

White Paper on Peacebuilding

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The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is a joint project of four institutions



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About the White Paper on Peacebuilding

The White Paper initiative was coordinated by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The process drew on the network of professionals from all regions of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its four partners – the Graduate Institute’s Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP); the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Interpeace; and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO) – as well as the network of the Centre for International Cooperation (CIC) of New York University (NYU), and of the Swiss FDFA.

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform has coordinated the White Paper on Peacebuilding as part of its mandate to advance new knowledge and understanding of peacebuilding issues and contexts, and to build bridges between International Geneva, the UN peacebuilding architecture in New York, and peacebuilding activities in the field. As a joint project of four institutions, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform does not engage in advocacy efforts. The Platform is a hub for practical peacebuilding expertise and know-how that draws upon field experience and research.

All views expressed in this White Paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the four partners of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform – CCDP, GCSP, Interpeace, and QUNO – or those of the Swiss FDFA and CIC of NYU.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The White Paper on Peacebuilding reflects a 12-month process involving in-depth conversations, a series of background papers, and consultations with peacebuilding professionals from all regions. The aim of this exercise was to incorporate a range of voices and perspectives about the future of peacebuilding, about how countries and societies themselves can move towards sustainable peace, and about the assistance the UN and other international and local actors can bring to such processes.

The case for broadening the peacebuilding conversation is rooted in the fact that the next decade will see more pressures on institutional and societal systems – at all levels – and these pressures are likely to lead to an increased risk of conflict. In order to face these challenges, peacebuilding and prevention capacities need to be developed further and rendered more effective. What is more, there is a growing gap in perspectives about ‘what’ peacebuilding might be at international or local levels, as well as about the ‘how’, ‘why’, and ‘who’ in peacebuilding.

Over the last 20 years, peacebuilding practice has grown in extent and professionalism. Much of this practice involves the use of dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to resolve or manage conflict through non-violent means. However, despite this increase in experience, peacebuilding practice is often poorly implemented. Hence the need for a broader discussion about the practice of building peace.

The reflections of this White Paper occur at a timely moment: the UN Peacebuilding Architecture is undergoing its 10-year review and the UN Secretary-General has established a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. The review and the High-Level Panel open the space to rethink the role of the UN in peacebuilding and to understand the ways in which the organization relates to broader trends in peacebuilding practice. This White Paper contributes to these efforts by exploring the global context of the peacebuilding field and by highlighting perspectives about the challenges, opportunities and future of building peace.

The key findings of the White Paper on Peacebuilding are presented in four sections:

1. The global context of the peacebuilding field

- Many regions face transforming security landscapes.
- The characteristics of violent conflict have changed.
- Power has become more diffuse.
- State capacities and functions are challenged in many regions of the world.
- National, regional, or societal systems are likely to be increasingly stressed in the future.
- There is a lack of confidence in institutions to prepare for and address risks to peace.

2. Challenges for peacebuilding practice

- Peacebuilding directed by external interveners is no longer a politically and practically viable approach.
- Many peacebuilding professionals observe a reduction of operational space to build peace.
- There has been a shift towards a securitization of peace and development work.
- The absence of a shared perception of what constitutes ‘peacebuilding practice’ remains a challenge.
- The institutionalization of peacebuilding within the UN has yielded limited practical results.
- The emergence of ‘peace industries’ has changed incentives for peacebuilding practice in many regions.

- The number of NGOs has risen, but their contribution to peacebuilding is not always clear or effective.
- Peacebuilding practice does not sufficiently address the role of actors and institutions based in developed economies in shaping conflict and peace dynamics.

3. Opportunities for peacebuilding practice

- Peacebuilding is a field that constantly adapts to change and strives for creative solutions.
- There is considerable potential for regional organizations to engage in peacebuilding.
- Urban settings offer many opportunities to strengthen peacebuilding practice.
- The UN remains relevant for peacebuilding, especially as a diplomatic forum.
- The 10-year review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations are opportunities to strengthen peacebuilding practice inside and outside the UN.
- There is an ever-growing pool of technical expertise.
- South-South exchanges on peacebuilding practice need to be promoted.

4. Future perspectives for building peace

- Demystifying peacebuilding practice to build peace better.
- Strengthening peacebuilding as prevention of violent conflict by building on local expertise.
- Integrating information, communication and networking technologies into peacebuilding approaches.
- Targeting leaders for a change in perception of peacebuilding practice.
- Creating networks between local change-makers.
- Transforming peacebuilding support.
- Finding new funding models for peacebuilding.
- Monitoring trends in the financing of peacebuilding.

The voices and perspectives gathered in this White Paper and the background papers are a contribution to a broader discussion about the opportunities, challenges and future of building peace. This discussion is urgent as many states and societies are facing transforming security landscapes and peacebuilding practice is being put to the test.

PREFACE

The 1992 'Agenda for Peace' defined 'post-conflict peacebuilding' as 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'. However, 20 years later, the post-conflict framing of peacebuilding has been overtaken by the evolution of violent conflict and the ensuing adaptation of the response. Peacebuilding practice now occurs in a wider variety of contexts ranging from fluid political transitions to regions under increased stress due to climate change, rapid urbanization, or contentious large-scale investments. These changes underline the urgent need to reflect on how we think about peacebuilding practice. Many policy and practice communities are grappling with the question of how countries themselves can most effectively move towards sustainable peace, with the assistance of the United Nations (UN) and other international and local actors.

These reflections occur at a moment when the UN Peacebuilding Architecture is undergoing its 10-year review and when the Secretary-General has established a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. The review and the High-Level Panel open the space to assess and rethink the role of the UN in peacebuilding and to understand its linkages to broader trends in peacebuilding practice. This White Paper on Peacebuilding contributes to these efforts by exploring the global context in which peacebuilding occurs and by highlighting key challenges and opportunities. It also offers reflections on future perspectives for building peace.

