Geneva Peace Week 2023

Policy Briefings and Workshop Summaries

The following document gathers some notes provided by the event organisers within the framework of Geneva Peace Week 2023. The information presented in this document is intended solely for reference purposes and to provide insights into the discussions and sessions that took place during GPW23.

Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

How to Measure Peace: The Everyday Blueprint

ORGANISERS: Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI), The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP)

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The EPI method emphasizes local community involvement in generating peace indicators, challenging the typical non-local approach.
2. The workshop addressed both technical and adaptive challenges in implementing the EPI method, including methodology, donor engagement, and the balance between standard indicators and EPI approaches.

QUOTES:

1. Pamina Firchow, Executive Director of Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI) and Associate Professor at Brandeis University**:** "These indicators can be used to produce participatory statistics or statistics that have been created using tools generated by everyday people who are experts about their own realities."
2. Eliza Urwin, Head of Reserch at the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Research Associate at Everyday Peace Indicators: “With EPI, we are not just collecting data; this method goes beyond traditional metrics, enabling us to tap into local experiences and weave them into the broader narrative of peacebuilding. It's about turning stories into statistics, transforming narratives into numbers that resonate with both local communities and policy-makers. Our goal is to bridge the gap between grassroots realities and high-level decision-making.”
3. Julianne Funk, Project Coordinator Everyday Peace Indicators: "As EPI, we are concerned about the extractive nature of data collection so we introduced the engagement concept into our monitoring and design work to think about creative ways to give back data to communities to use to design projects”

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The Geneva Peace Week 2023 workshop on "How to Measure Peace: The Everyday Blueprint," was led by Pamina Firchow, Eliza Urwin, and Julianne Funk. This session focused on the Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI) methodology, illustrating its application in measuring peace in contexts such as Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Bosnia. The workshop emphasized the significance of local community involvement in generating indicators of peace, a departure from traditional methods in peacebuilding and development.

Pamina first presented a thorough overview of EPI's role in development and peacebuilding. She detailed the EPI process, designed to capture community-generated indicators for complex social concepts like peace, justice, and coexistence. She described the participatory nature of

EPI, highlighting the four critical steps: focus groups, verification and voting, analysis and design of programming, and longitudinal data collection to track changes. She stressed the importance of community engagement in the DMEL (Design, Monitoring, Engagement, Evaluation, and Learning) process, notably EPI's unique aspect of returning data to the communities. Firchow also offered practical examples from Sri Lanka, where EPI indicators led to improvements in community spaces. Additionally, she introduced the Grounded Accountability Model (GAM), a form of EPI for streamlined monitoring and design, exemplified by its application in a South Sudan atrocities-prevention program.

Julianne's segment highlighted EPI as a tool for community engagement in monitoring and design. She underscored EPI's distinction in the field by returning data to communities, fostering deeper project impacts and local ownership. Julianne presented on the Mostar project titled "Spaces to Activate and Rejuvenate", where EPI played a crucial role in identifying and implementing improvements in public spaces like Ploča Beach, Trimuša Park, and Bunica Beach. The project was distinct in its approach to investing in both indoor and outdoor public spaces, combining material enhancements with cultural activities. While indoor spaces and activities were funded through grants, the approach to outdoor public spaces required a more nuanced method, relying heavily on community input. EPI's community-level indicators proved more concrete and specific than those gathered by other partners, making them particularly useful for incorporation into city-wide surveys. About 70 EPI indicators related to outdoor public spaces influenced the decision on where to invest.

She also presented two innovative EPI methods: a card game and Photovoice. The card game, used as an educational tool, allows community members to engage with the indicators they helped create. Photovoice, a visual method, enables communities to develop photo stories expressing their perspectives. She shared the real-world impact of these methods, such as the construction of an artesian well in San Jacinto, Sucre, guided by community-driven indicators.

Eliza Urwin's presentation focused on using EPI for Evaluation and Learning, specifically in the SCORE initiative in Sri Lanka. Funded by USAID, this initiative aimed to advance reconciliation by promoting cohesive identity, reducing socio-economic disparities, and enhancing community resilience. Urwin detailed how EPI contributed to SCORE by creating local indicators of reconciliation and guiding both surveying and program development by Global Communities. She provided a detailed account of EPI's work in Kallappadu North, a Tamil village in Sri Lanka, and highlighted the dual approach of quantitative surveys and qualitative assessments in evaluating SCORE projects. Furthermore, Urwin touched upon EPI's role in academic learning, discussing a paper co-authored with Pamina that discusses EPI research in Afghanistan.

The workshop concluded with a dynamic 40-minute discussion, engaging audience members on the significance of measuring peace and its integration into their work. Participants shared insights on the challenges they encounter in peacebuilding efforts, sparking a valuable exchange of experiences and perspectives. Key topics of discussion included the practical use of the EPI method considering its time and cost implications, strategies for presenting the approach to donors, and ways to incorporate EPI with standard indicators used by donors and

project managers. Further, the dialogue delved into bridging the impact of community-level work with higher policy levels, measuring the effectiveness of EPI indicators, and incentivizing participation in such comprehensive methodologies.

The conversation also touched upon the unique challenges faced by an audience like that in Geneva, often working at a high level and distant from local communities, and the need for certain types of documentation. Additionally, there was a focus on the personal impact of such in-depth work on peacebuilders, including the importance of self-care in these roles. Overall, the workshop was not only informative about the EPI methodology, its applications, and integration but also pivotal in guiding audience members through understanding its relevance and practicality in their own peacebuilding endeavors.

Peacebuilding and Private Finance Actors: Investing in Partnerships that Create Peace

ORGANISERS:

Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations in Geneva, Finance for Peace initiative, Interpeace

Moderator: Mr. Felix Kroll, Head of the political department at the Permanent Mission

Speakers:

- ***Dr Roselyn Akombe***, Chief, Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch; Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.
- ***Daniel Hyslop***, Head of Research and Senior Peacebuilding Advisor; Interpeace – Finance for Peace initiative
- ***Prof. Adriano Nuvunga***, Director; Centre for Democracy and Development
- ***Frederik Teufel***, Lead Coordinator, Transition States Coordination Office; African Development Bank

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Conflict is growing but peacebuilding funding is not – in fact, it is declining. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, development finance is often not sequenced to, or supportive of, diplomatic or conflict prevention objectives. Yet, development is financed at approximately 80 times the level of peacebuilding. Financing for peacebuilding from traditional donors is decreasing, despite the fact that peacebuilding is cost-effective at preventing conflict: according to World Bank estimates, 16 dollars is saved on conflict per one dollar invested in peacebuilding, which testifies of the cost-benefit rationale of peacebuilding. Yet, the percentage of Official Development Assistance (ODA) channelled to civilian peacebuilding amounted to 0.5 in 2022, which corresponds to USD 1 billion, or 1/204 of total ODA. This is 22 times less than humanitarian aid. Large peacebuilding donors are decreasing their commitments, and it is estimated that financing for peacebuilding is at a 15-year low. **The need to catalyse funding from**

other sources is urgent, especially given the current environment where peacebuilding needs are growing. 75% of countries with the highest poverty rates are Fragile or Conflict-Affected States (FCS), and only 15% of the latter are meeting the core SDGs.

2. Therefore, **there is an urgent need to open up a market for peace by building bridges between the peacebuilding and the finance sectors:** peacebuilders operate in settings where the private sector often contributes to fuelling conflict dynamics, in part due to the fact that fragile and conflict-affected contexts are less resilient to internal and external shocks that may lead to conflict over access to resources, land ownership, issues of livelihoods. **In the context of growing shares of impact investing and investments into the SDGs, there are still no products to invest into SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.** The lack of investment opportunities has also led the public sector to largely dominate the engagement into FCS, also in light of the fact that many investment opportunities that exist in FCS lie in the extractive sector and are exploitative in nature, thus contributing to conflict dynamics. The example of Mozambique, where 5 000 billion cubic feet of liquefied natural gas were discovered, testifies of the need for a greater paradigm shift: such large-scale investments are highly sensitive in nature and thus require extensive consultation with local communities, to ensure that a peace lens is integrated in the activities of multinationals engaging in Mozambique, looking at issues of governance, human rights due diligence, inclusivity. **The private sector bears real potential to unlock the country's wealth but local communities will only benefit if sustainable relationships are developed through constructive dialogue.**

3. In response to these challenges, peace finance builds on the global momentum generated by the New Agenda for Peace, and the UN Secretary-General's call for International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to become 'agents for peace', which combined with the High-Level Advisory Board process on multilateral institutions reform, pave the way for the 2024 Summit of the Future**. Peace finance not only seeks to embed a do-no-harm investment approach, it aims to actively contribute to peace by shifting away from grant-based, short-term peacebuilding, to longer-term engagement with private sector actors through partnerships with development finance actors. Peace finance provides a catalytic way of de-risking the investment environment and creating additionality for both investors and local communities, key to unlocking more investments into FCS.** Initiatives such as Investing for Peace, a joint effort led by the UN PBSO, the UNCDF, and the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), testify of the burgeoning architecture for peace finance. Investing for Peace aims at creating and establishing peace-sustaining Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for blended financing to enable IFIs, DFIs, and the private sector to contribute to peace and development in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Investing for Peace is looking at developing three areas: (i) a peace pipeline, aimed at developing and incubating businesses and promoting local ownership; (ii) peace ownership, by providing investors with contextual and technical capacities; (iii) peace markets.

Concurrently, Finance for Peace initiative strives to develop a conducive environment for the sustainable, peace-sustaining, conflict-sensitive engagement of the private sector into FCS. Finance for Peace's focus is threefold: (i) drawing from the green finance market, it aims at developing the standards, norms, and guidance that are critical to grow trust in this market and to prevent the looming spectre of 'peacewashing'; (ii) it seeks to catalyse critical market intelligence, to highlight the sectors, thematic, and geographies that would benefit most from the growth of a market for peace; (iii) it invests in policy and partnerships, to capitalize on the essential role played by DFIs, service providers, private sector, civil society organizations, and the UN, in addition to creating an enabling environment ahead of the Summit for the Future. Along this journey, these partnerships will help unlock better alignment between development finance actors and peace actors, and ultimately maximize the impact of ODA on peace, and conflict prevention. The political support and engagement provided by member-states is pivotal in embedding the topic of peace finance into multi-lateral policy agendas ahead of the Summit.

QUOTES:

Dr. Roselyn Akombe: "When peace agreements fail to integrate women, civil society members, the youth, and private sector actors, they often fail. It is time for us to start de-risking communities, to ensure that returns on investments are invested back into the communities we serve. The Summit for the Future offers the opportunity to entrench these narratives and build more partnerships to create the right market for peace."

Mr. Daniel Hyslop: "Peace Finance is not just a nice thing to do. It is the key paradigm to de-risking investments first for communities and then for investors. This is what we are here to do."

Mr. Felix Kroll: "Blended financing is key to incentivizing companies and investors to invest in high-risk environments, where livelihoods, peace, and economic growth are needed the most."

Prof. Nuvunga: "If the private sector takes shortcuts on issues such as governance, human rights due diligence, inclusivity, it will ultimately lead to conflict. We need to shift the mindset of the private sector operating in conflict-sensitive areas towards community-centric development models, through the co-creation of strategies for peacebuilding".

Frederik Teufel: "Inclusive approaches to development ensure that we leave no one behind. Peace finance seeks to go beyond a Do-No-Harm approach to actively contribute to peace in contexts that have been marginalized politically and economically. Its ability to convene a diversity of stakeholders and create alliances with the African Union, RECs and African governments also ensures African-led, locally-driven solutions."

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Asked about the role of the UN in working with the private sector and innovative finance actors on financing peace, Dr. Roselyn Akombe advanced its ability to convene a plurality of stakeholders, and to carry out political analysis for investors thanks to its global reach. The PBF is one of the UNSG's leading peacebuilding instruments to invest in catalytic risk-prone areas and incentivize other actors to invest, with a view to engage the private sector. Burundi and the

DRC are successful cases where private capital was harnessed to increase livelihoods. Dr. Akombe advocated for more member-states to join Germany in the peace finance space, to scale up the pilots that are incubated within Financing for Peace through providing catalytic political support.

Mr. Daniel Hyslop delved into his experience of building an enabling environment for peace finance through the Finance for Peace initiative, aimed at forging stronger links between the peacebuilding and finance worlds through establishing a common language. He highlighted a feasibility study for a peace bond in Ghana for a renewable energy infrastructure project to showcase how the proceeds of a bond can be harnessed for intentional peace impact while increasing its Net Present Value (NPV), by embedding Peace Enhancing Mechanisms (PEMs), that is, peacebuilding activity, into the proceeds of a bond.

Prof. Nuvunga deplored that the peace agreement that was brokered by the UN in Mozambique in 1992 failed to provide a path for meaningful engagement with the private sector, impacting the effective implementation of the agreement to this day by fuelling community grievances. The vast resources that the country hosts require a greater paradigm shift, towards constructive engagement with the private sector, which can become an asset in ensuring that local communities' expectations are met, especially in Northern Mozambique where livelihoods are deeply impacted by ongoing conflict. The private sector can play a greater role in stirring the local economy by providing economic opportunities to disenfranchised populations, and developing local capacities, thereby strengthening resilience and promoting local ownership.

Mr. Frederik Teufel emphasized his organisation's long-term engagement within FCS, providing a natural avenue for strengthening its focus on resilience, especially in contexts where fragility has intensified in the past decade such as the Sahel, effectively overriding development gains. Peace finance offers an innovative approach to addressing deeply entrenched issues of inequalities and exclusionary patterns of development, thus preventing the rise of grievances in contexts that are left behind. The idea behind peace finance is to stir local private sector activities through an inclusive business development approach that curtails patterns of chronic underinvestment. The AfDB has chosen to partner with Investing for Peace and Finance for Peace to enrich its expertise in peace-sensitive investing and plan for scale from the onset of investments, by making the business case for peace finance.

Q&As:

"The UN resolution on partnerships and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda highlights the private sector as key potential partners, but it is not currently invested in peacebuilding. How can we convince the private sector to invest in the youth?"

