacebuilding Architecture made several recommendations to address this shortcoming and called for the reframing of peacebuilding as an enterprise to sustain peace that should not be confined to post-conflict situations.

CHAPTER TWO: PEACEKEEPING

I. Mapping the Terrain: The Growth of UN Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping, although not explicitly provided for in the UN Charter, has become the most visible activity of the United Nations. Despite all the challenges and crises it has faced and the changes it has experienced, peacekeeping remains one of the most important conflict management tools at the disposal of the multilateral system.

The first peacekeeping operation, authorized in 1948, consisted of unarmed military observers, and the first armed operations were deployed in 1956 in the context of the Suez Crisis. It is only in the 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, that UN peacekeeping saw its first important expansion, rising briefly to 75,000 blue helmets before dropping again, then expanding steadily since 2000. There are now more UN peacekeepers on the ground than ever before, with 125,000 UN personnel (military, police, and civilians) deployed in sixteen peacekeeping missions across four continents with an annual budget exceeding \$8 billion.

At the same time, the nature and ambitions of peacekeeping have evolved considerably. Peacekeeping went from cease-fire monitoring between states to complex "multidimensional" missions with increasingly long mandates. These mandates can now include ensuring the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements; assisting in laying the foundations for sustainable peace; supporting the extension of state authority; monitoring human rights; organizing elections; overseeing security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; and protecting civilians under imminent threat.

The peacekeeping bureaucracy expanded with the creation, in 1992, of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)—separate from the Department of Political Affairs (DPA)—in response to the need for "force generation" and for running increasingly large and complex peace operations. In 2007, the Department of Field Support (DFS) was created to provide a more integrated logistical and administrative support system to field missions, as was the Office of Rule of Law and Security

Institutions (OROLSI), under DPKO. These new agencies created a new set of challenges to integration and coherence in the UN.²¹

Although UN peacekeeping operations since the 1990s have almost exclusively been authorized by the Security Council, this has not always been the case. Earlier missions have been authorized by the General Assembly, which also retains an important role in determining the mission budgets through its Fifth Committee. And while early observer missions were authorized under Chapter VI of the UN Charter (“Pacific Settlement of Disputes”), peacekeeping operations—many recent ones coined “stabilization” missions—have increasingly being authorized under Chapter VII²² and have directed peacekeepers to use force to protect civilians where possible.²³

With the growth of peacekeeping, however, came many challenges and much questioning of the model from within and without, particularly when peacekeepers are asked to manage conflict rather than keep peace. The basic principles (consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate) and philosophy that support the peacekeeping model have been under stress, and the gap between expectations and means (political, financial, military, etc.) has often led to the perception that peacekeeping does not work. Many question whether peacekeeping is still “fit for purpose” to respond to challenges such as the growing complexity of some local and regional conflicts, people’s growing aspirations for change, fluctuating consent of host-country governments, assertive regional organizations wanting to play a greater role in maintaining peace in their regions, and the spread of violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

II. Current Debates

The HIPPO Report

In light of the challenges faced by peacekeeping and other field-based peace operations, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon established a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) late in his second term, on October 31, 2014, to comprehensively assess the state of UN peace operations today and emerging needs in the future. This was the first comprehensive review of UN peacekeeping since the 2000 “Brahimi Report,” which had been written by a panel of ten experts in response to the dramatic failures of UN peacekeeping in the 1990s, especially in Rwanda, Somalia, and Srebrenica in Bosnia. The HIPPO, a sixteen-member panel chaired by José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste, considered a broad range of issues facing peace operations, encompassing both UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions, to reflect the fact that field-based special political missions managed by DPA have gained considerable importance under this secretary-general and could be described as “light peacekeeping.”

²¹ Arthur Boutellis, “Driving the System Apart? A Study of United Nations Integration and Integrated Strategic Planning,” International Peace Institute, August 2013, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_driving_the_system_apart.pdf.

²² Charter of the United Nations, “Chapter VII,” 1945.

²³ Joachim Koops, Norrie MacQueen, Thierry Tardy, and Paul D. Williams, “Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, July 2015).