This White Paper constitutes the outcome of a 12-month collaborative, multi-stakeholder process coordinated by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). It was developed with the objective of broadening the discussion around how countries themselves can most effectively move towards sustainable peace.

INTRODUCTION

Inspired by the original notion of a “white paper” in government circles, this White Paper on Peacebuilding seeks to stimulate debate over the challenges, opportunities and future perspectives of building peace in conflict-affected states and societies. It is not a consensus document and does not seek to be conclusive. On the contrary, the White Paper attempts to give voice to, and capture, a multitude of diverging views and perspectives.

This White Paper is a reflection of a collaborative process involving conversations with over 100 peacebuilding professionals from all regions working at the community, national and international levels; the drafting of 20 background papers; and a variety of discussions and consultations. This data gathering process has been designed from the bottom up and has been as inclusive as possible. The initiative sought to capture the personal views of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds in diplomacy, international organizations, business, civil society and academia.

The aim of this exercise was to incorporate a range of voices and perspectives into on-going discussions over the future of peacebuilding, while recognizing that a tremendous amount of work already exists in policy and scholarly communities.¹ The background papers commissioned for the process, which are released jointly with this White Paper, already demonstrate the diversity of views on how countries and societies themselves can most effectively move towards sustainable peace, and about the assistance by the UN and other international or local actors.

Why is such a broader conversation necessary? First, the next decade will see more pressures on states and societies – and likely more conflict. These pressures can emerge, for instance, from demographic trends (population growth, increasing urbanization), economic trends (more inequality and unemployment), power shifts (changing constellations, diffusion of power, less control by states), climate change (more natural disasters and climatic fluctuations) and new conflict dynamics (geo-political tension, more chronic violence, new threats).² Rising pressures will likely increase the risk of conflict. In some regions, this conflict could be violent. In order to face these challenges, peacebuilding and prevention capacities need to be developed further and rendered more effective.

The second reason has to do with the perception of peacebuilding. The fortunes of many states and societies have significantly changed over the last decades. Many new actors based in emerging economies have become more confident to assert their interests in different forums and contexts, including with respect to peacebuilding. This change has led to different perspectives about ‘what’ peacebuilding might be at international or local levels, as well as about the ‘how’, ‘why’, and ‘who’ in peacebuilding. Amid these changes, a broader conversation is demystifying peacebuilding and the diversity of practice that it entails.

Over the last 20 years, peacebuilding practice has grown in extent and professionalism. Much of this practice involves the use of dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to resolve or manage conflict through non-violent means. However, despite the growth in experience, peacebuilding practice is often poorly implemented. The White Paper, therefore, also points to a thriving field of practice and underused capabilities.

¹ See for instance the two recent four-volume compendiums collecting over 200 key works on peacebuilding. V. Chetail and O. Jütersonke (eds), *Peacebuilding* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); and R. Mac Ginty (ed), *Peacebuilding* (London: Sage, 2014).

² See Background Paper No. 14; and National Intelligence Council (NIC) *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* (Washington D.C. NIC, 2012); Martin Commission for Future Generations, *Now for the Long Term* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2013); J.C Glenn, T.J Gordon, and E. Florescu, *State of the Future 2013-2014* (Washington D.C.: The Millennium Project, 2014).

The White Paper is divided into four parts. The first gathers perspectives on the global context of the peacebuilding field. The second points to key challenges to peacebuilding practice, while part three highlights key opportunities. The fourth part presents a reflection of future perspectives for building peace. Annex 1 details the process and methodology applied by this White Paper. Annex 2 presents a table of contents of the background papers. Supporting evidence is included in the footnotes.

1. The global context of the peacebuilding field

Many regions face transforming security landscapes. Key elements driving these transformations include chronic political instability, persistent social volatility and conflict, the proliferation of non-state armed groups and transnational actors, disputes over land and natural resources, weak state systems, and recurring cycles of violent competition over the state or markets. These transformations manifest themselves differently across regions but are particularly powerful in the Middle East and North Africa; East, Central and West Africa; Eastern Europe; Southeast Asia; and Central and South America. Some societies in these regions face an erosion of the social fabric, albeit for different reasons. This erosion is not new, but has intensified in many regions as a result of climate change, unconventional conflict and violence, geo-political disputes, transnational organized crime and terror networks, as well as growing inequality. In light of these challenges, peacebuilding practice is being put to the test.

The characteristics of violent conflict have changed. New types of armed actors with fluid affiliations are defining many conflict theatres. At the same time, fewer instances of violent conflict fall into the classic categories of 'inter-state' or 'civil' wars. The majority of violent deaths occur outside those major conflict zones that are usually represented in the global media.³ There is also a much greater awareness about the differing impact of violence on women, children, and elderly people.⁴ The scale of violent deaths is of particular concern to countries that are characterized as facing 'chronic violence', for instance in Central and South America, but also in many major cities across all continents, which has significant social and economic consequences.⁵ At the same time, geopolitical tensions are rising and lead to new conflict dynamics as noted for instance in the background papers on Northeastern Asia, Europe, and Central Asia. What is more, new threats to states and societies are developing, including through the proliferation of precision strike capabilities, cyber instruments, and bioterror weaponry.⁶

Power has become more diffuse. There is a growing number of actors that play an ever more important role in peacebuilding, be they state, non-state or sub-national actors such as cities. Many actors engage with peacebuilding outside existing institutional frameworks and are using different labels to advance their efforts and interests in a specific context. Interviews revealed that, at the city level, the growth of practice networks has allowed local mayors to respond better to urban violence. At the same time, communication technologies have contributed to the emergence of new networks including different configurations of state and non-state actors.⁷ In the peacebuilding field, such processes have created spaces outside of – yet often connected to – intergovernmental organizations. What is more, the diversity of actors in these spaces raises new questions. For instance, 'What is the division of labour between different actors in supporting national or societal ownership of peacebuilding?', 'What is the link between efforts occurring at different levels?', or 'Can peacebuilding occur without an inclusive vision of the peacebuilding process across different levels?'