Dr. Akombe notes that the rapid population growth in Africa requires us to think innovatively about the quality of financing going into the continent, notably by looking deliberately at youth-led institutions. Mr. Teufel emphasized that the main challenge in investing into the YPS agenda lies in the returns-oriented nature of private sector engagement, and thus requires innovative thinking that explores different delivery models fitted with business acumen.

"How to ensure that more funding is reaching civil society organizations?"

Mr. Hyslop highlighted that innovative financing mechanisms may provide opportunities to finance civil society organizations in adaptive ways: the Peace Finance Standards incepted by Finance for Peace aim to integrate a representative sample of civil society organisations into its advisory committee, to ensure these needs are addressed.

“Conflict is a key driver of food insecurity. Where does agriculture stand in the peace finance space?”

Mr. Hyslop highlighted the bankability of food storage facilities, which bear strong potential to yield significant investment opportunities but require solid conflict-sensitivity and integrated peace actions. Mr. Teufel noted the importance of revitalizing rural areas, where poverty is highly concentrated due to patterns of exclusion, notably through embedding a peace approach into the climate finance agenda.

Show me the Meaning of... Meaningful Participation

ORGANISERS:
GICHD, Small Arms Survey, DCAF

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Participating meaningfully is not just about being at the table.
2. Mentorship, peer support and leaders leading the way by giving space for everyone to participate are strategies that enable meaningful participation.
3. Men and women need awareness of their own bias and of stereotypes that form barriers to gender and diversity to be able to counter them, speak up and not be silent bystanders.

QUOTES:

- “At the beginning, the commandant accepted my competence in the conflict zone, but I had to prove to my male colleagues that I received the same training and had the same competences as them”. (Captain Na Fatou Mbayang CISSÉ, Head of Gender Office, Ministry of Senegal armed forces)

- “It was not easy to navigate society when society already put you in those boxes, expecting you to drop out of school, commit crimes, and so on”.“I wanted to go to prestigious universities, but people were saying it might be better for me to goto a university in my area.... Even though I managed to be in a prestigious university I had the
- feeling of impostor syndrome. I felt like I didn’t belong there, and people might judge me for who I am.” (Ms Inès Bourqoui, GEDI Program officer, GCSP)

- “During a mission, my male colleague told me that if I want to, they could organise a convoy just for me if I wanted to go back to the base and shorten my mission. It was kind and considerate, of course, but it showed that they had a strong assumption that I, as a

woman, could not perform under the same circumstances as the men". (Ms. Kheira Djouhri, Project officer at the Small Arms Survey in Geneva).

- "We need to value experience, even the small and personal ones. The women we work with tend to undermine their experience and their expertise. It's important to have someone around you, a colleague or friend, who can challenge you and support you" (Ms. Kheira Djouhri, Project officer at the Small Arms Survey in Geneva).

- "Just the fact that women are at the table doesn't mean that they have the possibility to meaningfully participate" (Mr. Callum Watson, Small Arms Survey).

- "I was working on a large development project involving several field offices. I noticed that one of the projects was harmful to one of our beneficiaries in the field, but as a junior officer I didn't feel I had the power or voices to raise this to a more senior level" (could not take name, affiliation).

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:
The session started with an icebreaker which allowed participants to reflect on meaningful participation, starting with an example of an experience when they couldn't participate, but wanted to, and one experience of an experience when they could participate and why. The experiences were placed under four categories.

Being present
Negative experiences: jargon, language barriers, risks in the civic space, (gender) stereotypes, issues with visas, age and seniority, childcare, and infrastructure, lack of access to information and lack of access to networks.
Positive experiences: active listening, open questions, process design, acknowledging work and including it, mutual trust, self-empowerment, feminist spaces, networks. To seize opportunities, influence and make decisions.

Self-efficacy
Negative experiences: impostor syndrome, lack of self-confidence, perceived lack of legitimacy.
Positive experiences: having a mentor to encourage participation, psychological safety, trust-building, the possibility to choose between two different options, competence and confidence.

Deploying agency
Negative experiences: lack of access to networks.
Positive experiences: community and trust, good working environment.

Exerting influence
Negative experiences: How to present yourself, hierarchies as a barrier to exerting influence.

Positive experiences: relinquishing power (sharing space), detours- finding different ways of getting involved, coalitions, paving the way for others.

Speakers gave examples of barriers to women's participation in peacekeeping operations, such as being considered and recognized for their competences, leaving caring responsibilities behind, having the appropriate infrastructure in mission (such as menstrual hygiene products), impostor syndrome and low societal expectations, and political violence targeting women. They gave examples of creating networks and platforms for women's participation in peacebuilding, networks and the importance of mentorship and peer support, opening the discussion, resilience and grit to overcome obstacles. Take the time to actually understand the context, why people participate and not.

A role play was conducted to showcase barriers to meaningful participation. Participants identified the following barriers:
- it wasn't really a discussion.
- The agenda was already set (by two men).
- The leader of the discussion was not gender sensitive.

Suggested solutions:
- Coaching/mentoring of a leader who is not gender sensitive.
- Doing a round table
- Comprehensive ToR needed.
- Having a clear objective: what do women/men need.
- Make yourself heard and insist.
- When you are in a relative power position – speak up for those who are not and give space.
- Raise confidence and experiences of women.
- Be intentional with the methods that you use (some people are more effective in a silent discussion, putting things on paper etc).
- Training on gender and diversity.
- It's not a women's issue, it's a culture issue. Train women and men to check their biases.
- Do not be a silent bystander, ask to re-discuss or make a plan to intervene.
- Ask for help when it's needed, especially women AND men as part of the solution.
- Raise awareness on gender coded language such as "hysterical" and "emotional"

Conclusion: How to empower others (what can I do as a leader to ensure others can meaningfully participate). "Let us all grow and learn, no one is immune to stereotypes (Riina Allinen, Project Officer at DCAF)"

Increase our Collective Abilities to Face Complex Challenges - Promoting Peace and Inclusive Societies.

ORGANISERS:

Caux Initiatives of Change Foundation In partnership with Principles for Peace; CHS Alliance, Creative Leadership**,** Inner Development Goals Lémanic Hub

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. **Not only the "WHAT" is important, it is also about the "HOW"** and the needed skills and competences for awareness and implementation of the principles/standards.

2. The idea of this *Sprint Lab* on our collective abilities was to connect existing initiatives and rapidly progress from problem to ways forward using a step-by-step approach.
   Part 1 was about setting the scene with compelling discussion starters. All four speakers referred to the needed skills and competences for awareness and implementation of the principles/standards promoted by the organisations to influence the implementation of operational responses. The common thread in the discussion was **how we are all trying to increase the collective abilities within our sectors or target groups but the struggle is to make system changes.**

3. In part 2 about *solving the problem* and part 3 on the *collective solutions*, one key reflection was on the **lack of attention and support on the inner capacity to deal with our increasingly complex environment and challenges.** Climate change, the Covid pandemic, and the war on Ukraine are cited as the reasons for the lack of progress on the SDG and the implementation of key standards and principles. While what we are also lacking is the **inner capacity to deal with our increasingly complex environment and challenges.** The development of the inner abilities we all need for the implementation is the starting point. Trustworthiness, tolerance, and transparency are key to transforming structures and supporting the revival of good governance and integrity in public life. These are easy to advocate but much harder to embody in practice.

4. We face a blind spot when it comes to establishing global peace and security, that of cognitive and emotional skills. **Personal and global change go hand in hand.** Each one of us has the power and the responsibility to self-reflect and align our actions with our values and increase our collective abilities.

5. Top skills and qualities shared as important were : **humility, critical thinking and creativity**. For enabling change by collaboration, **courage, optimism, co-creation skills, trust and inclusive mindset.**

6. In pairs, participants discussed leverage points that might accelerate the process of reaching any common objectives for significant impact : **copying mutually exclusive or double standards, adopting solutions to cultural contexts, support rather than control, top down solutions, addressing the power structures, community centered and accountable to people…**

7. We recognized the often difficulty of looking at things differently, of **being creative, at being realistically but dramatically innovative while time is pressing** to bring changes to scale.

8. We **illustrated some of thinking** by some topics chosen in the group work (pairs) such as on child sexual abuse

QUOTES:

“The silence and the inaction of many powerful leaders today constitutes the complicity in the senseless and excessively brutal destruction of civilian life. Across the globe, the ongoing nightmares for many pose also a threat to us all. Is it possible that we have forgotten the path to peace?” (Ignacio Packer – Caux Initiatives of Change).

"If times are urgent, let's slow down" (Willi Studer – Inner Development Goals Lémanique Hub, quoting Bayo Akomolafe, an Indian professor and author)

“If the humanitarian system is to meet the growing needs of people affected by crises, we need transformation not tinkering.” (Tanya Wood – CHS Alliance)

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:
What we are lacking *to increase our collective abilities* is the inner capacity to deal with our increasingly complex environment and challenges. The development of the inner abilities we all need for the implementation is the starting point for system changes. There is a lack of attention and support on the inner capacity to deal with our increasingly complex environment and challenges.

The New Agenda for Peace: Reflecting on the Future of Peace and Security Engagements

ORGANISERS:
Geneva Centre for Security Policy

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Role of the Security Council: concerns were raised about the SC’s ability to address conflicts. There was a call to prioritize conflict prevention and reconsider the sequencing of peace operations. Further, the role of non-permanent members of the SC and the improvement of political security dialogue were also highlighted.
2. Role of the UN: panel raised that the UN should serve as a forum for discussing opposing viewpoints and promoting dialogue – however, panelists also stressed that

informal forums for dialogue were needed. Further, the UN's role in assisting in implementing peace agreements and ceasefire was noted as highly relevant.

3. UN Peacekeeping: Despite the challenges to peacekeeping operations, the panel seemed to agree that ending UN peacekeeping is not an option, but rather a comprehensive review of its operations is needed.
4. UN Peace Operations: the idea of a spectrum of peace operations was discussed, as it would provide more flexibility in adapting to different conflict contexts.
5. Coalition Building: The importance of building broad coalitions of relevant peace actors (locally and internationally) before launching peace operations was highlighted. It was pointed out that consensus between these actors can be difficult to maintain.
6. Nexus Between Peace and Development: the potential of the nexus between peace and development, especially in conflict-prone areas, was highlighted by certain panelists.
7. Member States: Panelists stressed the importance of member states in cooperating, and in rebuilding trust both within their countries as well as in international organizations. Further, there must be an eradication of double standards between member states (and within the UN).
8. Root Causes of Conflict: the importance of looking into root causes of conflict was discussed. It was mentioned that this can sometimes stand in the way of peace agreements, as attempting to address the root causes can cause more conflict. Exploring the economies of states and structuring social contracts was suggested as a way to address these causes.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The session focused on the evolving security landscape (pointing out the growing internationalization of armed conflict and an erosion of key conflict resolution norms) and the role of the UN in shaping the future of peacekeeping. The panel highlighted the need for an approach to peacekeeping that is both more flexible and cooperative, considering the changing security landscape, and emphasizing the importance of addressing root causes of conflicts. There was also a lot of focus on the importance of expanding the toolbox of peacekeeping operations so that the tools used vary per context, taking into account local actors, and so on. The session also discussed the role of the UN, and whether it has changed from a place for arbitrating disputes, and instead has become a tool wielded by some member states to become a way to enforce specific outcomes. The panel suggested that the limits and expectations for the upcoming Summit of the Future must be made clear for it to be effective.

How can Early Warning Systems in Africa Address Inequalities and Build Trust with Human rights at the Centre? [A Peer-to-Peer Exchange]

ORGANISERS:

Organised jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the African Union Commission (AU) and the World Bank Group (WB) as part of Geneva Peace Week 2023.

In a peer-to-peer exchange, the workshop explored the potential of early warning tools, systems and practices informed by human rights norms, standards, and data to bridge the gap between early warning and early action in the Africa context.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The workshop contributed to the ongoing process of peer review and validation of the proposed prevention-focused human rights analytical framework (PHRAF) to be mainstreamed into the AU's early warning systems, tools, and processes.
2. The discussions raised the importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) working symbiotically with Human Intelligence as an area for further investigation, particularly in terms of increasing data availability and accessibility, safeguards, and source quality evaluation.
3. The workshop provided useful suggestions on approaches to engaging with civil society, national human rights institutions, academia, and other partners for increasing primary data uptake and collection, information quality, analytical depth, and building overall public trust in early warning.

SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP:

The workshop explored the question of how early warning systems in Africa can address inequalities and build trust with human rights at the center.

Over 40 experts from States, international organisations, academia, and NGOs participated in the peer-to-peer exchange, including with panellists from the AU, OHCHR and the World Bank. The panellists were **Mr. Issaka Garbou**, Head of Governance and Human Rights in the AU's Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, **Mr. Daniel Owens**, Senior Social Development Specialist, Lead for the Global Program for Reintegration Support of the World Bank, and **Mr. Marc Titus Cebreros**, Human Rights Officer, with the Early Warning Analysis and Prevention Team in OHCHR's Methodology Education and Training Section**. Ms. Maymuchka Lauriston**, Deputy Regional Representative of the OHCHR East Africa Regional Office, moderated the discussion.