In June 2015, the HIPPO released its report,²⁴ which put forward over 100 recommendations and called for four essential shifts in the future design and delivery of UN peace operations:

1. “Politics” must drive the design, deployment, and implementation of UN peace operation mandates as political solutions rather than military or technical ones. It also called on member states to help mobilize renewed political efforts to keep peace processes on track when momentum behind peace falters.
2. Peace operations should be tailored to the context, using the “full spectrum of UN peace operations” flexibly rather than past “peacekeeping” versus “special political missions” templates. It also called on the UN to strengthen analysis, strategy, and planning and on the Security Council to adopt “sequenced and prioritized mandates” to allow missions to develop over time.
3. A stronger “global-regional peace and security partnership” is needed to respond to crises, and such partnership should be based on enhanced collaboration and consultation, as well as mutual respect and mutual responsibilities.
4. UN peace operations must become more “field-focused and people-centered.”

The Report of an Outgoing UN Secretary-General

In September 2015, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon released his own follow-on report outlining his agenda and “priorities and key actions” to move the HIPPO recommendations forward by the end of 2016, when his term ends.²⁵ In this report, he endorsed the HIPPO’s “primacy of politics” and use of the term “peace operations” to denote the full spectrum of responses (i.e., making flexible use of all UN crisis management tools available, tailored to the conflict and the political strategy). This is both an opportunity to remedy the current fragmentation in the work of UN entities in charge of implementing the organization’s peace and security agenda through “a continuum of response and smoother transitions” and a channel for the first shift the HIPPO called for (i.e., for peace operations to be guided by political solutions—with a particular focus on prevention and mediation—and “for the Security Council to bring its collective political leverage to bear on behalf of political solutions”). The secretary-general seconded the panel’s cautious approach to the use of force and its conclusion that UN peace operations are not the appropriate tool for military counterterrorism operations.

The secretary-general also called for stronger global-regional partnerships, in particular with the AU, an organization that has carried out peace enforcement missions from Somalia (with some support from the UN assessed budget) to Mali and the CAR (two operations that the UN has since taken over). The relationship between the two institutions has deepened over the years, and a new Joint UN-AU Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security is due to be signed in 2016. The secretary-general’s report, however, did not go as far as the HIPPO—which had been well-received by African member states—when it came to the contentious issue of financing AU peace operations. Both

²⁴ United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnership, and People: Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, June 16, 2015.

²⁵ United Nations Secretary-General, *The Future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/357–S/2015/682, September 2, 2015.

the HIPPO and the secretary-general called for “a pragmatic case-by-case approach,” but the HIPPO also called for UN “enabling support—including through more predictable financing—to the African Union peace support operations when authorized by the Security Council” (as previously recommended by the Prodi Report of 2008).²⁶

Some of the more concrete measures presented in the secretary-general’s report relate to “new ways of planning and conducting peace operations to make them faster, more responsive, and more accountable to countries and people in conflict.” These include the establishment of a small, centralized unit for analysis and planning in the secretary-general’s office to enhance the capacity of the Secretariat to conduct conflict analysis and strategic planning across the UN system, as well of the already established Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell.

Some of the issues raised by the HIPPO, however, were not picked up by the secretary-general. The fourth shift called for by the HIPPO (i.e., toward more “field-focused and people-centered” operations) did not garner as much attention. Neither did the panel’s proposal of ways to effectively integrate women, peace, and security throughout mission lifecycles and across mandated tasks—although some of the recommendations were taken up in his 1325 Global Study. Strategies for unarmed protection of civilians were also largely absent from the secretary-general’s report. The report’s stronger messages were on accountability, including for sexual exploitation and accountability, at the time of sex abuse allegations in the CAR. These were directed both to his staff—leading to the resignation of Babacar Gaye, his special representative and head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA)—and troop-contributing countries—leading to their decision not to replace one of the peacekeeping contingents in MINUSCA due to its poor performance, setting an important precedent.²⁷

The secretary-general also left several important issues “for consideration by his successor and member states.” These included restructuring the Secretariat entities entrusted with managing the UN peace and security agendas (including the HIPPO’s suggestion to create an additional deputy secretary-general position responsible for peace and security) and financing (including the HIPPO’s recommendation to have a single “peace operations account” to finance all peace operations and their related backstopping activities in the future). In not addressing these issues, the secretary-general probably judged that he does not have the necessary internal authority at the end of his term and that member states are not ready for such an overhaul of the system with its potentially important political and financial implications.²⁸

²⁶ For more on the issue of the UN-AU partnership, see Paul D. Williams and Arthur Boutellis, “Partnership Peacekeeping: Challenges and Opportunities in the United Nations–African Union Relationship,” *African Affairs* 113, no. 451 (2014). See also ICM report on “The Relationship between the UN and Regional Organizations, Civil Society, NGOs, and the Private Sector.”