³ Human Security Report Project, *Human Security Report 2013: The Decline in Global Violence* (Vancouver: Human Security Press, 2014); Geneva Declaration Secretariat, *Global Burden of Armed Violence: Lethal Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁴ World Health Organization (WHO), *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention* (Geneva: WHO, 2014).

⁵ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America* (New York: UNDP, 2013).

⁶ NIC, *Global Trends 2030*, 67.

⁷ See NIC, *Global Trends 2030*, *op.cit.*

State capacities and functions are challenged in many regions of the world. Most of the regional background papers and many interviewees agreed that some states have limited capacity to provide people with security, welfare and representation.⁸ In some parts of Central and South America, states have lost control of power, authority, and territory to organized criminal actors; in some parts of the Middle East and Africa this has happened to transnational armed groups. In most regions, territorial control by states is contested, in many cases violently. This outlook stands in contrast to the prevailing operating principles of international governmental organizations and inter-state processes that are based on national sovereignty and relationship to governments.

National, regional, or societal systems are likely to be increasingly stressed in the future. The background studies and several interviewees underline that key stress factors relate to hydrocarbon resources, land, small arms, social marginalization, climate change, and rapid urbanization. These stress factors are well known and documented.⁹ The background studies emphasize that the discovery of new hydrocarbon resources and large scale infrastructure projects are increasing pressure on existing national and societal systems. This is especially the case in East Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central and Southern America. They also highlight that social marginalization and the frustration of young people is a central challenge to peacebuilding given existing political, social and economic systems. In parts of Central and South America, continuous exclusion and stigmatization of large youth populations has led to ‘chronic’ violence.

There is a lack of confidence in institutions that prepare for and address risks to peace. The background papers illustrate that the practice of many UN institutions has become increasingly driven by institutional incentives. This trend is particularly clear in the Middle East and in different parts of Africa and highlights that the incentive to maintain and fund a specific institution, mandate, department or position has tended to trump the purpose of said institution or department.¹⁰ This incentive has made institutions less agile to adapt to changing contexts and has fortified professional silos around different concepts. In some contexts, this has also led to a gap between institutional practices and local needs for peacebuilding support.¹¹

2. Challenges for peacebuilding practice

Peacebuilding directed by external interveners is no longer a politically and practically viable approach. The regional background papers point to an increasing self-confidence amongst many state and societal actors in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. This is evidenced by their willingness to challenge the often paternalistic approaches of outsiders attempting to control peacebuilding dynamics on the ground. ‘Outsiders’ is generally understood as foreign donors, international organizations or international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that want to affect political dynamics in a specific region or context. This is especially the case in Central Asia, Central Africa, and South America where stronger, more centralized governments have pushed back on UN activities labelled as ‘peacebuilding’. These observations contribute to a growing evidence base that shows a disconnection between peacebuilding at the grass-roots level and action by international organizations and bilateral donors.¹² They also reveal the complexity behind the terms

8 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance* (Paris: OECD, 2011).

9 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), *2005 World Summit Outcome* (New York: United Nations, 2005); United Nations, *The Report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda* (New York: United Nations, 2013); World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2011); OECD, *Think Global, Act Local: Confronting Global Factors that Influence Conflict and Fragility* (OECD: Paris, 2012).

10 Such institutional processes are well understood, see for instance M.N. Barnett and M. Finnmore, ‘The Politics, Power and Pathologies of International Organizations’, *International Organization* 53:4 (1999), 699-732.

11 S. Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); P.Uvin, *Life After Violence: A People’s Story of Burundi* (London: Zed Books, 2009).

12 See for instance M. Bradbury and S. Healy (eds.) *Whose Peace is it Anyway: Connecting Somali and International Peacemaking* (London: Conciliation Resources with Interpeace, 2010); M.B. Anderson, D. Brown, and I. Jean, *Time to Listen: Hearing People on the Receiving End of International Aid* (Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2013); A. Donini, L. Minear, I. Smillie, T. van Baarda and A.C. Welch, *Mapping the Security Environment: Understanding the Perceptions of Local Communities, Peace Support Organizations and External Aid Agencies* (Medford: Feinstein International Famine Centre, 2005).

'ownership' or 'participation' in a peacebuilding process.¹³ 'Ownership' is too often understood as purely relating to governmental authorities with 'participation' being restricted to elites. However, societies are much more complex, and governments and elites may not possess sufficient legitimacy to speak credibly of societal ownership of peacebuilding processes.¹⁴ The notion of ownership should therefore be understood in a wider sense and include other actors such as political parties, civil society actors, businesses and state actors at different levels.