Using a modified "world café" format, the participants were divided into three groups (2 in person, and 1 virtual group). Guide questions were organized using two themes: Innovation and Participation. In discussions facilitated by the panellists, they shared their insights and views about how to ensure that the early warning tools, systems, and practices in Africa are informed by human rights norms, standards, and data.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS:

Guide Questions in the *Innovation* Café:

1. ***(1) How would you improve the indicative list of human rights issues with a heightened link to conflict risks?***
2. **(2) *How can we better use the expertise and analysis of AU human rights organs and national human rights institutions?***

- Discussion with participants reinforced the need to constantly review elements of the PHRAF, evaluating relevance of themes, indicators and data points. Many of the topics raised are included in the current 13 PHRAF areas, however some could be fleshed out. These include human rights education, neighbouring conflict, trade, and energy.
- Other issues raised: inclusion of traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution (possibility to frame this in terms of resilience mechanisms); country cooperation public health in crisis/humanitarian emergencies.
- Participants emphasized the need to engage local communities as an approach to gain contextual understanding of conflict situations and drivers.
- Addressing climate change and environmental issues are among the many peace buildings to be integrated into data and analysis.
- Indicators can also be considered in terms of conceptual versus concrete issues and thought should be given to how this distinction is made in terms of data and analysis.
- Participants raised the issue that internal contradictions can emerge from the relationship between risk factors, for instance between business and trade promotion, and environmental protection.
- Artificial Intelligence was discussed as a potential tool for early warning, including methods of tracking social media trends and rapid rates of mis- and disinformation. The latter point was mentioned in the context of the current Middle East crisis. The use of safeguards was also considered.
- The need for data safeguards such as data responsibility guidelines - AI accessibility and speed does not necessarily lead to quality and there is a need to manage misinformation and balance how to be both dynamic and contextual and showcase best practices as big data is increasingly becoming more important.

Guide Questions in the *Partnerships* Café:

1. ***(1) What are some best practices related to survey and interview design to increase data inclusions that can incentivise participation of marginalized groups (women, children, persons with disabilities, etc.)?***
2. ***(2) What are some best practices related to engaging CSOs and communities in primary data collection while safeguarding their rights?***

- There is a need to have a clearer understanding of how to best support CSOs' role as data collectors, with suggested solutions focusing on AU and regional accreditation mechanisms and peer-to-peer learning within CSO networks.
- It is critical to think about how data is going to be used (only 10-15% of primary data is currently used), how it is communicated and how to develop feedback loops with those that provide data to ensure the process is not extractive.

- Discussion focused on ways to increase collection of primary data (from current 10% to 15%) levels. How can civil society organizations be encouraged to provide data and what is the benefit of sharing information for them?
- Encouragement and training are needed for the local media organizations to generate or disseminate information in trusted and non-biased ways.
- Innovative partnerships are needed to leverage the local capacities of sectoral actors who collect primary data that can be used to build trust around data through inclusion of communities, and also ensure an increase around primary data uptake. Partners could include actors engaged in:
    - DRR, who are very much focused on triggers such as natural disasters on sources of resilience and risks that affect communities. These natural hazard triggers can be added to the PHRAF focus areas.
    - Education institutions were put forward as a source of information given the wide outreach.
- National actors (authorities) are natural partners, and their capacities should be strengthened. For example, the ECOWAS-USAID partnership was mentioned in the context of a sustainability mechanism, with the onus on ECOWAS to take the helm.
- The importance of including or dynamically linking with disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) perspectives was mentioned by the World Bank facilitators.
- Modalities for data collection should be inclusive and follow the leave no one behind principle. Consideration should be given to the voices potentially left out due to myriad reasons, including low literacy rates, for example.
- Ways forward will, to an extent, depend on the indicators used. Based on the latter a strategy can be developed to see what partners can be consulted and what partnership modality can be developed. Important to note that this may incur costs. Partners, especially CSOs, will need to be compensated for any role they play since this will require additional resources.
- The discussions emphasized the need for a bigger role for community actors such as CSOs to bridge the gap between early warning and early response at the national level. In addition, these same actors can be empowered to provide primary data to help analysis for prevention of conflicts.
- Important lessons that were highlighted in improving this constructive role by CSOs include:
    - The need to peer learn and criticize CSOs through umbrella organizations.
    - An accreditation mechanism to qualify the different CSOs in their area of work based on an acceptable list of criteria.
- All in all, the participants agree on the big role CSOs, and other community actors play to move forward the AU-WB-OHCHR project in all facets of intervention from data collection to the implementation of recommended response options.

My voice, our Peace! Connecting women peace leaders from Ukraine and Afghanistan

ORGANISERS:
OSCE Secretariat, CDPG (Centre for Dialogue and Progress-Geneva), GCSP-Geneva Centre for Security Policy

KEY TAKE-AWAYS:

1. Women's role in peace negotiations is still very limited. Only the meaningful inclusion of women in peace processes will ensure long-lasting peace and security in post-conflict countries. Women should not only be included in peace negotiations when women's issues are discussed. Their voices need to be heard and included in every aspect, from economic reconstruction to security and the support from international organizations should not stop while women got a seat at the table.
2. Sustainable and just peace requires collective efforts and should be accepted by the community, never imposed on it. The absence of war and physical violence is not, per se, a signal of sustainable peace.
3. Networks can be a powerful tool to amplify women's voices, advance the WPS agenda, and serve as a bridge between civil society and the political leaders.

QUOTES:
"Peace cannot be based on the denial of part of the society" and "Peace must be rooted in the society" Shah Gul Rezaie, Human rights activist, European Institute of Peace

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Women's inclusion in peace and security processes, as well as women's leadership in conflict resolution and peacebuilding are essential prerequisites for long-lasting sustainable peace and stability. On 31 October, the OSCE, the Centre for Dialogue and Progress Geneva and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy organized a high-level event on challenges faced by women in peace processes and how networks can play a role in empowering peacebuilders and supporting women' leadership and agency. The event also offered the opportunity to identify concrete steps and recommendations for joint international actions towards greater inclusivity. The event was opened by the OSCE Secretary General, Helga Maria Schmid (through video message) and moderated by GCSP Senior Diplomatic Adviser, Amb. Marc P George.

Key points from the panel discussion:

<u>Speaker 1: Fawzia Kofi</u>

- Peace processes that include women are more diverse and sustainable. Women bring enriching views and in-depth knowledge btu are still hardly represented in Track I processes
- War in Afghanistan is about women and they are a tool of this war
- Need to look beyond humanitarian crisis: we need to have a political solution for this conflict and women want to be part of it

Speaker 2: Shah Gul Rezaie

- The main goal is to achieve a sustainable and just peace in Afghanistan but peace is a process and not a project. It needs to be accepted by all and should not be imposed at the expense of women and minorities
- The mere absence of war and physical violence is not peace: peace is related to justice and equality. There is no peace without ensuring gender equality

Speaker 3: Anna Popsui

- Peace requires combined efforts from the grassroot & international community. One conflict in one region creates repercussions around the globe.
- Implementing WPS at national level is of utmost importance to make sure women are meaningfully included in all decision-making roles
- Since 2014, women have played a powerful role in Ukraine by delivering social and medical services and led humanitarian efforts. Women-led organizations supply vital services but their work is often hidden and high-level discussions related to the on-gong conflict hardly include them

Speaker 4: Loredana Teodorescu

- Networks remain a strategic tool to advance WPS agenda
- Stress the added value of networks: advocating for inclusion of women, bridging between different levels, tool for soft diplomacy, giving visibility to women and showcasing them as powerful agents of change
- WPS should be seen as cross cutting agenda

Closing Remarks: Dr Lara Scarpitta

The session was closed highlighting challenges of the inclusion of women in peace processes, stressing the importance of peace for social justice and human dignity, and with the proposal of three concrete actions: Involving, Empowering & Investing in women as well as including them in all stages of conflicts.

Questions:

During the session a variety of questions were raised on the role of networks across contexts, engaging men and how to deal with toxic masculinity and the work of NGOs in Afghanistan to address gender-based violence.

Let's Intersect: Building Trust-Based Partnerships to Accelerate Peace

ORGANISERS:
Rotary International (RI) & Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP)

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Results of 20+ global surveys and studies indicate that trust between multinational institutions, policymakers, and citizens has declined at an alarming rate. In an increasingly fragmented world, the United Nations New Agenda for Peace calls for rebuilding trust as a "must-do" in order to achieve widespread, sustained peace.
2. How do we define trust? What does it look like in action? Trust is an experience between individuals, organizations, and distributed networks that fuels social connection and cohesion. Trust reinforces good governance, rule of law, and multi-pluralism. When trust is present, people are more open to new ideas and possibilities because they assume "others" will act with a certain level of humanity, goodwill, and dependability.
3. There are insights to be gained from organizations that have peace as a focus, operate via trust- based relationships, and are highly engaged at the community level. These organizations are typically non-governmental "intersectors" that facilitate connections between civil society, government, and business to address local and global challenges. Rotary International is one highly visible and longstanding model.

QUOTES:

- "Trust is a kind of societal glue that helps manifest peace." - Patricia Shafer, co-moderator, Senior Fellow For Peace Education, Alliance for Peacebuilding; Executive Director, NewGen Peacebuilders.
- "A spirit of fellowship reinforces an organization's status as a trusted partner and goes to the very core of efforts to bring about peaceful coexistence." - Peter Kyle, co-moderator, panelist, Rotary International Director (2020-22).
- "Leaders need to keep in mind that trust is not static or linear. It takes work to be solid on an organization's inside and successful in partnerships on the outside."- Liz Hume, panelist, Executive Director, Alliance for Peacebuilding.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Rotary International (RI) and the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) co-delivered the policy brief and discussion "Let's Intersect . . . ". The session included remarks from co-moderator Patricia Shafer, AfP Senior Fellow for Peace Education and Executive Director, NewGen Peacebuilders. In-person and online attendees contributed synonyms for trust and reflected on the extent to which their organizations create partnerships for peace. Panelists brought the concept of trust to life by sharing experiences and insights on trust-related values outlined below:

FELLOWSHIP:

Peter Kyle, a past Rotary International Director and former Chair of the Rotary Peace Centers Committee, represented the world's largest community-based peacebuilding organization. There are 1.4 million members in 40,000 clubs. Kyle highlighted the 100-year history of peace advocacy and "Promoting Peace" as one of seven areas of focus. He noted that a parallel association for 1,500+ people who received Rotary Peace Fellowships encourages alumni fellows to collaborate on peace projects. The Rotary Representative Network is a body of unofficial ambassadors to United Nations agencies and programs. A strategic partnership with the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) makes an online Rotary Positive Peace Academy available for free. Kyle said that trust-based partnerships for peace are part of the Rotary DNA.

DIVERSITY:
Samson Tesfaye provided details on Women Deliver 2023 (WD2023) hosted inKigali, the capital of Rwanda. The high-energy conference focused on gender equity. Tesfaye, co-head of WD2023, is an experienced social communications professional and representative to the UN Economic Commission for Africa. More than 6,500 participants attended WD2023 in person, and 10,000 people from 178 countries joined online. Tesfaye attributed success to an intentional co-design with input from multiple countries; consideration for different ethnic and economic groups; and "safe space" sharing. Tesfaye emphasized that the conference was not organized top-down. The undertaking was bottom-up. Organizers asked 'What do you want to hear? Who do we invite?'" In addition, high-level speakers were required to listen to unscripted participant questions and commit publicly to gender equity-focused actions at home.

INTEGRITY:
Dr. Christine Kaddous, Professor and Director of the University of Geneva's Masters in European and International Governance Program (MEIG), proposed that integrity is first and foremost an individual accountability dependent on commitment to truth and ethical behavior. Personal standards in turn influence society. To illustrate how multi-national trust-based partnerships get at the roots of peace, Kaddous recounted the creation of the post-World War II treaty that established the European Coal and Steel Community. It was an effort to overcome competition for critical resources and promote the common good. Kaddous underlined that trust-based partnerships are the core of any multilateral system, and they are not built overnight.

SERVICE:
Jean-Luc Perrin, a Rotary Representative to the UN in Geneva, has held positions at the World Intellectual Property Organization and led developmental projects in multiple countries experiencing violence. He views partnerships with multi-national organizations as essential to addressing global challenges. Perrin recounted the inspiring story of one Rotarian's proposal that Rotary International embark on a journey to eradicate polio. Decades later, Rotary remains an active partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Rotarians have contributed $2.1 billion to help vaccinate 2.5 billion children. Today, for every $1 (USD) that the Rotary Foundation contributes, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation donates $2 (USD). The World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ensure data-driven program efficacy. Asked about potential for a Peace Challenge similar to the Polio Challenge,

Perrinresponded that shared values make it possible to be in action toward the same goals. Trust forwards the sense of togetherness.c

LEADERSHIP: Liz Hume is Executive Director of the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) with 200+ member organizations worldwide. Hume described the need to expand the number of multi-partner peace programs and foster relationships between scholars and practitioners. She also emphasized the need in the peacebuilding field to actively cultivate values that many people dismiss as “soft skills.” She proposed that a balance be struck between the “hardware” approach to humanitarian and economic development and the “software” of right relationships. Hume recalled the incorporation of trust-aligned values into the current AfP strategic plan and called on leaders of peace-related organizations to do the same.

NEXT STEPS:
Overall, the session emphasized that trust is elevated or undermined to the degree that organizations engage with community members and authentically pursue locally-driven problem solving. In a call to action, co-moderator Kyle expressed hope that Rotary Clubs everywhere will direct considerable local attention to a reversal of the trend toward polarization. Co-moderator Shafer and panelist Hume made a commitment on behalf of AfP to: 1) disseminate a summary paper on links between trust and peace; and 2) bring together a collaborative working group that will leverage the spirit of trust-based partnership in a project to accelerate peace.