²⁷ “RCA: Comment remplacer les Casques bleus congolais?” RFI, January 1, 2016, available at www.rfi.fr/afrique/20160109-rca-inquietude-apres-annonce-depart-contingent-congolais.

²⁸ See Arthur Boutellis, “From HIPPO to SG Legacy: What Prospects for UN Peace Operations Reform?” *Global Observatory*, September 24, 2015, available at <http://theglobalobservatory.org/2015/09/hippo-peacekeeping-peacebuilding-united-nations/>.

A Membership with Strong Differing Views

While the HIPPO report was the result of wide consultations and was initially well-received by a large, diverse group of UN member states, the release of the secretary-general's follow-on report endorsing many of its recommendations brought to the surface long-standing differences among some member states over key issues related to peacekeeping. One of the initial reservations voiced was the use of the term "peace operations" to denote the full spectrum of responses. Another division emerged over how much authority the secretary-general actually has to implement some of the recommendations he has put forward in his report without these first being considered by the broader membership of the various General Assembly committees (the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations "C34" and the Fifth Committee, in particular).

The November 20, 2015, Security Council session, during which the secretary-general formally briefed the council (under the UK presidency) for the first time on his action plan for taking forward the recommendations found in the HIPPO report, revealed further divisions, and it took another five days for the council to negotiate a presidential statement. One of the most contentious issues was, not surprisingly, the unresolved issue of financing of AU operations. But also contentious was the reaffirmation of the basic principles of UN peacekeeping without adding the language in the HIPPO report that "these principles must be interpreted progressively and with flexibility in the face of new challenges, and they should never be an excuse for failure to protect civilians or to defend the mission proactively."²⁹ The final presidential statement merely "takes note of" rather than "welcomes" the recommendations of the two reports and commits the council to "consider sequenced and phased mandates, where appropriate, when evaluating existing United Nations peace operations or establishing new United Nations peace operations."³⁰

These differences of view, however, reflect longstanding divisions within the Security Council, within the broader membership of the General Assembly, and particularly between council members who mandate peacekeeping missions, financial contributing countries (FCCs, the top six of which include not only council members but also Japan and Germany), and troop-and-police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs, mainly from Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa). These divisions have emerged since the "departure" of Western contributors from peacekeeping in the early 2000s as a result of the failures in Bosnia, Somalia, and Rwanda. In past years, member-state disagreements over issues such as troop and contingent-owned equipment (COEs) reimbursement rates and performance have diminished the ability of the C-34 to effectively consider and negotiate outcomes on peacekeeping policy.

The publication of the two reports also brought to the fore the long-held view that, for years, some permanent members of the Security Council resorted to UN peacekeeping forces to take pressure off their own militaries, which were heavily engaged elsewhere, in crisis theaters of equal or lesser strategic

²⁹ What's in Blue, "Briefing and Draft Presidential Statement on the Future of UN Peace Operations," November 20, 2015, available at www.whatsinblue.org/2015/11/briefing-and-draft-presidential-statement-on-the-future-of-un-peace-operations.php.

³⁰ United Nations, Statement by the President of the Security Council, UN Doc. S/PRST/2015/22, November 25, 2015.

importance. Under these conditions, peacekeeping tends to become at times part of great-power geopolitical calculations and a substitute for a political strategy.³¹

Peacekeepers have increasingly been asked to “do more with less”—even though the symbolic ceiling of \$8 billion for the annual peacekeeping budget was eventually broken in 2014—and the legitimacy of the Security Council is increasingly contested. In this context, much remains to be done to ensure the “burden” of peacekeeping is better shared among member states and to improve what has been termed the “triangular cooperation” between the Security Council, the UN Secretariat, and TCCs/PCCs, despite declarations of good intention, such as the presidential statement on December 31, 2015.³²

UN peacekeeping may, however, be entering a new era. In the aftermath of NATO’s operations in Afghanistan, a number of European countries have expressed an interest in returning to UN peacekeeping, and some (most significantly the Netherlands, Sweden, and, most recently, Germany) already started doing so in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).³³ The United States has also shown a renewed commitment to UN peacekeeping by organizing the September 2015 Leaders’ Summit (“Obama Summit”) in New York and issuing a new US policy on peacekeeping.³⁴ The summit generated over 170 pledges of new personnel, assets, and capabilities (as well as capacity building for the AU) from a number of countries, including many European ones, but also, notably, China, which has become ninth in terms of troop contributions and first among Security Council members.³⁵ The United Kingdom will organize the follow-on summit on September 8, 2016, in the UK to follow up on pledges already made and get new ones.