Many peacebuilding professionals observe a reduction of operational space to build peace. From stronger anti-terror legislation, through pressures by state elites, to normative frameworks – there is a sense that building peace has become more constrained.¹⁵ Many interviewees noted the frequent gap between the willingness of individual peacebuilders to take risks for peace – sometimes involving significant personal danger – and the risk-averse attitudes of donors and international organizations. The latter also tend to favour relationships with state actors, a tendency that in some regions has made it more difficult to build peace. Especially in the Middle East and Central Africa, peace builders are struggling to have their voice heard as prevailing responses focus on militarized or securitized approaches to deal with violent conflict. Even though these approaches also constrain peacebuilders in Central and South America, there has nevertheless emerged a new space for peacebuilding practice in these regions due to the evident failure of heavy-handed securitized approaches to reduce crime and criminal violence.¹⁶ Leadership at the national and sub-national level has also advanced alternative approaches to heavy-handed policies against drug-related and criminal violence.¹⁷

There has been a shift towards a securitization of peace and development work. Most states and international organizations have shifted their way of dealing with conflict and peace towards securitization strategies, as seen recently in West and Central Africa and the Middle East. A similar tendency exists in the handling of urban security.¹⁸ In many regions of the world, peacebuilding approaches have been swept aside by the discourse and practices of securitized approaches to manage violent and non-violent conflict. This is a concern for many peacebuilding professionals, who see securitization as a limited, and often counterproductive, way of dealing with underlying threats to peace. The dominance of the securitized approaches may be attributed to much more consistent and powerful lobbying, by political and commercial interests in the defence sector. In contrast, the peacebuilding field has no strong and consistent governmental or private sector lobby in its support.

The absence of a shared perception of what constitutes 'peacebuilding practice' remains a challenge. The regional background papers and many interviewees emphasize that peacebuilding can mean something different to different policy communities.¹⁹ While perceptions are never identical in any specific community, there is a tendency by state representatives and officials from international organizations to associate peacebuilding practice with the UN, its peacebuilding architecture or operational departments. Many peacebuilding professionals with strong field experience (including many from the UN) distinguish between the community-level, cross-sectorial and bottom-up nature of peacebuilding practice on the one side and politics within the UN related to their own peacebuilding activities on the other. But at the field level, many people simply get on with doing what is needed to build peace and do not worry about definitions.

13 T. Paffenholz, 'Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Beyond the Inclusion–Exclusion Dichotomy' *Negotiation Journal* 30:1 (2014), 69–91.

14 A. Ramsbotham and A. Wennmann (eds), *Legitimacy and Peace Processes: From Coercion to Consent* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2014).

15 See also K. Mackintosh and P. Duplat, *Study of the Impact of Donor Counterterrorism Measures on Principled Humanitarian Action*, Independent Study Commissioned by UNOCHA and the Norwegian Refugee Council, July 2013; S. Hasbeslagh, 'Listing Terrorists: The Impact of Proscription on Third-party Efforts to Engage Armed Groups in Peace Processes – A Practitioner's Perspective', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 6:1 (2013), 189–208; J. Arnault, 'Legitimacy and Peace Processes: International Norms and Local Realities', in Ramsbotham and Wennmann, *Legitimacy and Peace Processes*, 21–25.

16 UNDP, *Citizen Security with a Human Face*, op cit.

17 Global Commission on Drugs, *Taking Control: Pathways to Drug Policies that Work* (Rio de Janeiro: Global Commission on Drugs, 2014); O. Argueta and A. G. Táger, Paz, *Seguridad y Prevención de Conflictos en Centroamérica* (Guatemala City: Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales, 2014); O. Jütersonke, R. Muggah and D. Rodgers, 'Gangs, Urban Violence, and Security Interventions in Central America', *Security Dialogue* 40:4/5 (2009), 373–397.

18 S. Graham, *Cities Under Siege: The New Military Urbanism* (London: Verso, 2011).

19 M. Barnett, H. Kim, M. O'Donnell, and L. Sitea, 'Peacebuilding: What Is in a Name?' *Global Governance* 13:1 (2007), 35–58.

The institutionalization of peacebuilding within the UN has yielded limited practical results. Different background papers note that ‘UN peacebuilding’ is still linked to a sequential approach to conflict, to a normative attitude of liberal internationalism and to an operational framework focusing on the deployment of missions. Consultations in New York and several interviewees also highlight that, in spite of the creation of the Country-Specific Configurations (CSCs), the positive impact of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (PBA) has been limited, with the exception of individual efforts by CSC Chairs and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). They also highlight that discussions on ‘peacebuilding’ within the UN tend to focus on the place of peacebuilding within the UN’s organizational structure and on the functioning of the PBA. They note a steady decline in interest in peacebuilding within the UN system and that ‘turf wars’ and wrangling between different UN Members States have prevented the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the PBF and the Peacebuilding Support Office from becoming more effective actors. These observations were echoed in several analyses in preparation for the PBA’s 10-year review.²⁰

The emergence of ‘peace industries’ has changed incentives for peacebuilding practice in many regions. Many interviewees share the feeling that for-profit motives are playing an ever more dominant role for organizations to advance peacebuilding programmes, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations with significant donor interests. Many interviewees attributed this trend to the increased competition for resources after many country-level programmes experienced a funding crunch. Key trends have also included the artificial inflation of the range of interventions from local NGOs or UN programmes, and prioritized resource mobilization to cover overhead costs rather than delivering on needs and ensuring local ownership. Some interviewees highlighted an increasing intellectualization of peacebuilding support. At the individual level, there is the parallel development of seeing peacebuilding as just another career path motivated by advancement, but not necessarily by values and commitment to peace in a specific context.

The number of NGOs has risen, but their contribution to peacebuilding is not always clear or effective. Some regions have seen the emergence of a mosaic of NGOs that respond to various financial and programme incentives of foreign donors. NGOs are also perceived as a vehicle for leveraging external political influence on local political systems. This mushrooming of NGOs stands in contrast to the limited development of broader political platforms, such as political parties, as a systematic expression of political views and will. In many regions, NGO landscapes remain fragmented and efforts towards participatory politics have been opposed by ruling parties or governments. Especially in the Middle East, as well as North, East and Central Africa, there is limited trust shown towards NGOs as it is unclear which agenda a given NGO is really pursuing. Many NGOs exhibit a high degree of linkage to business, government, or international interests.