Entre traditions et lois: production artisanale d'armes à feu en Afrique de l'Ouest // Between Tradition and the Law : Artisanal Firearms Production in West Africa

ORGANISERS:
Small Arms Survey and the Permanent Representation of France to the Conference on Disarmament

TOPIC:
According to the African Union, small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to the safety, security and stability of Africa, and are considered one of the main vectors of armed violence on the continent. Among the local sources of small arms trafficking, the artisanal production of firearms represents a recurring challenge for States, particularly in West Africa. While the production of artisanal firearms is deeply rooted in the culture and history of the sub-region, the supply and demand for these weapons has increased due to socio-economic and security dynamics. Although homemade weapons are still used for hunting, livestock protection and traditional ceremonies, they are also increasingly used in criminal activities and communal

conflicts, mainly due to their affordability and their accessibility. Faced with these challenges, the States of the ECOWAS zone seem to be struggling to find the means to control this production in a sustainable manner. In order to better understand this phenomenon, the Small Arms Survey conducted research aimed at drawing up an inventory of the artisanal arms and ammunition sector in West Africa as well as the main regulatory approaches used by the States in the region to address the issue. Based on the lessons learned from this research, the Small Arms Survey aims, through this round table, to stimulate a discussion on good practices to counter the proliferation and illicit use of artisanal weapons in West Africa.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The production of artisanal firearms is an activity that is often passed down from father to son in West Africa, where castes of craftsmen and blacksmiths have been present for generations. The activity is rooted in the culture of the people concerned and has an economic impact because it feeds entire families.
2. It is difficult for the State to exercise strict and effective control. The majority of small arms manufacturers operate illegally throughout the region, with areas of concentration in certain departments. The informal and clandestine nature of this activity also hamper efforts to collect reliable data on the number of gunsmiths in each country.
3. The currently regulatory framework for firearm production in West Africa does not distinguish between industrial and artisanal production, contributing to poor enforcement, low awareness and regulation avoidance among craft producers. Many gunsmiths are calling for the establishment of a legal framework enabling them to work legally and come out of hiding, clear rules and the material resources needed to apply them.

QUOTES:
Please note that the quotes below are translated from French

“A gunsmith is an actor whose main activity is the manufacture of traditional guns, but also an actor who uses iron to make tools used in the household and in rural work.” (Hervé Gonsolin)

“It would be wrong to differentiate between cultural and criminal uses, because the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. These weapons are increasingly being manufactured for both purposes” (Julien Joly)

“From a regulatory point of view, it is also important to distinguish between production and possession issues.” (Julien Joly).

“Taking a pragmatic approach won't work. Being for or against the manufacture of artisanal firearms will not help. We need a differentiated approach driven by dialogue” (Hervé Gonsolin).

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The discussion for this in-person event was conducted in French, and broadcasted online (FR and EN). Speakers included Colonel Gabin Chaounka from the National Commission on Small Arms in Benin, Hérvé Gonsolin from COGINTA, Julien Joly from the Small Arms Survey, Alizée Semon from the Permanent Representation of France to the Conference on Disarmament, and Delidji Eric Degila from the Graduate Institute Geneva (moderator). After the opening remarks by Ms. Semon, each speaker gave a presentation on some aspects of artisanal production, and answered questions by the audience.

Mr. Joly introduced the subject by contextualizing the issue within the broader framework of small arms proliferation in Africa. He pointed out that the sources of illicit arms in the region are multiple and evolving and are not limited to the diversion of international arms transfers. Locally made firearms, which are often produced illegally, are a common reality in West Africa. In fact, over the past fifteen years, most arms control efforts in West Africa have focused on the physical security and management of state stockpiles; meanwhile, around 80% of weapons in circulation in the region are held by civilians, and include craft weapons. The practice of craft firearm production has deep cultural and economic roots in West Africa and serves different societal needs (and sometimes different uses) than industrial firearm production. Communities depend on artisanal firearms for hunting, protection, or ceremonial purposes, or use them as symbols of social status. In addition, the sophistication of the firearms produced has greatly evolved over time and are no longer limited to rudimentary weapons used for hunting or ceremonies. Handmade firearms are diverse, they include handguns and long guns, such as 8 mm and 12 mm pistols, as well as assault rifles and 12-gauge shotguns (in some cases double-barrelled). Most skilled gunsmiths are capable of producing guns with more complex systems such as pump-actions, revolving loading mechanisms, and automatic and semi-automatic mechanisms. Mr. Joly also emphasized that the practice of craft production was found in all countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region.

The Survey's analysis of legal frameworks in all West African countries led to the conclusion that the regulatory approaches adopted by states to address illicit production of firearms was highly indiscriminate. In most of the cases, there are no legal definitions of what constitutes an 'artisanal weapon' (except in the case of Benin and Cape Verde) and the terminology present in the laws or decrees is often obsolete (e.g. inherited from colonial times) or imprecise. A system to manufacture or repair firearms exists by the law, but not all countries have implemented it. Mr. Joly also discussed the issue of marking and record-keeping. Almost all legislations require that firearms be marked with essential elements but without précising the method of marking. Most recent laws are inspired from the ECOWAS Convention and include security marking provisions. However, in practice, producers often fail to comply with these norms. Similarly, provisions on record-keeping to oblige producers to record data on their production exist in several countries, but little evidence of their application has been found given that most producers operate in illegality. There are currently no provisions related to firearms safety, despite the numerous accidents that have been known to happen during the production or manipulation of these types of weapons. Despite all these challenges, the research conducted by the Survey found that there was a desire from producers to professionalize and regularize their activity, or to undergo programs of reconversion.

Colonel Chahounka shared the experience of Benin in regard to the production of artisanal firearms. He emphasized that the production of these type of weapons is the greatest source of arms proliferation and trafficking in his country. The skills required to build these arms are passed down from father to son and within well-established families of gunsmiths. The latest census in Benin dates from 2019, however he pointed out the difficulty to get exhaustive numbers given the clandestine nature of the activity. Out of the 132 producers recorded, one region counted half of the total producers. Colonel Chahounka also stressed that artisanal firearms are the most commonly used types of weapons in criminal activities according to official statistics. To respond to this challenge, the government of Benin enacted a special decree for artisanal firearms. It completes the other relevant provisions on arms control present in the penal code and the general law on arms and ammunition. He stated that the most pressing issues include the application of all degrees and laws related to arms control and artisanal weapons, but also the need to popularise the law and conduct awareness raising on the risks that these weapons can cause. Finally, systematic and up-to-date census are essential to understand the scope of this production.

The third and last presentation was conducted by Hervé Gosolin. Having conducted significant research on craft producers in Côte d'Ivoire, his intervention aimed at sharing their perspective. After describing his research, he provided information on the profile of the producers encountered. Producers generally do not possess an educational background and have other occupations on the side. Like the other speakers, Mr. Gonsolin stressed the cultural and historical nature of gun making. In the 18th Century, a king named Sékou Oumar Ouattara established himself as king and relied on families of gunsmiths to produce weapons and establish his power. This led to a specialization of the activity. While these communities of gunsmiths are no longer supplying the king, they provide their services to the traditional hunter community, the Dozos. He explained the role of the Dozos, legitimate actors at the heart of this informal network of production and the informal regulatory system that currently governs it. While noting the economic aspect of this activity, he further stressed its traditional and sacred character.

Harnessing MHPSS for Trust-Building, Peace and Development

ORGANISERS:
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Division for Peace, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Interpeace

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. MHPSS must be integrated into peacebuilding as an essential component to support communities and individuals to be resilient in the face of conflict and fragility, to end cycles of violence, and to foster sustainable peacebuilding and development beyond the emergency phase towards the longer-term.
2. MHPSS in peacebuilding is a multi-disciplinary practise that still needs more research, funding and tailoring to specific contexts.
3. MHPSS should become an institutionalized practise in project design and within organizations across the HDP nexus.

QUOTES:

“It is not just important but essential to give a sense of agency to those affected by trauma and conflicts, so they will not feel themselves only as victims, but rather in charge of their own destiny.” Abiosseh Davis

“How can we ask survivors to live in peace with each other without being at peace with themselves? This is why social support is critical.” Frank Kayitare

“The synergy between MHPSS and peacebuilding is symbiotic. As much as peace nurtures psychological and community well-being, fortifying a community's psychosocial health amplifies its resilience to adversities.” Nika Saeedi

“MHPSS is culturally sensitive, language matters. We need to make sure to include different cultures in project design and activities as representation matters.” Nika Saeedi

“Everyone is feeling in their own bodies this nexus of peace and trauma, and reflecting on this is essential to link peace to healing.” Michael Niconchuk

“It is difficult to reach forgiveness before developing trust amongst communities.” Frank Kayitare

“MHPSS should not be a trend, it should be an integrated practice.” Nika Saeedi

“To go beyond language and practise barriers between MHPSS and peacebuilding practitioners, it becomes necessary to demystify and deconstruct terminologies to find common ground. We find that starting with collective theories of change helps practitioners identify where the approaches and practices of each discipline can reinforce those of others.” Abiosseh Davis

“Leadership is an important component of determining the effectiveness and durability of MHPSS programs as well as their implementation. Leaders should also try to create a bridge between decision making and people by taking into account their needs in the design of policies and consideration of mental health issues.” Nika Saeedi

“We also should have integrated mechanisms to promote the wellbeing of staff members.” Abiosseh Davis

“There needs to be an accountability system and the creation of a safe environment to focus on healing.” Michael Niconchuk

“MHPSS should be part of institutional culture within international, national, and local organizations and include checking in regularly with staff.” Sara Habibi-Clarke

“Understanding trauma and collective identity is also a key component to consolidating peacebuilding efforts, and attention to this needs to be sustained into the longer term.” Sara Habibi-Clarke

“Men find it difficult to apply for MHPSS because of socialization and cultural norms and are often not allowed to express and engage with MHPSS.” Frank Kayitare

“Building capacity of community-based, trusted actors to facilitate group therapy approaches is critical in both addressing the shortage of professional psychologists, as well as embedding resilience capacities at the community level.” Frank Kayitare

“During the commemoration period [in Rwanda], the focus is not just on survivors but also children of perpetrators—it is a time to reflect but also for them not to bear the guilt. In fact, the mourning period is not about blame but remembrance.” Frank Kayitare

“We need to recognize there is a delicate balance between the science and the art of well-being.” Sara Habibi-Clarke

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

This panel discussed the transformative potential of MHPSS in longer-term peacebuilding, violence prevention and development. The exchange addressed current challenges but also presented practices and key recommendations for the integration of mental health in peacebuilding.

Addressing Contemporary Challenges of Private Military and Security Companies and Mercenaries in Fragile Contexts: the Role of Geneva-Based Actors

ORGANISERS:
The University of Copenhagen, DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. International Geneva has been working on this issue of private military and security companies and mercenaries for close to 80 years: beginning with the Geneva Conventions and continuing with various UN procedures and initiatives, the Montreux Document, and the International Code of Conduct Association, .
2. PMSC regulation, today, is mostly about political will to reinforce capacities at the local level. If states are willing to implement policy changes, there are proven methods that work.
3. Providing incentives to change is as important as imposing regulation from above.
4. Accountability and justice are extremely rare for victims of PMSC, meaning engagement in this space and filling in international legal gaps is crucial.

PANELISTS & KNOWN QUOTES:

- **Jean-Michel Rousseau**, *DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance*:
    - "It's important to keep in mind all the norms, good practices, and tools that are already available for PMSCs governance, not just what we don't have."
    - "International Geneva will *never* have the local knowledge or the local political will, but it is at the core of the international PMSC ecosystem and complements local knowledge with international norms, good practices, and tools."
- **Dr. Uju Agomoh**, *PRAWA and African Security Sector Network, Nigeria*:
    - "By bridging the gap between Geneva and the field through strategic initiatives, ECOWAS can strengthen the regional governance of Private Military and Security Companies. This collaborative approach ensures that PMSC activities align with international norms, promoting stability, security, and ethical conduct within the ECOWAS region."

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

This panel discussion brought together multilateral organizations, civil society, and academia around the rise of mercenaries and private military and security companies (PMSC) in recent decades. Recurrent examples demonstrate that such actors have – when inadequately regulated, overseen, and held accountable – been drivers of conflict, fragility, and instability. Thus, as DCAF's Jean-Michel Rousseau laid out, international Geneva has been working on this problem for a long time – starting with the establishment of the Geneva Conventions, through the decolonization period, and the appearance of modern PMSCs e.g. in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The Geneva Conventions created the internationally binding definition of "mercenaries", followed by many other initiatives such as the UN International Convention Against Mercenaries, the Special Rapporteur and subsequent UN Working Group on Mercenaries ongoing, the Montreux Document, the International Code of Conduct and its Association (ICoCA), and the UN Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on PMSC. It is clear, therefore, that neither mercenaries nor PMSC operate in a legal vacuum.

With PMSC and mercenaries again in the international spotlight, the panel discussed practical ways to strengthen their governance in the fragile contexts where it matters most. Senior Policy Advisor Vicent Bernard of ICoCA highlighted their report *When the Abused Becomes the Abuser*, which studies how poor working conditions for security guards in PMSC can make them more likely to commit abuses. Dr. Uju Agomoh, Executive Director of PRAWA and West African Regional Coordinator of the African Security Sector Network (ASSN), brought to the panel a voice passionate about on-the-ground experience and practical information on PMSCs and those who hire/profit from them. She also discussed the problems arising from the lack of recruitment standards and oversight issues in the West Africa region. Dr. Sorcha McLeod of the University of Copenhagen spent time going over the UN Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on PMSCs, particularly the difficulties of getting it passed (where until today it has never resulted in any functional instrument because of a deep disagreement on its binding status). However, since accountability and justice are extremely rare for victims of PMSCs, she sees this Working Group as extremely important. Moderator Wendy MacClinchy, Director of the UN program at CIVIC, closed saying that after the war in Iraq, most PMSC contractors were either pardoned or their cases were settled outside of court. Further, there has only been one prosecution ever within The Wagner Group. However, she echoed Jean-Michel Rousseau's resolve in that the world has dealt with this issue before and had actually established norms, good practices, and tools that are now available. We're not starting at zero, rather we need to invest more in the aforementioned initiatives ongoing today.

When the Waters Flow as One

ORGANISER:
UN Women Geneva

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The Peace Agreement is the first in the world, to incorporate a gender approach that included work with Afro-descendant, Black, Raizal, Raizal, Palenquero, Indigenous, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, rural and peasant, young women, signatories of the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP in 2016.

2. The film highlights the importance of civil society organizations and women's organizations in the peace-building process and the empowerment that comes along with it. As the film states "Like rivers, women grow when they join together."