These new pledges could eventually lead to better peacekeeping if the UN seizes the opportunity to fill capability gaps in current field operations and to shift from a numbers-based to a capabilities-based approach to force generation.³⁶ More pledges could ultimately mean that the UN Secretariat is able to choose the most appropriate of different offers rather than beg TCCs for troops. But this should not distract from the fact that “politics,” not hardware, is the real force multiplier and the key to the success of peacekeeping. The US and European countries’ sudden renewed interest in UN peacekeeping, particularly in places like Mali, have also raised concerns about a possible “NATO-ization” of certain UN peacekeeping operations and about some Security Council members possibly wanting to take the

³¹ Richard Gowan, “The Security Council and Peacekeeping,” in *The UN Security Council in the 21st Century*, edited by Sebastian von Einsiedel, David M. Malone, and Bruno Stagno Ugarte (New York: Lynne Rienner, October 2015).

³² United Nations, Statement by the President of the Security Council, UN Doc. S/PRST/2015/26, December 31, 2015.

³³ John Karlsrud and Adam C. Smith, “Europe’s Return to UN Peacekeeping in Africa? Lessons from Mali,” International Peace Institute, July 2015, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/IPI-E-pub-Europes-Return-to-Peacekeeping-Mali.pdf.

³⁴ Paul D. Williams, “The New US Policy on Peacekeeping,” IPI Future Peace Operations, October 6, 2015, available at www.futurepeaceops.org/2015/10/06/keeping-a-piece-of-peacekeeping/.

³⁵ United Nations, “Ranking of Military and Police Contributions to UN Operations,” January 31, 2016, available at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2016/jan16_2.pdf.

³⁶ Adam C. Smith and Arthur Boutellis, “Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping,” International Peace Institute, May 2013, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_rpt_rethinking_force_gen.pdf.

peacekeeping tool further down the road of stabilization and/or offensive operations against violent extremists in the future.

The HIPPO concluded that UN missions should not be mandated to conduct military counterterrorism operations because they are not suited to do so but that they must be able to operate where asymmetric threats are present, including through a preventive and preemptive posture and willingness to use force tactically to protect civilians and UN personnel.³⁷ Much of the debate over asymmetric threat environments has so far been around the safety and security of personnel.³⁸ This debate has also influenced the UN's recent thinking on technology and innovation,³⁹ as well as on information and intelligence—no longer a taboo word.⁴⁰ However, the secretary-general's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which recommended that member states “integrate preventing violent extremism into relevant activities of UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions in accordance with their mandates,”⁴¹ will no doubt raise a new set of questions on whether, how, and when the UN should engage with some of the political and governance factors that drive and sustain violent extremism.⁴²

III. The Challenge of Peace Operations Reform: Leadership and Champions

In order for UN peace operations reform to move forward and result in a UN that is “better fit for purpose,” it will be essential for the UN Secretariat and member states to play their parts and for the political momentum created by the HIPPO to be sustained for the implementation of the recommendations put forward by the UN secretary-general and the HIPPO.⁴³

Leadership by the Next UN Secretary-General

While current efforts by the UN Secretariat to move forward some of the recommendations of the HIPPO should be applauded (such as establishing the new centralized strategic analysis and planning cell), the effective implementation of most recommendations will take time, as successful change in the UN often happens incrementally over the long term.⁴⁴ Recommendations that have not garnered much attention so far, such as the need for renewed focus on prevention and for a more field-focused UN, will

³⁷ United Nations, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*.

³⁸ See Haidi Willmot, Scott Sheeran, and Lisa Sharland, “Safety and Security Challenges in UN Peace Operations,” International Peace Institute, July 2015, available www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/IPI-E-pub-Safety-and-Security-in-Peace-Ops.pdf.