Peacebuilding practice does not sufficiently address the role of actors and institutions based in developed economies in shaping conflict and peace dynamics. Several interviewees observed that international actors tend to localize responsibility for violent conflict, while local actors often point to the behaviour of actors based in developed countries – in terms of policy choices and consumption patterns – as key factors for conflict dynamics. In the Americas and Asia, this trend can be illustrated around the issue of drug trafficking where the predominant focus has been on the supply rather than the demand side. In Africa, South America and South East Asia the trend can be illustrated by the issue natural resource exploitation and the role of firms that are incorporated in industrialized or emerging economies. European peacebuilding policies are usually insensitive to the consequences that may arise abroad as a result of European political decisions and the involvement of European actors.

20 S. Hearn, A. Kubitschek Bujones and A. Kugel, *United Nations “Peacebuilding Architecture”: Past Present Future* (New York: Centre on International Cooperation of New York University, 2014); M. von der Schulenburg, *Rethinking Peacebuilding: Transforming the UN Approach* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2014); Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (DHF), *The Peacebuilding Commission’s Impact and Engagement*, Workshop Report (Uppsala: DHF, 2013).

3. Opportunities for peacebuilding practice

Peacebuilding is a field that constantly adapts to change and strives for creative solution. The ability to adapt within the difficult circumstances of peacebuilding processes and to find novel ways of tackling new and old problems is a tremendous resource of the peacebuilding community. In peacebuilding contexts, adaptability and creativity frequently translates into the fact that peacebuilding professionals are taking considerable personal risks on a daily basis. Changing practice has also been driven by a diverse set of actors ranging from different government departments, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, companies or local community leaders. However, advances in peacebuilding practice have frequently been contingent upon the leadership of individuals within a broader institutional framework – be it in government, an international organization, a company, or civil society. Within the UN, there has been a focus on architectures for peace, peace and development advisors and mediation support.²¹ In business, a focus on non-securitized risk management has become a more prominent part of investment and operations.²² Various faith-based organizations have an advantage in the form of a grassroots network of peacebuilders.

There is considerable potential for regional organizations to engage in peacebuilding. The regional background papers point out that there are existing or nascent regional organizations in South East Asia, Southern Africa, East Africa, and Central and South America and Europe. Interviews revealed that cooperation among regional organizations and with the UN have improved in recent years and have been facilitated by, for instance, staff exchanges, informal debriefs, or a series of inter-institutional arrangements. Some background papers suggest that placing peacebuilding coordination within the regions would be preferable to a centralized peacebuilding architecture in New York. For instance, the North Africa background paper argues for a stronger role of regional organizations to address the current regional challenges. But interviews also point to challenges for a decentralized peacebuilding architecture, especially with respect to the internal political divisions and weak practical capacities of some regional organizations. Beyond regionalization, peacebuilding support has also started to move towards specific country compacts, as recently evidenced in East Africa.²³

Urban settings offer many opportunities to strengthen peacebuilding practice. Cities today are economic magnets and a source of opportunities for many. They are also sites of grinding poverty and great inequality in access to services, including basics such as housing, schooling, health care, food, transportation, security, and justice.²⁴ In many poorer neighbourhoods and slums, concentrated deprivation goes hand-in-hand with high levels of violence. The regional background papers on Central and South America highlight that securitized and heavy-handed responses against criminal violence and drugs did not work. They also underline that such approaches even tended to increase violence and generate new conflicts. However, these regions have also seen diverse approaches emerge that seek to resolve conflict and build peace through integrated non-militarized and non-securitized approaches.²⁵ In Central and South America these approaches evolved as part of citizen security or urban safety initiatives, and a closer interaction with peacebuilding practice could assist city leaders to more effectively reduce violence and build peace in urban centres.

The UN remains relevant for peacebuilding, especially as a diplomatic forum. As the world's foremost forum of states, the UN contributes to national political transformation, particularly through diplomatic accompaniment. Such diplomatic accompaniment can include mediation functions under the Secretary-General's good offices mandate or the facilitation of relations between governments and multilateral and bilateral donors

21 C. Kumar, 'Building National Infrastructures for Peace: UN Assistance for Internally Negotiated Solutions to Violent Conflict' in S. Allen Nan Z. Mampilly and A. Bartoli (eds), *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011) 384-399.

22 B. Ganson (ed), *Management in Complex Environments: Questions for Leaders* (Stockholm: International Council of Swedish Industry, 2013).

23 S. Hearn and T. Zimmerman, *A New Deal for Somalia? The Somali Compact and its Implications for Peacebuilding* (New York: CIC-NYU, 2014).

24 WHO, "Urban Population Growth" (Geneva: Global Health Observatory, n.d.); Humansecurity-cites.org, *Human Security for an Urban Century: Local Challenges, Global Perspectives* (Ottawa: Human Security Research and Outreach Programme of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and the Canadian Consortium on Human Security, 2007).

25 R. Muggah and K. Aguirre, *Mapping Citizen Security Interventions in Latin America: Reviewing the Evidence* (Oslo: NOREF, 2013).

through the PBC's CSCs. However, in some regions there is an observable trend towards a loss of legitimacy on the part of the United Nations – notably in North and East Africa and the Middle East – which will limit the role that the UN can play in these regions.

The ten-year review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations are opportunities to strengthen peacebuilding practice inside and outside the UN.