3. Colombian women in exile worked together to contribute to the Colombian Truth Commission with the conviction that truth is not complete without women, including those who had to leave the country.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:
The screening of the documentary When the waters flow as one: A women and peace story took place on Wednesday, November 1, 17:00h – 19:00h CET at Maision de la Paix, Auditorium Ivan Pictet, A1B- Petale 1 during the Geneva Peace Week. The screening was followed by a

debate about the film participated by Ms. Adriana Quinones, Head, Human Rights and Development, UN Women Geneva Office; Ms. Sílvia Plana Subirana, Strategic Relations, ICIP - International Catalan Institute for Peace and Ms. Luisa Franco, Program Officer, swisspeace. When the waters flow as one: A women and peace story was developed by UN Women in Colombia, thanks to the support of the Swedish Embassy and in coordination with the completed Truth Commission. The film was created within the framework of the commemorative acts of resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council, which in 2020 commemorated 20 years since its unanimous approval. This film piece was also conceived as an innovative way to connect, empathize, dignify, and recognize, from the exercises of truth and memory of women, their contribution to peace in Colombia.

The film of 85 minutes spoke with women from regions ranging from the Caribbean to the Amazonian foothills, from the snow-capped mountains to the plains, the Colombian southwest, the Pacific. A total of 45 women, from 30 different territories of the country participated as protagonists representing their organizational processes. In addition, initiatives of national level lead from women in capital cities were represented in 15 protagonists. The film piece portrays from the voices of women and their organizations, stories that highlight the challenges, losses, sometimes heartbreaking, and at the same time the resilience, strength and courage of Colombian women who joined forces like the waters, and advanced in a decisive and invaluable role so that the scars they have had to endure for more than half a century in the the country was not in vain.
Women like the ones portrayed on the film have created their generation's own vision of feminism, fighting for peace, justice, dignity, truth and non-repetition. The name When the waters fall as one appeals to the fact that, as rivers meet with seas, women come together to be a great tide that transforms everything and can do everything for the benefit of all. The name is a way of telling the world: women and peace have met and will continue to meet to, with all the impetus and determination of the struggle that all of them have advanced for decades, build a more egalitarian, fair, resilient, capable of building on the pain of so many years. During the panel discussion, the three speakers reflected on their lives and work and how these experiences were connected to the film narrative.

All of them agreed on the importance of women as peace builders, and how their meaningful participation is crucial to build a long-lasting peace. They highlighted the disproportional impact of the conflict on women: in sixty years, more than 400,000 women have been victims of homicide in the context of the armed conflict, and there are more than 57,000 women victims of forced displacement.

The gender perspective incorporated in the work of the Truth Commission recognizes this disproportionate impact of violence that armed actors exercised against women and girls due to their gender; furthermore, it also recognizes the impact on the lives of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people due to their sexual orientation and gender identity. The gender approach was mainstreamed throughout the work of the Truth Commission and among its functions, it created a gender working group that contributed with research, preparation of meetings with a gender perspective, coordination with civil society organizations and other

platforms. Demonstrating the differential ways in which the conflict- affected people due to their gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity was a starting point for the implementation of reparation measures that restore people's and particularly, women's rights, hold perpetrators accountable, and make visible the mechanisms built by women for long- lasting peace in their territories.

The role of women in exile and their contributions to the Truth Commission was also key in the conversation. The Colombian Truth Commission was the first one in the world to make a comprehensive and systematic effort to actively promote the participation of any victim who wanted to provide her testimony as well as of any person or organization, both Colombian and international, that wanted to contribute to the Commission's work. In response to this historic call, Colombian women in exile created a group in November 2019. The group brought together women from Europe and America with the aim of contributing, from a gender perspective to the objectives of the Commission. They did this with the conviction that truth is not complete without women, and that the voices of those who fled the country should be included. The panelists highlighted the importance of putting in place mechanisms that guarantee the participation of women in exile in the peace-building process taking place in the country. The Peace Agreement is the first in the world, to incorporate a gender approach that included work with Afro-descendant, Black, Raizal, Raizal, Palenquero, Indigenous, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, rural and peasant, young women, signatories of the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP in 2016, those who inhabit the borders of Colombia, women with disabilities and those deprived of their liberty.

As highlighted by H.E. Ambassador of Colombia Gustavo Gallon, Colombia has completed a broad participatory process for the formulation of the Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325, where more than 1,500 women have shared their experiences through 20 spaces and their vision for the future in areas where the armed conflict has been most present.

Addressing Climate Change Through Just Transitions

Engaging Armed Groups on Environmental Protection and Climate Change: Current Challenges, Approaches and looking to the Future

NSAGs and environmental practices

As a starting point to her contribution, Sjöberg delved into some examples of current practices by NSAGs towards the environment, both negative and positive. On the one hand, many NSAGs exploit or tax natural resources, such as through illegal mining and logging, to fund themselves; there has been evidence of this in the DRC, Myanmar and Senegal. Such practices

can exacerbate the negative impacts of conflict, harming and displacing civilians, oftentimes indigenous populations, and causing further environmental degradation in circumstances where resources may already be scarce.

On the other hand, NSAGs can have positive environmental impacts through their own policy and practical measures. In particular, NSAGs with clearly stated political objectives and those with strong ties to the natural environment and specific territories, usually ethnic NSAGs, can develop institutions to regulate the use of finite natural resources, such as water, forests and game. This is ordinarily in circumstances where the controlled territory is politically and economically isolated, and NSAG's awareness that resources are limited leads to the need for such environmental governance. In some instances, NSAG's practices are amplified on the international arena, such as the attendance of the United Liberation Movement for West Papua at COP26 to launch their "Green State Vision" and the International Water Forum organised in response to the water scarcity in Northern Syria.

Current challenges

The main challenges discussed around NSAGs and the need to adapt the territories they control is their access to funding and capability of carrying out such projects. According to Mayhew, multilateral climate funds and multilateral development banking to enable climate change adaptation and mitigation is geared towards states and spent by the same in territories they control. This leaves a gap for territories controlled by NSAGs, who do not have direct access to such funds. Even if such funds were accessible, they remain burdensome processes that are for entities with the capacity to undertake these, ordinarily state structures. Concurrently, the need for a return of investment requires lower risk, stable structures that can implement the funded projects, rather than conflict-affected structures. Concurrently, independent development actors and donors can be restricted from working with NSAGs due to concerns about the latter's legitimacy and some of them being listed as terrorist organisations by certain states and donors.

In light of these barriers, according to Mayhew, there is little evidence of what climate adaptation programmes would look like when implemented by development actors in territories controlled by NSAGs. In turn, there is a lack of sharing on any existing practices or lessons learnt. Echoing this, Isyuk noted that whilst there is a sense of urgency, there is a lack of understanding of what the "price of inaction" will be: how will the dynamics of the conflict change? What will happen to civilians with no livelihoods and nowhere else to go?

As a solution, Mayhew suggested looking beyond multilateral climate funds and development banks, to bilateral funding by donors. Donors may offer more flexibility around the terms of funding and aims, focusing on smaller scale, local projects as opposed to large national infrastructure projects. Moreover, there is a need for decision-making in granting funds to be informed by experts on implementing projects in conflict affected areas, such as researchers, humanitarians and peace actors with an understanding of the conflict dynamics and armed groups experts, who will have different insight into what is feasible in given circumstances.

Whilst making climate financing more accessible is the first step, it is also crucial to have a better understanding and clarity on what can be done with it, so that donors are encouraged to spend money in these territories.

Finally, Isyuk highlighted the need for nuance when considering the solutions that are needed in such territories, as these are not necessarily the same as projects on state controlled territories. Rather, solutions may be more low-tech and adapted to their needs and lifestyles, such as protecting water sources from evaporation with covers. This is where development and humanitarian actors have a key role to play in engaging with armed groups.

Engagement with NSAGs

Oftentimes, the lack of state presence can also mean a lack of any environmental governance if the controlling NSAG is not able or willing to fill this gap. Hence, engaging with NSAGs is crucial. The legal frameworks for this engagement, as set out by Sjöberg, are International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL, in line with the "sliding scale" approach of IHRL obligations for NSAGs). Particularly under the latter, the recent recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment provides an opportunity/tool for engaging NSAGs to play a bigger role in contributing to environmental protection.

Furthermore, environmental agreements can be reached between parties on an ad hoc basis, just like humanitarian agreements, as is done already on the exchange of prisoners, for example. Such agreements can be reached during conflict or subsequent peace processes. Agreements can also be established between relevant conservation actors and NSAGs. Notably the Karen National Union and the World Wildlife Fund have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the protection of forests within the former's controlled territory. There are further examples of the environment being integrated into peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery, such as the reintegration of former members of NSAGs as park rangers in Mozambique and as citizen scientists in Colombia.

Isyuk also spoke on the engagement with armed groups through the ICRC's lens, as an organisation that as a principle engages with all parties to a conflict across a wide spectrum of issues. Within the ICRC's operations, the integration of climate risks began organically, but the ICRC is now starting to take a more systematic approach in mainstreaming this within engagements with different stakeholder, as it grows in significance. When framed as issues of resilience and sustainable livelihood and the solutions discussed are more tangible and available, such as the sustainable use of existing water sources or decisions on agricultural produce, this dialogue with different actors, including armed groups, can be easier. The difficulty begins when trying to look at alternative solutions where there are none readily available, which may require long-term governance structures and programmes, which not all armed groups can deliver.

Likewise, according to Sjöberg, the technical nature of some issues requires experts to deliver digestible training, and these experts can be difficult to find. At the same time, there can be an overload of information, considering that the environment is among one of many issues on which actors want to engage NSAGs, leading to a need for prioritisation in advocacy efforts.

At the same time, Isyuk observed that the highly networked structures and environments in territories controlled by armed groups mean that it is not necessarily the case that actors target their work at the "leaders" of armed groups. Often, work is done through the communities, empowering them to do something differently in order to maintain their livelihoods. This also furthers the sustainability of such efforts, trickling measures through communities able to maintain these and organising themselves to do so.

Takeaways and reflections

Tuning into this panel, one of the main takeaways from the discussion is that in order to better tackle the existing challenges, there is a need to take stock of current and past practices from multiple angles. First, what are the practices and underlying motives of armed groups' actions impacting the environment? A recent policy brief by the Danish Institute for International Studies surveyed 20 NSAGs in order to better map out how and why NSAGs protect the environment; it found NSAGs do so i) unintentionally, in the case of forest protection ii) for recruitment and legitimacy reasons and iii) as part of their political vision. It concludes that while little is known about NSAGs and environmental practices, climate change and environmental degradation will only lead to an increase of their ideologies and politics vis-à-vis the environment. Thus, better understanding of their practices, intentions and challenges is needed in line with the growing importance of the same.

Second, there is a wealth of international humanitarian and development actors who are engaging with NSAGs that would also benefit from sharing their lessons learnt and practices in this regard. Existing networks and groupings, such as the Geneva Environment Network, therefore have a role to play in putting NSAGs and the environment on their agenda.

Third, and finally, how have barriers to funding previously been dealt with in relation to broader development work in territories controlled by NSAGs? There are long-standing issues in working with NSAGs who may be designated as terrorist organisations and/or do not have access to traditional, state-centric sources of funding to deliver services on the territory they control. While there is no easy fix, lessons drawn from broader development cooperation with NSAGs can also inform environmental cooperation.

Aside from these stock-takes, there is a need to look at the legal and regulatory frameworks pertaining to the environment and how they account (or not) for situations involving NSAGs. Indeed, NSAGs in control of territory represent just one side of the coin; what of the states that have lost control of that territory, and their climate change obligations? Under the Paris Agreement, states are able to account for their national circumstances in setting out their ambition to reduce and mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions. This grants states leeway in

absolving themselves of full responsibility, in terms of climate change obligations, for territory they no longer control. Combined with the aforementioned challenges NSAGs face in filling this governance gap, the legal regime's silence on such situations is symptomatic of its wider failure in addressing the links between climate change and armed conflicts.

Finally, on the legal side, there is a gap in the research as to what NSAGs' obligations are in relation to the environment under fields of international law other than IHL: IHRL, but also International Environmental Law (IEL). Little has been written about NSAGs being bound by IEL, including the modalities of this and practical implications (see van Steenberghe). Yet there are clear policy reasons, both positive and negative, in establishing whether (and how) this is the case. Meanwhile, recent developments under IHRL, such as recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and arguments tying the (treaty-based) rights to life, family life and privacy to climate change action by states, may also impact the obligations owed by NSAGs. International actors' interest and academic research on these fast-paced developments would be amiss to leave NSAGs behind.

Concluding remarks

This timely panel event is part of a notable increase of interest in the field of environmental harm during armed conflict. Yet, within this discourse, the role and obligations of NSAGs remain underexplored. The multidisciplinary nature of the challenges posed, and the potential solutions, call for greater cooperation, dialogue and research by international actors, both state and non-state institutions. Climate change poses an existential threat, in the face of which no stone must be left unturned.

Complexities of Local Peace: Climate Change, Forced Displacement and Decent Work

ORGANISERS:
Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, HDP Nexus Coalition, International Labour Organization, Interpeace, UN Refugee Agency

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
The workshop delved into the intricate challenges of achieving local peace amidst climate change, forced displacement, and decent work issues. Emphasising collaboration, participants stressed the need for integrated solutions, active inclusion of displaced populations and local stakeholders, and climate-smart approaches. Efforts centred on creating meaningful employment opportunities, economic resilience, conflict sensitivity, and peace responsiveness, all while prioritising local peacebuilding initiatives. The workshop highlighted the interconnected nature of these challenges, advocating for sustainable, long-term strategies that empower

communities and address their unique needs, ultimately aiming to mitigate the impact of crises and foster resilience among affected populations.