³⁹ See Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping, “Performance Peacekeeping,” December 22, 2014, available at www.performancepeacekeeping.org/offline/download.pdf.

⁴⁰ United Nations Secretary-General, *Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, paras. 94, 107.

⁴¹ United Nations Secretary-General, “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” UN Doc. A/70/674, December 24, 2015, para. 58 (b).

⁴² See “UN Peace Operations in Violent and Asymmetric Threat Environments,” International Peace Institute, Olga Abilova, rapporteur, March 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/1603_Peace-Ops-in-Asymmetric-Environments.pdf.

⁴³ On UN peace operations reform, see www.futurepeaceops.org/.

⁴⁴ Youssef Mahmoud, “A Ripe Moment for Change at the UN?” *Global Observatory*, March 9, 2016, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/03/a-ripe-moment-for-change-at-the-un/>.

require all the more effort. The new secretary-general may also want to put his or her own mark on UN peace operations reform instead of simply implementing recommendations from his or her predecessor.

As there is a danger that momentum might be lost with the leadership change, strong leadership will be required from the next UN secretary-general to push for important internal reforms early on in his or her first mandate and to manage expectations on reform. He or she may need to develop a five-to-ten-year plan for peace operations reform, which can then align with General Assembly budget cycles, as reforms proposed in the HIPPO would require a substantial restructuring of current financing and resources to allow for more flexibility to adapt to evolving environments.

No matter what, such reforms will not be easy, and the next secretary-general will need to clearly articulate his or her strategic vision and build a compelling narrative⁴⁵—accompanied by concrete incentives—on the value and relevance of peace operations reform that both the UN bureaucracy and member states can support. Such reforms would no doubt challenge established power structures, risk-averse behaviors, and differing mindsets of individuals, member states, and departments (particularly DPA, DPKO, and DFS, but also, for example, the Department of Management, which is resistant to a more field-focused Secretariat).

The Need for Member-State Champions

In contrast to the peacebuilding review, which has now gone into a formal intergovernmental process co-led by Angola and Australia, there was no clear plan for member states to carry either the HIPPO or the secretary-general's recommendations forward. It therefore will largely be up to "interested" member states to build and carry forward the momentum for peace operations reform and keep the HIPPO's spirit alive over the next year and beyond. The president of the General Assembly could play an important role in generating political support and building consensus toward promoting change, including through the High-Level Thematic Debate on UN, Peace, and Security of May 10–11, 2016. This debate will present the opportunity to build on synergies between the HIPPO and the other global reviews—the Peacebuilding Architecture Review and the Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace, and Security.⁴⁶

Groups of member states will, however, be tempted to focus on and "cherry-pick" specific recommendations rather than implementing a much-needed holistic vision for more effective future UN peace operations. This may have already started happening in the committees and ad hoc bodies such as the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations C-34, and the Fifth Committee as these started considering a number of HIPPO recommendations. With 100 recommendations offered in the HIPPO report and more

⁴⁵ Francesco Mancini, "Managing Change at the United Nations: Lessons from Recent Initiatives," International Peace Institute, October 2015, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/IPI-E-pub-Managing-Change-at-UN.pdf.

⁴⁶ United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture*; Coomaraswamy, et al., "Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, and Securing the Peace"; United Nations Secretary-General, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security*, UN Doc. S/2015/716, September 16, 2015, available at http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2015_716.pdf.

than forty initiatives presented in the secretary-general's report, prioritizing might seem like an onerous task, but it may be necessary. Coming up with a more detailed implementation plan, and thus breaking down challenging issues into more manageable bundles of proposals, could be helpful. While some member states have shown interest in supporting the implementation of the HIPPO and secretary-general's recommendations,⁴⁷ no real member-state champions or "group of friends" have yet emerged around key recommendations. A clearly articulated rationale for change with a few concrete proposals from the new secretary-general would also be more easily championed by member states or groups of member states.

IV. Conclusion

In 2000, the "Brahimi Report" called for a "renewed commitment" of all member states—including members of the Security Council, FCCs, and TCCs/PCCs—to the maintenance of international peace. Fifteen years later, while UN peacekeeping and the challenges it faces have evolved, the key conclusion of the HIPPO's report is not very different: politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations, and a renewed focus on prevention is needed to avoid having to deploy costly peacekeeping operations to deal with managing conflict.