The ten-year review and the High-Level Panel are expected to increase attention on issues of peacebuilding among UN member states. They may also review the effectiveness of the UN's prevailing operational model on peace and security based on 'missions' and 'deployments'. Although the PBA review is likely to focus on the institutional manifestations of peacebuilding support within the UN system, increased Member State attention to peacebuilding is an opportunity to highlight the changing nature of peacebuilding practice. Many non-governmental actors also see the review as an opportunity to call for a more systematic relationship between the PBA and civil society organizations. At present, the PBC's role is focused mainly on increasing the coordination of peacebuilding between different UN departments and agencies, as well as Members States, excluding the participation and contribution of civil society organizations.

There is an ever growing pool of technical expertise. Overall, there is increasing technical knowledge on different theoretical and practical aspects of peacebuilding.²⁶ Peacebuilding expertise is scattered across many different sectors, including academia, governments, international organizations, international NGOs, businesses and different types of local actors. Although many actors resist control of a peacebuilding process by foreign actors, different government or civil society actors in conflict-affected contexts frequently seek external support with respect to technical assistance. This assistance can be related to expertise in mediation support, process design, security sector reform, or a variety of thematic areas. Due to these requests, there is now a set of international actors that provide technical assistance to a whole array of local governmental or non-governmental actors. According to various local peacebuilding professionals interviewed for the White Paper, additional work is needed to connect the technical expertise of local actors to international policy making to ensure that flows of expertise goes both ways – from international to local and from local to international levels. Many international organizations continue to favour international over local expertise and analyses of macro over micro dynamics.²⁷

South-South exchanges about peacebuilding practice need to be promoted further. Peacebuilding practitioners in all regions have stories to share about the lessons learned and different approaches to resolving conflict and building peace. But in many cases there are few mechanisms for mutual learning and exchange of experience within continents and especially between different regions. A better exchange about peacebuilding practice could expand the evidence base on the effectiveness of specific approaches.

26 A. Odendaal, *Local Peace Committees and National Peacebuilding* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2013); M.Brandt, J. Cottrell, Y. Ghai and A. Regan, *Constitution-making and Reform Options for the Process* (Geneva: Interpeace, 2011); K. Pappagianni, *National Dialogue Processes in Political Transition*, Civil Society Dialogue Network Discussion Paper No.3. (Geneva and Brussels: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, 2014); R. Ricigliano, *Making Peace Last: A Toolbox for Sustainable Peacebuilding* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012).

27 P. Justino, T. Brück, and P. Verwimp (eds), *A Micro-level Perspective on the Dynamics of Conflict, Violence and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

4. Future perspectives for building peace

Demystifying peacebuilding practice to build peace better. Many background papers and interviewees point to a gap between local needs for building peace and what international organizations and donors supply.²⁸ The practice of peacebuilding within the UN system has also led to a perception of peacebuilding as an ‘outside intervention’ through ‘missions’ or ‘programmes’, and that peacebuilding mainly occurs at the level of states and international organizations. This perception does not coincide with the experience of other peacebuilding communities that stress the community-based origins of peacebuilding, as well as its multi-stakeholder, context-sensitive, inclusive, and bottom-up nature. Broadening the discussion about peacebuilding practice in specific contexts and what effective support looks like is important to foster more prosperous and peaceful societies.

Strengthening peacebuilding as prevention of violent conflict by building on local expertise. The prevention of violent conflict is a major challenge for local and international actors as underscored by recent crises in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North and Central Africa as well as by continuing trends of chronic violence in Central and South America. Many interviewees noted the inherent limitations to strengthening prevention within the UN due to political sensitivities. This White Paper highlights the importance of local actors and approaches for peacebuilding. Such local expertise holds much potential for the prevention of violent conflict. The question then becomes how to link the local knowledge with governing bodies at different levels in order to take the necessary measures to act and defuse tensions at an early stage. Especially in South and Central America, progress has been made in establishing observatories as monitoring and early warning tools.²⁹ There is also a growing evidence base about the effectiveness of prevention strategies in the public health field that could serve to inspire peacebuilding practice.³⁰

Integrating information, communication and networking technologies into peacebuilding approaches. The last decade has seen a rapid expansion of new technologies that have changed the way people communicate, network and share information. While there are regional variations, the internet is estimated to have 2.5 billion users globally, and 6 billion people are estimated to have access to a mobile phone.³¹ More work is needed on how the integration of new technologies can make peacebuilding practice more effective. While many technologies have created stronger in-group identities by creating stronger bonds between like-minded individuals, the task for peacebuilding is to connect people across conflict lines. New technologies also create new network approaches to programme or campaign strategies that can foster a new way of working for the peacebuilding field. But open questions remain, especially with respect the role of technology in monitoring and evaluation, inclusive process designs, or information management.

Targeting decision-makers for a change in perception of peacebuilding practice. Change within institutions is driven – and resisted – by individuals. Although bureaucracies have a tremendous ability to ‘out-wait’ dynamic change-makers, there are decision-makers who are willing to make institutions engage more effectively in building peace. An avenue to target decision-makers is through initiating analysis and debate about the role of leadership in international organizations and national governments in advancing peacebuilding practice. Such a debate can draw on officials with experience of field work, multi-sectorial partnerships, and context-sensitivity. A specific group could be leaders in media organizations to help change the style in which conflict and political transitions, as well as peacebuilding practice, is reported.

²⁸ See also S. Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and Everyday Politics of International Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

²⁹ P. Eavis, *Working Against Violence: Promising Practices in Armed Violence Reduction and Prevention* (Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat, World Health Organization (WHO), *Violence Prevention: The Evidence* (Geneva: WHO, 2011).

³⁰ WHO, *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention*, op.cit.

³¹ Martin Commission for Future Generations, *Now for the Long Term*, op.cit., 22.