QUOTES (indicate the name of the person and his/her affiliation):
"IKEA Foundation and UNHCR's integrated project in Ethiopia fosters peaceful coexistence between refugees and hosts. Through agricultural cooperatives, irrigation systems, solar energy, and youth engagement, it enhances livelihoods, food security, and social cohesion. The project showcases the power of collaboration for sustainable development." **Agnes Hurwitz, Global Lead on Rule of Law Governance & Peacebuilding of UN Refugee Agency**

"At FAO, we are emphasising improving relationships between host and displaced communities, an aspect often overlooked in the past, fostering a more economic and socially inclusive and effective pathway forward towards durable solutions." **Julius Jackson, Lead, Conflict and Peace Unit, Office of Emergencies and Resilience of Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and Co-Lead, HDP Nexus Coalition**

"ILO emphasises the interconnectedness of global challenges, highlighting the impact of conflict, disasters, and climate change on decent work and vulnerable populations. In Mauritania, ILO, FAO, and PBF address unemployment and climate-related issues, fostering resilience through dialogue, training, and labour market interventions." - **Camilla Roman, Policy Specialist, Priority Action Program on Just Transitions of International Labour Organization**

"It is now widely recognised that it is no longer sufficient for technical specialists working on food security, livelihoods, climate, and displacement to ensure their actions merely 'do no harm', especially in conflict affected contexts. Instead, we are working in partnership with them to demonstrate that by taking a 'peace responsive' approach to how they design and deliver their same services, they can actually actively contribute to building resilience against conflict drivers, while improving the effectiveness of their technical programming." - **Dr Rebecca Brubaker, Director of Policy, Learning and Advisory Services of Interpeace**

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Panel Discussion:
Agnes Hurwitz from UNHCR highlighted the challenges faced by displaced people due to climate change, food insecurity, conflict, and violence. She emphasised the need for economic resilience and discussed a joint initiative between IKEA Foundation and UNHCR in Ethiopia focusing on creating economic and resilient hosting areas. Through initiatives like agricultural cooperatives, irrigation, solar energy, and youth engagement, the project enhances livelihoods, food security, and social cohesion. Hurwitz emphasised the deep impact of climate change and environmental challenges on these communities and stressed the importance of creative solutions.

Camilla Roman from ILO emphasised the intricate connections between global challenges, spotlighting how conflict, disasters, and climate change significantly affect decent work and vulnerable communities. ILO's central mission revolves around promoting employment and decent work, recognising the profound implications of these challenges on labour conditions, human mobility, and societal stability. In addressing these issues, a collaborative effort with FAO and PBF was undertaken in Mauritania, a country grappling with high youth unemployment and climate-related problems like water scarcity. Through thoughtful dialogue, targeted training programmes, and strategic labour market interventions, the initiative not only tackled these challenges but also built resilience within communities.

Julius Jackson from FAO and the HDP Nexus Coalition highlighted FAO's shift towards innovative approaches, emphasising the importance of improving relationships between host and displaced communities by promoting economic inclusion for both. This inclusive perspective, often overlooked in the past, is viewed as a crucial pathway towards durable solutions in addressing food insecurity and sustainable local food systems. He highlighted examples from eastern Africa that bring in the private sector to work with refugee and host communities on specific value chains that enhance economic and social inclusion. He also stressed the need for long-term strategies, integrating climate security considerations, and promoting peace-responsive initiatives.

Dr Rebecca Brubaker from Interpeace emphasised the significance of cooperation in their work, highlighting the core principle of their approach called 'peace responsiveness'. This approach goes beyond the traditional notion of doing no harm and actively promotes proactive contributions to peace by fostering better cooperation and coordination. She underscored the importance of sectors such as food security, livelihoods, climate, and displacement adopting a peace-responsive approach, enhancing their programming effectiveness, and building resilience against conflict drivers in collaboration with other sectors. This collaborative effort amplifies their impact and contributes significantly to shared goals in conflict-affected contexts.

Workshop Discussions:

The discussion revolved around two main questions:

What do you see as the key programming principles to ensure that forcibly displaced communities can address transition to living incomes, dignity, inclusion, and reasonable working conditions in context impacted by climate change?

- In addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by forcibly displaced communities in the context of climate change impacts, the discussion highlighted several pivotal programming principles. Central to these was the emphasis on integration, inclusion, and empowerment. Participants stressed the importance of integrating forcibly displaced populations within host communities, fostering social cohesion, and mitigating potential tensions. Inclusion, beyond a mere buzzword, took on a substantial meaning, encompassing considerations of age, gender, and diversity. Empowerment emerged as a core tenet, involving tapping into local agency, enabling communities to actively

participate in decision-making processes, and take charge of their own future trajectories.

- The discussion also underscored the significance of collaboration and adaptability. Better collaboration among stakeholders, spanning UN agencies, NGOs, and local authorities, was recognised as indispensable for the success of any initiative. Dialogue and partnership were seen as catalysts for sustainable solutions. Adaptability, within the realm of evidence-based and data-driven programming, emerged as a critical need. Understanding the local context, cultures, and expectations is essential, ensuring that interventions are not only effective but also culturally sensitive and contextually relevant. Addressing spoilers like corruption and misinformation, fostering long-term perspectives, and ensuring coherence across various dimensions were acknowledged as vital strategies. Furthermore, the participants stressed the importance of communication with communities, trauma-informed policies, and the involvement of local entities from the project's inception to create a foundation for enduring, positive change.

What do you see as the key advocacy priorities to ensure that the needs and experiences of forcibly displaced communities are included in global discussions on climate change and economic development?

- In the realm of advocacy, participants delineated comprehensive priorities to champion the rights and well-being of forcibly displaced communities in global discussions surrounding climate change and economic development. Advocacy efforts were geared towards amplifying the voices of the displaced, ensuring not just their inclusion but meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Short-term responses were seen as stepping stones, crucially integrated into meticulously planned, longer-term development agendas. Decent work principles and peace responsiveness were emphasised to create an environment conducive to growth and stability.
- Collaboration with the private sector emerged as a strategic focus, seeking to enhance working conditions and employment opportunities. Gender-transformative approaches were advocated to address deeply rooted gender disparities, empowering women, and ensuring their active involvement in all initiatives. Cultural and gender-sensitive integration strategies were highlighted as indispensable, recognising the nuances of different cultural contexts. Creating employment opportunities was identified as a cornerstone, extending beyond the displaced to encompass host communities, fostering collaboration and minimising tensions. Acknowledging climate change as a primary driver for forced displacement and navigating the complexities of legal statuses versus integrated experiences were identified as crucial advocacy points, aiming for policy changes and international cooperation. Through these advocacy priorities, participants aimed to create a lasting impact, advocating for the displaced communities' rights, dignity, and sustainable future.

Water as a Tool for Peace: Bridges between the Human Right to Water and the Prevention of Conflicts

ORGANISERS:
Geneva Water Hub, Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Human rights-based approach at the basin level is for the benefit of everyone. It is important to consider the basin as a whole, with an integrated approach when talking about water for peace and its human rights component and to fight against climate change. It is necessary to move from traditional approaches of managing water as a resource to ecosystem and human rights approaches at the basin level, developing the principles of equity, reciprocity and sustainability promoted by international water and human rights law.
2. International water law is essential to prevent conflicts and promote peace as it safeguards equity and sustainability, ensures predictability and levels the playing field. The UN global water conventions, the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, are essential tools for supporting basin and sub-basin cooperation based on the fundamental principles of customary international law. These instruments are an effective tool for conflict prevention and peace building as they foster the development of agreements and joint institutions, and support implementation through policy development, capacity building and exchange of good practices.
3. Water can connect, but also separate. Today, science shows the impact of climate change and water is at the center of it. It is important to change the narrative and indicate that if we take the right steps in addressing climate change and migration, we can progress from vulnerability to prosperity.
4. We need to deepen our understanding of water and peacebuilding. Understanding power asymmetries in transboundary basins will help, because these can enable or block progress. Understanding the use of soft power through discourses – as ‘all is fine, not need to approach this from a perspective of human rights or international law’ often mask unjust situations. It is remarkable the type of transboundary water cooperation that we have in Europe or Western Africa. It is necessary to re-humanize the relationship between water and human beings.

QUOTES:

Propose to make water a blue flag of peace, as the flag of the UN (UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation).

His Excellency Ambassador Yackoley Kokou Johnson (Permanent Mission of the Togolese Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva) closed his speech by citing former US president John Kennedy: the person who will solve the water issue will gain two Nobel prize: the peace Nobel prize and the science Nobel prize.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

His Excellency Ambassador Yackoley Kokou Johnson, Permanent Mission of the Togolese Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, opened the event stating the importance of water for peace and how access to water is necessary for human rights. The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, Professor Pedro Arrojo-Agudo presented his report on “Water as an argument for peace, twinning and cooperation ». The report shows the need for a human rights-based approach at the basin level. He noted the importance of considering the basin as a whole, with an integrated approach, when talking about water for peace and its human rights component in the fight against climate change. He highlighted that States’ responsibility to protect basins extends beyond the sovereignty concept, as they influence the human rights of right holders beyond their borders. A human rights-based approach implies democracy elements, such as meaningful participation and transparency.

The Chief of the Transboundary Cooperation Section in the Environment Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Ms Francesca Bernardini, highlighted that the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was negotiated with the objective to prevent conflicts. She noted that the conflict prevention nature of the Water Convention permeates not only its legal text – which requires the establishment of agreements and joint institutions that are actors or peace – but also its functioning – with its Implementation Committee devoted to facilitating cooperation and preventing disputes between Parties. This intervention was followed by the remarks of the Senior Advisor on Migration for the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) and the Vulnerable 20 Group (V20), Ms Dina Ionesco. She discussed the connection between human rights and climate change, indicating the impacts on the life of people. She also recognized that we need to move trajectories from vulnerability to prosperity through climate action. She recommended that global water governance needs to consider migration in its multicausal dimensions. She noted that migration cannot solve water availability issues but it can be seen as part of the solution if well governed.

Professor Mark Zeitoun, General Director of the Geneva Water Hub, called for the re-humanization of our relationship with water. He stressed the importance of keeping eyes wide open to the abuse and misuse of water, noting that the poor always pay the most for water. He argued that the essential qualities of water – e.g. its flowing nature – make it a great tool for diplomacy, but that we should realize that water on its own cannot overcome ideologies and hate and other roots of conflict. He described the current armed conflict in Gaza as leading to

dehumanization. The concluding remarks were made by His Excellency Ambassador Achsanul Habib, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. He noted the importance of meetings like the World Water Forum, who's next edition will be in Bali, which creates a bridge between the topic of water and the need for shared prosperity.

Conflict Prevention in the Context of Climate Change: Lessons from the Pacific

ORGANISERS:
Independent Diplomat

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Weary with climate change related sea-level rise, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) declared the preservation and continued sovereignty over maritime zones.
2. States in the region mutually recognized each other's maritime zones, the management of natural resources, effectively anticipating the effects of climate change and inter-state tensions that could arise from it.
3. A second Declaration was issued in November 2023, is aimed at building on the Maritime declaration, to include the permanence of Statehood and the human rights of the population.

QUOTES:

1. H.E. Ambassador Falemaka of the Pacific Island Forum: "Pacific peoples are the product of their environment, we view ourselves as custodians of the land and oceans, we understand that our single greatest threat to our peace and security is climate change".
2. Prof. Marcelo Kohen, Emeritus Professor at the Graduate Institute: ""Drafters of the original laws (of the sea) did not intend for these borders to be mobile because they didn't foresee this (climate) crisis".

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

1. ID hosted a panel-format policy briefing that fell primarily under the pillar "addressing climate change through just transitions." The event had roughly 65 participants, including the Ambassador from New Zealand and the Deputy Minister of Australia. Guillaume Charron for ID moderated the event, and the panel included Ambassador Mere Falemaka of the Pacific Islands Forum, Professor Marcelo Kohen from the Graduate Institute, Security and Crisis Advisor David Maizlich from the ICRC, and Deputy Permanent Representative Samuel Lanwi from the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

2. The event focused on policy with diplomats, rather than on data and practitioners. Ambassador Mere Falemaka presented the PIF Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise (hereafter PIF Declaration), explaining that its history goes back to the 2019 meeting. At that event, representatives raised concerns over climate change and how geopolitical tension was exacerbating the region's vulnerabilities. Amb. Falemaka asserted that the Pacific peoples are a product of their environment - meaning they view themselves as custodians of the highly respected land and oceans. From this position, the single greatest threat to peace and security is climate change, as they recognized in the 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security (both human and environmental security).

3. Professor Marcelo Kohen argued that the document represents an expression of existing international law. He argued four elements to recognize legality of the Declaration's position: the approach of contemporary international law to maritime areas incorporating more specific zone designations, the principle of rational boundaries, the notion of climate justice, and the idea that the right of peoples to self-determination has an economic dimension. Meanwhile, David Maizlish suggested that conflict preventative action was very difficult to ascertain. Instead, he identified a key issue as the slow and technical processes of implementation in national law and integration on the ground of new environmental or international norms, but that doesn't mean that the integration of such norms isn't crucial.

4. The Ambassador suggested that the next steps included collective advocacy of the region on this Declaration and building international support for it. The PIF Declaration has already received endorsements from many states, especially small or island states. After the event, New Zealand's ambassador offered her own response to a question from online about turning responsibility over to large states that are more responsible for the environmental damage. She argued that members of the Pacific Islands Forum wanted to keep control within the region as an assertion of authority for the smaller, local states. This week, the PIF leaders will be meeting, and it would be valuable to keep an eye on what decisions come out of their discussions on the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise.

Building Resilience to Mis- and Disinformation: Evidence and Challenges for Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings

ORGANISERS:

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Interpeace, BBC Media Action, Fondation Hirondelle

The pervasive issue of mis- and disinformation is causing distrust and division globally, evident in its role in promoting violence in the Central African Republic and fuelling divisions in places like Libya, DRC, and Colombia. These campaigns, used by political actors, threaten regional stability by influencing elections and peace processes. Despite these alarming impacts, there is limited rigorous evidence on effective programmes combating unreliable information and its

impact on conflict drivers. To address this, an interactive workshop facilitated by experts from Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), BBC Media Action, Fondation Hirondelle, and Interpeace aimed to develop innovative solutions. Panellists shared experiences countering false information in conflict areas, followed by open discussions exploring research gaps. Participants engaged in small-group activities, proposing potential solutions, emphasising collaborative efforts, linguistic de-escalation, and positive narratives. The workshop emphasised the need for comprehensive evidence-based approaches and psychological insights to counter emotional influences, underscoring the importance of combating misinformation and disinformation in fragile contexts through collective, proactive, and reactive measures.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Ana-Maria Colina from J-PAL emphasised the global impact of misinformation, particularly its role in fuelling distrust and violence. She highlighted the rapid spread of false information due to technology and stressed the importance of evidence-based programmes. Ana-Maria discussed proactive efforts like media literacy training and pre-bunking, acknowledging the challenge of changing people's minds. She also emphasised the need for reactive measures and impact evaluation to understand underlying factors and detect unintended consequences, noting limited evidence on evaluation types, including insights from India about social beliefs influencing misinformation detection.