In light of past UN peacekeeping reform attempts, we must remain realistic about the implementation of the recommendations of a panel appointed by a secretary-general at the end of his second term and the impact these will ultimately have on the commitment and shared sense of responsibility of member states and on a Security Council facing a crisis of legitimacy.

That said, the HIPPO remains an opportunity for member states—together with the UN Secretariat—to reflect collectively on how to forge a new consensus over making UN peace operations "fit for purpose." Member states have to collectively choose between sharing the responsibility and benefits of more flexible and effective peace operations that are able to address a broad spectrum of challenges, on the one hand, and continuing to share the burden of maintaining peacekeeping operations that are deployed as a default response contested from all sides, on the other.

⁴⁷ Ethiopia and Norway have been organizing regular informal meetings of permanent representatives in New York, and the Republic of Korea organized a series of seminars in New York and Seoul in partnership with IPI. See "The Future of Peace Operations: Maintaining Momentum," International Peace Institute, Olga Abilova, rapporteur, November 2015. On April 11, 2016 Ethiopia, Norway, and the Republic of Korea co-organized, with IPI, a conference in New York on "UN Peace Operations Review: Taking Stock, Leveraging Opportunities, and Charting the Way Forward." The objective of this event was to take stock of the status of implementation of the recommendations put forward by the HIPPO.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prevention and Mediation

1. In the margins of the high-level segment of the 72nd session of the General Assembly, the president of the General Assembly, with the support of the secretary-general and the help of independent experts, should organize a leaders summit to launch the process for developing a global agenda on prevention as a national governance and development priority.
2. As part of the prevention agenda mentioned above, and given the changing nature of conflict, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) should:
 - a. Reexamine the state-centric foundational assumptions on which recent normative advances in mediation have been built; and
 - b. Support the UN system in devising practical programming modalities for helping member states integrate prevention and mediation as national governance and development functions for sustaining peace and building resilience to violent conflict.

A new GA resolution on mediation will have been adopted by then, offering further guidance on how best to conduct these tasks.

Peacebuilding

3. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission should set up a member-state-led structure to produce, by the 72nd session of the General Assembly, a road map for implementing the new identical Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture, adopted on April 27, 2016 (Resolutions 2282 and 70/262, respectively). This road map should include modalities for predictable and sustainable financing for peacebuilding and mediation activities on the basis of recommendations it will have received from the secretary-general, as requested in the resolutions.

Peacekeeping

4. The new secretary-general should appoint a small team within the executive office to propose—in consultation with member states through both formal and informal dialogue—a detailed five-year plan on ways to carry forward those HIPPO recommendations that were not taken up by the current secretary-general or on which member states remain undecided. These include:
 - a. Restructuring the Secretariat entities entrusted with the peace and security agendas rather than simply creating an additional deputy secretary-general position responsible for peace and security (as recommended by the HIPPO), bringing together teams from the DPKO and DPA in the same regional groupings to support all UN field missions, whether peacekeeping missions, special political missions, or UN country teams;
 - b. Financing all UN peace operations (whether peacekeeping or special political missions) and their related activities under a single “peace operations account” to facilitate

tailored responses and financing Security Council–authorized AU peace support missions from assessed contributions;

- c. Selecting, preparing, and managing performance and overall accountability of peace mission leadership teams, including heads (special representatives of the secretary-general) and deputy heads of mission and force commanders, with due regard to gender equality;
 - d. Rethinking UN administrative and budgetary decision making in light of the HIPPO recommendation for more field-focused and people-centered operations able to deliver their mandate more effectively on the ground and more efficiently, with more integrated use of new technologies, including for monitoring and evaluation; and
 - e. Exploring the tension between short-term protection of civilians and long-term political strategies, as well as further exploring unarmed protection of civilians.
5. Member states committed to prevention, mediation, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping and to keeping the spirit of the 2015 reviews alive should carry forward the momentum of peace operations reform during this transition phase and beyond and build on emerging consensus and points of commonality by forming “groups of friends” around specific proposals or bundles of proposals (e.g., AU-UN partnership and financing; turning prevention into practice; field support).
 6. Some of the above issues, as well as other issues that may not have been taken up by the 2015 reviews, would benefit from further research and policy debates.