Creating networks between local change-makers. The White Paper interviews reveal that there are many courageous individuals working to build peace on a daily basis. Very often they are building peace at great personal risk and with very little protection of themselves or their family and friends. These change-makers can work at different levels and in different sectors including government, local communities, business or the media. While they can go about their work with ingenuity and flexibility, they often do not have adequate access to expertise and experience from change-makers in other parts of the world. Women at the local level can play particularly important roles as network creators or mediators in situations in which other actors are either unwelcome or do not dare to tread. An informal support network for local change-makers could strengthen South-South exchanges on effective peacebuilding. Such a network could also assist in informing discussions on peacebuilding at the policy level in New York, Geneva or other policy hubs.

Transforming peacebuilding support. Assistance to building peace is about supporting local actors building peace by lending expertise and advice to locally-shaped and guided plans and processes. Peacebuilding is not a 'mission' or a 'programme'. More work is needed in order to understand the workings of accompaniment, especially with respect to differentiated roles and responsibilities. For instance, diplomatic accompaniment of governments could be carried out through the UN, including through the PBC. Professional networks have been more independent and flexible in providing accompaniment with expertise than state-based institutions.

Finding new funding models for peacebuilding. Many peacebuilding professionals interviewed for this White Paper suggested that the model of funding peacebuilding through external donors will become increasingly unsustainable. Foreign funds may not only dry up in times of budget constraints, they also distort the peacebuilding space by providing incentives for specific peacebuilding approaches that may be ill-suited to a particular context. The reliance on outside support can also reduce the long-term prospects of peacebuilding, prevention and violence reduction efforts, as it tends to reduce the ownership of these efforts by local actors. Issues of control of financing mechanisms are extremely context specific.

Monitoring trends in the financing of peacebuilding. There is currently no monitoring system of patterns and flows of peacebuilding funding. A better understanding of the scale and type of support provided to peacebuilding could be gained by establishing a baseline for assessments on trends in the financing of peacebuilding. Such monitoring could focus on the financing of all activities that support approaches using dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to resolve or manage conflict through non-violent means. Attempts to clarify patterns and trends in the financing of peacebuilding could draw on the experience of the humanitarian and development fields as well as their efforts to gather annual statistics about trends and flows.

CONCLUSION

The voices and perspectives gathered in this White Paper, as well as in the background papers that accompany this publication, are now ready to be injected into a broader discussion about the opportunities, challenges and future of building peace. This discussion is urgent. The voices heard through the White Paper process underline that many states and societies are facing transforming security landscapes. In some regions, the effects of climate change, rapid urbanization, or geopolitical tensions are not a future scenario but a contemporary fact. As a contribution to this discussion, this White Paper has gathered a wide spectrum of perspectives built on a collaborative multi-stakeholder process. The result is a contribution to a growing evidence base of peacebuilding practice, and to a better understanding of the global and regional contexts within which peacebuilding practice is undertaken.

ANNEX 1: PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

1. Process

The White Paper on Peacebuilding constitutes a participatory process that attempts to give voice to, and capture, a multitude of diverging views and perspectives. Conducted over a 12-month period, the initiative was coordinated by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The process drew on the network of professionals of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its four partners – the Graduate Institute's Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP); the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Interpeace; and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO) – as well as the networks of the Centre for International Cooperation (CIC) of New York University (NYU), and of the Swiss FDFA.

Overall, the aims of the White Paper on Peacebuilding echo those of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform itself:

- Add value to on-going discussions by generating substance, analysis or understanding on peacebuilding at the cross-section of institutions, sectors, and disciplines;
- Enable frank and honest exchange by locating discussions outside of official meetings on positions, and above institutional and sectorial silos and 'turf wars'; and
- Listen to the voices of local peacebuilders worldwide, and make those voices heard in decision-making circles in Geneva, New York, and other major policy hubs.

For the purpose of the White Paper, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform established a Management Support Group (MSG). The MSG was composed of senior working-level representatives of the four Platform partners, CIC-NYU and the Swiss FDFA with a representation that bridges Geneva and New York. The group oversaw all aspects of the work conducted, including the structure of the process itself, the mobilization of interview partners and paper authors, data collection and analysis, as well as peer review and quality control. Since October 2013, the MSG has met roughly every two months in different constellations of its members.

2. Methodology

The White Paper process began with the formulation of a series of thematic lead questions to guide the discussion (see section 3 on guiding questions). The themes addressed were deliberately kept broad, as the aim was to allow for interlocutors to talk about their experiences in their own terms, based on their individual, context-specific understandings of the practices and institutions of peacebuilding.

In more technical terms, the process did not want to operate with preconceived analytical categories (e.g. a particular definition of peacebuilding), but instead sought to allow patterns of consent and disagreement to emerge from the data itself, i.e. from the views and perspectives shared during the White Paper process through interviews, background papers and discussions in meetings, consultations, and a retreat.

Rather than seeking to fill an identified data gap, the aim was to critically unpack underlying assumptions, presuppositions, and standard narratives. What is the available evidence base occluding from the analysis by virtue of the questions that have been posed so far? In other words, how can we dissect the "information architecture" around the notion of peacebuilding in a way that also allows for new perspectives and forms of knowledge to be "discovered" in the process?

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform reached out to peacebuilding practitioners in all regions and collected data along four avenues:

In-depth conversations with a variety of stakeholder communities: 28 of over 80 individuals from different stakeholder communities agreed to an in-depth conversation conducted by Platform staff. All individuals were identified collaboratively through the network of practitioners and diplomats of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners. Each conversation lasted between 30-60 minutes and followed a set of guiding questions (see section 3). The substance of the conversations remains confidential and was used without attribution in order to encourage authentic appraisals.