Dr Rebecca Brubaker from Interpeace highlighted the challenges Interpeace is witnessing in conflict affected settings, especially vis-à-vis AI generated disinformation. Disinformation exacerbates existing conflict drivers. However, existing resources are scarce, hindering grassroots mitigation efforts like fact-checking and youth education. Weak government policies and various challenges, such as language barriers and limited digital literacy, impede effective mitigation strategies. Rebecca stressed the need for a stronger evidence base to address these challenges and develop context sensitive mitigation mechanisms.

Alasdair Stuart outlined BBC Media Action's new strategy spanning 23 affected countries. The approach involves researching the media ecosystem and vulnerabilities, supporting independent media financially and ensuring digital safety. Efforts include strengthening journalists, fact-checking, and linking initiatives with local media projects. He emphasised the importance of broader digital and media literacy, focusing on a preventative approach such as pre-bunking to educate people about manipulative media techniques. Alasdair cautioned against over-reliance on tech companies, noting their disinvestment in safety tools. He highlighted the need for more sharing and coordination in the field and mentioned the development of the Integrity Initiative to address these challenges comprehensively.

Dr Jeffrey Conroy-Krutz, working with Fondation Hirondelle, discussed their work involving Radio Ndeke Luka in the Central African Republic (CAR), a widely accessed mass medium operating in a challenging context. The media landscape in CAR is underdeveloped, with limited state capacity and low literacy rates, leading to widespread misinformation on health, politics, and armed groups. He described their "Stop Atène" programme, featuring active fact-checking and media training, emphasising the challenge of assessing its impact on behaviour. Through a

rigorous impact evaluation, they observed a significant increase in people's trust in the radio station after the launch of new transmitters, indicating the effectiveness of anti-misinformation efforts. Despite people's tendency to verify information with sources like family and community leaders, the radio played a crucial role in shaping their perceptions and behaviours, highlighting the importance of building systematic trust in messengers to combat misinformation.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION:

The workshop delved deep into the intricate challenges of misinformation and disinformation within fragile settings, highlighting their severe implications for security, public trust, and institutional stability. Case studies from DRC, Mali, and southern Thailand illuminated the diverse ways false narratives impact elections, trigger protests, and exacerbate social divisions. An essential distinction emerged between misinformation, originating from genuine mistakes, and deliberate disinformation, underscoring the need for precise definitions to effectively combat these issues. The discussions underscored concerns within peace communities about inadvertently fuelling political mobilisation and violence, emphasising the necessity of nuanced approaches, particularly in the face of external pressures shaping conflict narratives. These discussions prompted fundamental questions about the purpose of peace work, emphasising the importance of clarifying objectives: whether to advocate for preferred outcomes or facilitate open dialogues among conflicting parties.

Balancing trust in information sources emerged as a central theme, with participants recognising the significance of promoting critical thinking skills within communities. Diversifying information channels, fostering scepticism while avoiding blind trust, and encouraging a healthy level of scepticism were identified as vital strategies. The workshop delved into the challenge of assessing misinformation rates, especially within private networks like WhatsApp, emphasising the need for innovative methods and technologies to measure the extent of disinformation spread effectively. Moreover, the workshop highlighted the crucial role of strategic communication in peacebuilding efforts, emphasising cooperation among diverse conflict actors. Acknowledging the strategic use of information by conflicting parties, emphasis was placed on fostering confidence-building communication and employing linguistic strategies like de-escalation agreements to mitigate tensions. Lastly, the workshop emphasised the psychological dimensions of misinformation, stressing the role of emotions, fear, and perceptions in shaping beliefs. Interdisciplinary approaches, including psychologists, were deemed essential in planning interventions and impact evaluations, underlining the importance of understanding the emotional aspects intertwined with misinformation dynamics. Collaborative efforts, positive narratives, and educational programs emerged as essential tools to counteract the overwhelming negativity propagated by false information, especially among the youth. The workshop concluded by underscoring the urgency of addressing misinformation's multifaceted challenges through comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and community-centric strategies.

Addressing Politics in Environmental Peacebuilding

ORGANISERS:
HD Center, Geneva Water Hub, MEDRC

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
The session aimed to share different approaches and perspectives to addressing politics in environmental peacebuilding activities. The relationship between water and peace is complex and challenging. While transboundary environmental issues present an opportunity for peacebuilding and mediation; cooperation without addressing politics and focusing solely on technical coordination will do little to advance towards positive peace and has limited ability to build trust between conflict parties.

Panellists included:
Adam Day, UN University (Chair)
Olivia Macharis, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
Natasha Carmi, Geneva Water Hub
Dané Smith, MEDRC

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:
HD as a mediation organisation predominantly works at a political level and is able to use the environment and technical aspects as entry points for dialogue. In the South China Sea, HD focuses on enhanced cooperation and the sharing of information through inter-agency scientific and technical dialogue under the ethos of a shared responsibility of resource management in the South China Sea. Focusing on an environmental element allows for the linking of scientific and technical tracks to political tracks. Dialogue on the environment also provides the opportunity to sensitise actors of broader environmental issues, e.g. climate change to advance towards environment and climate-sensitive peace activities even in lieu of political processes. Geneva Water Hub is a centre for competence on water for peace with a number of activities that focus on water for peace. Recent armed conflicts have seen an increase in attacks against and the weaponization of water infrastructure. The Geneva List of Principles on the Protection of Water Infrastructure is a reference document spearheaded by Geneva Water Hub that outlines a number of rules applicable to the protection of water infrastructure during armed conflicts, specifically in the conduct of hostilities, as well as in post-conflict situations that goes beyond current law - including international humanitarian law.
Linking a technical track with a political track that is not working is problematic and will not contribute to positive peace. The Joint Water Committee is an example of this where cooperation on water resources risks being coordinated management and not joint/equal management of an environmental resource. In this example power dynamics and structures of violence are not addressed and positive peace is not possible.

MEDRC's approach is to ensure sustained technical and political representation through a formal institutional mechanism. Its Stabilization Mechanism Project explores how MEDRCs institutional framework can be used as a conflict resolution model - utilising the environment in

the service of a peace process. Lessons learnt through the project regarding the overall structures, mandate, strategy and approach of MEDRC position it as being a model of a resilient framework for cooperation - and as a way for governments to engage at a Track 1 level through an institution designed to support peacebuilding. Questions from audience members provoked further discussion on why politics is often avoided in environmental peacebuilding, the difference approaches and experiences between dialogue on freshwater issues and dialogue on maritime issues, the use of dialogue during outbreak of conflict to support water and sanitation needs of affected populations, the potential of the security mandate of the Chad Basin Commission, as well as moving away from zero sum game approaches to transboundary water negotiations.

Critical Connections: Tracing the Links between Climate, Conflict, and Fragility

ORGANISERS:
Mercy Corps, Adelphi, CDA Collaborative, and United Nations Development Programme

Now, more than ever before, actors at all levels recognize the crucial need to understand, approach, and untangle the complexities of climate change and conflict. In response to this reality, there has been, in recent years, a broad move to develop methodologies and tools to equip humanitarian development agencies, policy makers and local communities with a solid understanding of how to address many of the contributing variables which create climate fragility, and support communities to become more cohesive, inclusive and resilient in the face of shocks.

In this session, the panel discussed different approaches for analyzing the intersection of climate, peace, and security. Our speakers presented a variety of assessment methodologies that seek to understand how longer-term climate change and more immediate climate shocks and stressors affect existing conflict dynamics and local systems.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Context specificity is everything in these kinds of assessments and all organisations ensure that locally informed qualitative data plays an important part in their conflict analysis, while this is often complemented by quantitative data. There is no one size fits all.
2. Intra-household conflict, and the prevalence of gender-based violence, had featured as an indirect climate risk in many of the contexts discussed despite often not being at the forefront of the wider exchange around climate security risks.
3. Local ownership is vital to these methodologies. Partners' expertise must be the driving force behind the assessment processes.
4. Assessments pull from different data sources, operate at different scales and with different audiences. However, each assessment seeks to understand the longer-term

and more immediate impacts of climate shocks and stressors on existing conflict dynamics.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Each speaker presented the unique approach of their assessments. The assessments, although broadly sharing the same goals, have distinct sets of deliverables, scales, audiences and variability of data sources with some intended to directly guide on-the-ground programming and others aiming to inform broader agency-wide strategies. For example, Mercy Corps highlighted the solutions focus of their assessment that queries what are some of the coping strategies people are already using, what solutions would they like, and why hasn't it been taken up already? On the other hand, CDA has developed a conflict analysis tool with a systems approach and a human-centered design process.

Speakers also shared how their assessments were able to identify and reveal new and interesting insights. For UNDP, the valorization of local knowledge was particularly important, and Catherine shared her experience of working with partners to interpret the approach and to adapt it to their own needs as the driving force of the assessment. During Alephi's extensive assessment of Lake Chad, they found surprising results that went against the predominant narrative that the lake is shrinking. Instead, they found that over the last decade, the shrinking had stabilized, but that there was now more variability in water levels and erosion of coping capacities within the community due to conflict.

One insight revealed by several methodologies was gender-based violence as a key climate security risk. Speakers identified that tensions within households were being exacerbated as an indirect result of the climate shocks that communities were experiencing. and intra-household conflict being revealed as a key climate security risk, even as an early warning sign, across many of the contexts in which our speakers have worked.

The panel acknowledged that too frequently, assessments by international organizations fail to engage equitably with local communities and can be extractive. All speakers are working towards more equitable relationships with the individuals and communities they work with. UNDP is uniquely placed with extensive presence in 170 countries across the world and often remain there for decades and are therefore able to cultivate strong relationships. Their approach is to ensure that partners are on board from the beginning, have ownership of the assessment process, and can share local level expertise. Bearing that in mind, it is also important to acknowledge that many organizations, even with the inclusion of local partners, struggle to reach the most vulnerable and hard to reach, particularly the most marginalized groups or those in fragile and conflict affected states. This challenge, amongst others, such as resource restraints, the difficulty of collecting and obtaining enough data to make meaningful assessments, and to work across the silos between the peacebuilding and climate spheres closed the session alongside questions from the audience both online and in-person.

Devil in the details: The evolving responsibilities of energy companies in conflict-affected areas

ORGANISERS:
United Nations Development Programme, Heartland Initiative

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The keynote speaker, Dr. Damilola Olawuyi (UNWG), highlighted adverse consequences of natural resource extraction on local communities and the link between conflicts, environmental issues, and human rights abuses.
2. There is a growing recognition, and shift towards a binding character, of the crucial role of heightened Human Rights Due Diligence for businesses, particularly energy and extraction companies, in understanding the context in which they operate was acknowledged.
3. Panelists discussed the impact of extractive and renewable energy companies on conflicts, the environment, and human rights, emphasizing the surge in mining activities driven by the energy transition and its implications.
4. The Panel stressed the importance of collaboration and consultation with local organizations and understanding the daily interactions among stakeholders, including investors, companies, and local civil society, especially in conflict-affected areas.
5. Challenges such as corruption at the national government level were acknowledged, and the need for increased awareness and knowledge was emphasized.
6. The concluding remarks highlighted the need for a more holistic approach, not just focusing on the endgame of energy transition but considering the broader picture.
7. Transparency in lobbying practices, ownership, and awareness of stakeholders' impact were emphasized, along with the importance of disseminating knowledge to local communities and rights holders.

QUOTE:

“As the need for critical minerals will increase five-fold in the coming years, there is a risk that conflicts over these minerals may also increase five-fold”
Damilola Olawuyi, Chairperson, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The session was opened by **Ms. Agi Veres,** UNDP-Geneva Director, highlighting the importance of the Geneva Peace Week as a platform for diverse communities to discuss the concept of “just transition.”. The focus was on the complex relationship between private companies, especially energy and extraction companies, financial institutions, and their impact on conflict dynamics. Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) was emphasized as crucial for businesses to understand their operational context, with reference to documents from OECD and the EU Parliament.

Keynote speaker **Dr. Damilola Olawuyi**, Chair of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, addressed the adverse consequences of natural resource extraction, particularly in conflict-prone regions like Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Reports presented at the UN General Assembly highlighted the link between the extractive sector, environmental issues, and human rights abuses. The importance of responsible security management in HRDD processes and the example of UNSC Resolution 1952 (UNSC Res 1952) for mineral extraction in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were underscored.

The subsequent panel discussion, led by **Marie-Laure Schaufelberger,** President of Sustainable Finance Geneva, delved into the impacts of extractive and renewable energy companies on conflicts, the environment, and human rights. Panelists, namely **Mr. Samuel Jones** (President, Heartland Initiative), **Dr. Annyssa Bellal** (Executive Director, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform), **Dr. Siniša Milatović** (Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP), **and Dr. Anais Tobalagba** (Legal and Policy Researcher, Rights and Accountability in Development Limited), addressed topics ranging from mining activities linked to the energy transition to the role of financial institutions and the shift from voluntary to mandatory regulations in the European Union.

The panel also explored how companies can fulfill their responsibilities to engage with communities, ensure perspectives are heard, and play a role in sustaining peace. Challenges such as corruption at the national government level were discussed, along with the potential implications of legislations on human rights and the importance of engaging various stakeholders, including local civil society.