Background papers offering regional perspectives: The Platform commissioned 12 background papers that provide regional perspectives on peacebuilding. The authors' task was to provide an authentic and original analysis around three questions:

- What are the main challenges for building peace in your region?
- What are the key opportunities for building peace in your region over the next one or two years?
- What would be the key support necessary to build peace in your region over the next one or two years? Is there any specific role for the UN?

All authors were jointly identified through the network of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners. Intricate knowledge of specific regional dynamics was a key selection criterion. A list of the regions and authors is included in Annex 2.

Background papers offering thematic perspectives: The Platform commissioned 8 papers with a focus on scholarly and policy literatures, the history of institutional peacebuilding dynamics, data and trends on risks to peace, and several specific themes. The authors for the reviews and thematic paper were also collaboratively identified through the network of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and its partners.

Consultations, meetings and a retreat: Over a 12-month period, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform organized three consultations on the White Paper in New York (21 October 2013, 3 March 2014, 11 July 2014) and two consultations in Geneva (20 March 2014, 2 April 2014). Facilitated by Switzerland's Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, these consultations provided an opportunity for UN Member States and other stakeholders to contribute with substance and experiences to the White Paper process, and receive regular progress updates.

Additional insights were gained during a series of informal meetings:

- *What's next in Peacebuilding?* – organized by the Quaker United Nations Office New York (New York, 4-5 March 2014);
- *World Urban Forum 2014* – organized by UNHABITAT (Medellin, 5-11 April 2014),
- *Seizing Opportunities: Peacebuilding in a Complex World* – organized by FriEnt (Berlin, 7-8 May 2014);
- *Preparing for the 2015 PBC Review* – organized by Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (Uppsala, 14 May 2014);
- *Retreat on the White Paper on Peacebuilding: Distilling preliminary findings, shaping the strategic horizon* – organized by Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (Chexbres, 4-6 May 2014); and
- *What Future for Peacebuilding? Needs, Policy, Action* – Annual Meeting of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (Geneva, 20-21 November 2014).

All consultations, meetings and the retreat were conceived as opportunities not only to gather additional data, but also to test and consolidate thematic and conceptual patterns that had emerged from the analysis.

3. Guiding questions

The in-depth conversations had three specific analytical objectives and were structured along a series of guiding questions. These questions were developed in consultation with the MSG and were shared with conversation partners prior to the interview.

Objective 1: Gather perspectives on the nature and evolution of the broader peacebuilding universe

- What do you do to build peace?
- What does 'building peace' mean in your daily work life?
- Has anything changed in the way you build peace since you have started working in this field?

Objective 2: Gather perspectives about the role of the United Nations and other multilateral or regional organizations within the broader peacebuilding universe

- How much do you collaborate with multinational or regional organizations?
- Is there any specific UN office you have worked with?
- Has there been anything particularly successful in this collaboration?

Objectives 3: Gather different visions for building peace in violent and fragile contexts

- How do you think the building of peace will look like in the future?
- Do you think there is a specific role for outside actors?
- Do you have any specific expectations from the UN?

ANNEX 2: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Regional perspectives

Africa

- No.1 West Africa, *Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou*
- No.2 East Africa, *Jok Madut Jok, Ken Menkhaus, and Nuur Mohamud Sheekh*
- No.3 Central Africa, *Thierry Vircoulon, Charlotte Arnaud, and Violette Tournier*
- No.4. Southern Africa, *Dimpho Motsamai*

Americas

- No.5 Central America, *Bernardo Arévalo de León and Ana Glenda Táger Rosado*
- No.6 South America, *Eduarda Hamman*

Asia

- No.7 Central Asia, *Anna Matveeva*
- No.8 Northeast Asia, *Sachio Nakato*
- No.9 Southeast Asia, *Ed Garcia*

Europe

- No.10 Europe, *Catherine Woollard*

Middle East and North Africa

- No.11 Middle East, *Riccardo Bocco and Souhail Belhadj*
- No.12 North Africa, *Souhail Belhadj and Riccardo Bocco*

Thematic perspectives

- No.13 Peacebuilding: A Review of the Academic Literature, *Vincent Chetail and Oliver Jütersonke*
- No.14 Peacebuilding: A Review of the Policy Literature, *Aminata Sow*
- No.15 Risks to Peace: A Review of Data Sources, *Aske Nørby Bonde and Achim Wennmann*
- No.16 The UN Peacebuilding Architecture: Institutional Evolution in Context, *Sarah Hearn, Alejandra Kubitschek Bujones, and Alischa Kugel*
- No.17 Understanding the Negotiations Towards the UN's Peacebuilding Architecture, *Jussi Hanhimäki*
- No.18 Peacebuilding: Evolution, Trends, Visions – Retreat Synthesis, *Achim Wennmann*
- No.19 Operational Field Perspectives on Peacebuilding, *Louis Hoffmann*
- No.20 New Technologies: The Future of Alternative Infrastructures for Peace, *Helena Puig Larrauri, Rodrigo Davies, Michaela Ledesma, and Jennifer Welch*

GENEVA peacebuilding PLATFORM

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is a network that connects the critical mass of peacebuilding actors, resources, and expertise in Geneva and worldwide. Founded in 2008, the Platform has a mandate to facilitate interaction on peacebuilding between different institutions and sectors, and to advance new knowledge and understanding of peacebuilding issues and contexts. It also plays a creative role in building bridges between International Geneva, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in New York, and peacebuilding activities in the field. The Platform's network comprises more than 3,000 peacebuilding professionals and over 60 institutions working on peacebuilding directly or indirectly.

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is a joint project of four institutions: The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Interpeace; and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva (QUNO).