In the questions from the public, the importance of engaging stakeholders, potential unintended consequences of legislations, and strategies to encourage companies and governments to enforce initiatives were discussed.

The session concluded by emphasizing transparency in lobbying practices, ownership, and the need for a holistic approach beyond the immediate focus on the energy transition, highlighting the broader picture of sustainable peace.

Fostering Collaborative Solutions at the Nexus of Climate, Environment and Peace

ORGANISERS:
The World Bank, Kofi Annan Foundation (KAF, Conservation International (CI), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Climate, environment, and conflict challenges are interconnected. Collaborative solutions are necessary, as addressing these issues in isolation is less effective.
- According to the Environment of Peace Report by SIPRI, five principles were presented: foresight, cooperation, adaptability, just transitions, and inclusivity. These principles form the basis for effective policy and organisational responses.
- Key recommendations were given, including joint solutions for linked crises, investing in preparedness, financing peace, and ensuring a just transition when addressing the climate crisis.
- Panelists' views: The World Bank highlighted sustainability in fragile contexts, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue focused on adapting peacemaking to climate change, the IUCN stressed cross-sectoral collaboration, and PeaceNexus Foundation discussed integrating conflict sensitivity into conservation.
- Group discussions identified challenges like language barriers and inadequate financing. Solutions included educating donors, fostering collaboration, amplifying the voices of affected communities, building awareness and ensuring inclusivity.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The workshop focused on the intersection of environmental issues, peacebuilding, and climate-related challenges. Moderated by Sofia Anton from the Kofi Annan Foundation, the session aimed to highlight the interconnectedness of climate, environment, and conflict issues, emphasising the need for collaborative solutions.

In the introduction, Anniek Barnhoorn from SIPRI presented the "Environment of Peace Report," a two-year effort involving 30 researchers worldwide. The report identified two crises: environmental and security, emphasizing the need for a peaceful transition to avoid new risks.

The report proposed five principles, including acting fast and expecting the unexpected, and key recommendations such as addressing linked crises jointly and making the green transition just and peaceful.

During the panel, the experts responded to questions aimed to tackle different views:

-Development View (Phoebe Spencer, World Bank):The World Bank, committed to poverty reduction and sustainability, faces challenges in fragile settings due to the overlap of conflict and climate impacts. The Bank collaborates with various actors, including governments, civil society, and humanitarian organizations, to address these challenges.

-Peace View (Sebastian Kratzer, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue): Peacemakers are adapting to climate change, recognizing its influence on conflict dynamics. Peace agreements must incorporate environmental considerations, and collaboration between peacemakers and conservation scientists is essential.

-Environment View (Verónica Ruiz, IUCN): The IUCN focuses on building cross-sectoral partnerships to connect environmental work with humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts. Collaboration, inclusivity, and breaking silos are crucial for holistic and integrative solutions.

-Donor View (Héloïse Heyer, PeaceNexus Foundation): PeaceNexus Foundation supports organizations in conflict-affected contexts to improve practices and contribute to social cohesion. The foundation encourages collaboration between humanitarian, development, and conservation organizations.

Following the panel, a discussion among the participants was encouraged. Divided into two groups, the participants discussed challenges and recommendations based on the panel and the different expertises.

-Challenges: Language barriers, inadequate financing, disparity in funding scales, lack of expertise integration, implementation gaps in peace agreements, representation of affected communities, and organizational and capacity challenges.

-Solutions: Encouraging positive engagement with donors, educating donors on collaborative funding approaches, emphasizing inclusiveness, coordination among organizations, identifying and strengthening local capacities, and promoting humility and conflict sensitivity.

Paloma Noriega closed the panel, and emphasized the importance of including youth in decision-making tables, acknowledging their expertise, and ensuring that projects are accessible and beneficial to young people.

Harnessing technologies to build a better future

Ethical reframing of AI: Time for a Geneva Compact?

ORGANISERS:
Globethics, The Club of Rome

QUOTES:
“When directed towards the public good, Artificial Intelligence’s unprecedented capabilities can foster productive dialogue and empowered individuals. However, if left unchecked AI also poses a massive threat to democratic societies.”
~ Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO

“We need to include voices from across society and from around the world. Our approach to ethical artificial intelligence governance must be multilateral, multistakeholder, and truly

inclusive to ensure that good practices and effective governance, frameworks, and legislations are shared, are led together, and are adopted internationally, and that the benefits of this technology are equitably distributed."
~ Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO

"We should not let a few tech giants from the North to decide global AI rules."
~ Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO

"Would we feel fear or would we be excited because we have the tool, and instrument that would allow us to further express our humanity? So what are the questions we need to ask today, together?"
~ Karima Kadaoui, Executive President, Tamkeen Community Foundation for Human Development

[On algorithmic bias] "It is particularly important that that doesn't happen when AI is combined with public services or public institutions. What we need is rigorous auditing and accounting and standards in the adoption of AI technology."
~ Iason Gabriel, Staff Research Scientist, Deepmind, Google

"So who, what, when, where is going to be responsible for the framing of ethics in a different direction we are going, and also in the enforcement therefore?"
~ Anicia Peters, Chief Executive Officer, National Commission on Research, Science and Technology, Namibia
[There are four things to support trust and humanity in AI] "transparency, accountability, algorithmic bias, and privacy."
~ Arief H. Gunawan, Senior Advisor, Telkom; Advisory Board Member in IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

Lack of capacity in smaller countries and developing countries is a barrier for global cooperation on AI ethics and operationalizing AI principles. It is important that a global compact can facilitate coordination and communication on various initiatives, as well as mobilize funding.
~ Claudia Lopez, Assistant Professor, Informatics Departament,
Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María; Fellow at Chile National Center for AI

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

Overview

- The session "Ethical Reframing of AI: Time for a Geneva Compact?" was held on 2 November from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. and was co-organized and co-hosted by Globethics and the Club of Rome with the aim of fostering a critical dialogue on recent advancements in AI ethics policies and practical research. The session moderators were the heads of two organizers of the event. Fadi Daou and Carlos Álvarez Pereira.

- The session operationalizes the inclusiveness principle by composing gender-balanced, intergenerational panels with speakers from multi-regions/cultures, and multi-sectors (private sectors, civil society, public sectors, and academia). Five females out of nine panelists come from the following institutions: UNESCO, Namibia government, a Latin American university/Chile national AI center (below 40 years old), United States think tanks (below 30), and MENA region. Four male panelists come from a Kenyan university, Deepmind of Google (below 40), Swiss bank UBS, and Telecommunication company in Indonesia (below 40).
- The session has two parts.

Part 1: Ethical Reframing of AI

- The first panel grappled with the main issue of the ethical reframing of AI, as well as the guiding questions of the moderator: How can we put AI at the service of communities and humanities, facing on the ground and amidst existential challenges? What does responsibility and trust mean in this context?
- Larissa Zutter (United States, Research Fellow and Member of Board of Director, Center for AI and Digital Policy)
    - There is a need to **discuss responsibility and trust-building on the societal level**. What are the different actors' responsibilities? – which includes governments, companies, and NGOs, among others.
    - At the same time, it is **important for citizens to be informed about what they are using**. AI is not introduced into a void: who is benefiting?
- Laurence Nderu (Kenya, Researcher, Lecturer, and Chairman of the Department of Computing at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT))
    - **How do we create AI systems that are inclusive**? The idea is not to do a post-mortem analysis on these models and address this issue as a society.
    - There is the question **of inclusion and participation in decision-making** in the context of armed conflict and AI.
- Iason Gabriel (UK, Staff Research Scientist, Deepmind, Google)
    - The more complicated questions are on the **allocation of duties**: the nature of responsibility has changed a little, particularly in organizations. There is also an epistemic duty to understand what's happening and not proceed with ignorance.
    - **Sharing and participation**: Information sharing as everyone has a stake on the outcomes.
- Arief Hamdani Gunawan (Indonesia, Senior Advisor, Telkom; Advisory Board Member in IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)
    - There are four aspects that can support the trust and humanity in AI: **transparency, accountability, algorithmic bias, and privacy**.
    - AI needs an **accountable entity** to protect society. As AI works with many data, there should be a pact to handle bias and communicate the possibility of bias.
- Karima Kadaoui (Morrocco, Executive President, Tamkeen Community Foundation for Human Development)
    - Affirmed moderator's concern about the aspect of speed in AI developments.
    - More than responses, we need to ask questions that will **enable AI to be an instrument or tool that is a manifestation of our humanity**.

Questions – Part 1

- There is a concern that AI can bring about segregation – something like an apartheid although one that is not visible. We should think about how to identify exactly which AI is used by whom and which outcomes are used by people keeping in mind that the same **AI can act differently depending on who is using it**.
- Is AI just a tool or a new emerging disease?
- How do you unfold the question of responsibility? And the future aspects of it? We are looking at the question: why do we do what we do? Why are you doing what you're doing when you are building/doing AI?
- Google's power is information that is not shared, or which is sold. How do you deal with that? On the question of speed: How to redirect your investment in research?

Part 2: A Time for Geneva Compact?

- While the first panel dealt with the ethical reframing of AI, the second panel addressed the query of a need for a Geneva Compact amidst the rapidly changing AI technologies.
- Gabriela Ramos (Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO.)
    - AI is as good as the data that feeds it. AI can be a liability, and what determines this is the data and the regulation that the AI is trained on.
    - Some data issues include: **Black defendants are being flagged as riskier** than white defendants. **Women see fewer advertisements for executive** and high-level positions because AI is trained on the CVs of previous executives, mostly men. AI cannot understand that correlation does not imply causation. This is worsened when most conversations on AI are concentrated on large language models (LLM).
    - Lesson in dealing with **AI: The need to put into practice its alignment with human rights and with inclusive and fair outcomes.**
    - UNESCO adopted the Recommendation on AI in 2021, adopted 193 countries. The US is joining making it 194. Ethics is at the center of the instruments.
    - The Governments have a duty of care. In the implementation plan, there are 2 capacity building tools:
        - Readiness assessment technology. Assess the readiness of governments to implement AI ethically.
        - Ethical impact assessment, which facilitates the prediction of consequences and mitigation of risks of AI systems via a multi-stakeholder engagement before a system is released to the public.
- Musa Parmaksiz (Switzerland, Head of AI and Data Center of Excellence, UBS)
    - Yes – to the question of whether we need a Compact. We need to realize that this is **not the first encounter with AI on a global scale**. In the engagement with social networks and the impact that they have on our lives, **we lost a bit of our agency already** and are not living for oneself.
    - What's happening is a race to the bottom. The **only way to break is coordination – an effective way to use human values**. Not yet known how to and who is going and able to build these models.

- Anicia Peters (Nambia, Chief Executive Officer, National Commission on Research, Science and Technology, Namibia)
    - There is a need for a Compact for the ethical reframing of AI as developments are evolving fast.
    - **What does ethical mean? What does ethical responsibility mean**? Who, what, when, where is the responsible/ responsibility for the framing of ethics? We cannot leave the ethical and responsible AI development up to big techs, governments, and developers alone. Who are the voices and actors who should be on these platforms? It's politicians, developers, media, academia, social scientists, children, parents – yes - communities.
    - The **Compact as a platform to interrogate the questions** Karima is talking about and seek answers through for instance research.
    - We also need a type of **AI ethics coordinating or governance body**. While the UNESCO recommendations on the ethics of AI and other instruments can serve as a guide, we should not preclude governments from making their own countries' specific regulations, but the **responsibility on especially high-risk AI cannot be left to governments alone**.
- Claudia Lopez, (Assistant Professor, Informatics Departament, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María)
    - Considering different concerns: privacy, gender discrimination, sustainability – there are people are already collecting data and understanding their impact. There is the aspect of mobilizing **funding** for people doing this job.
    - Agree with Musa regarding the alleged bad faith of programmers. It is **how AI works: it might bring some impact that people might not pay attention to in the beginning**. Beyond doing oversight, there is a need to **operationalize AI principles**.
    - Important in a global compact is to **facilitate coordination and communication** on initiatives, as well as **mobilize funding**.

Questions – Panel 2

- Question on the military domain, on deregulation and banning.
- How does the Geneva Compact fit into the existing international agreements?
- In the context of armed conflict, the Compact will present different views and perspectives, especially to those working on silos.
- What are your views when dealing with questions on accountability in a compact? How would a Compact relate to other initiatives, specifically regional ones like the EU, unilateral ones like the US or multilateral ones? Is it the same thing?
- Reflection on the Compact. It seems for the most part that what we are trying to avoid is dystopia.
- Place of AI in children's rights and their violations.

Strategic Foresight in Peace Practice: Experiences from the Field

ORGANISERS:
CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation & CyberPeace Institute

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Foresight as a methodology can support peace practice in multiple different ways as it enables to build an idea of potential futures through the identification of signals that are visible already today. For peace practice, the combination of strategic and transformative foresight works the best. As a result, foresight methodologies enable anticipatory action and promote change when needed.
2. Foresight can for example be used to build a better understanding of a certain thematic, such as impact of novel technologies, in relation to peacemaking. As a result, peace practitioners can better prepare for potential future threats and opportunities.
3. Foresight work can also be supported using digital tools, such as Inclus that was tested during the workshop. Using digital technologies can enable inclusive, transparent, and anonymous collection of insights that inform the development of future scenarios.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

The workshop was designed to leverage the power of foresight in peace practice, focusing on sharing practical examples from the field combining them with an interactive, digital technology enabled exercise with the participants. The examples drawn from practice were descriptive of both the opportunities and challenges related to digital technology in relation to foresight methodologies used within the two organisations. Foresight as a method used in peace practice enable participants to include in their strategic programming a more profound analysis of present challenges and future possibilities. Future oriented exercises provide the participants a safe space to explore contentious issues without hardening current positions.

The session was built on three pillars:

1) Introduction to the key concepts and use of foresight at the CyberPeace Institute to build an understanding of the risks and challenges of technologies on the security of vulnerable communities in cyberspace to support in fine tuning internal capacities of practitioners. As a result, CPI has for example been able to develop a more systematic approach to AI and develop better operational guidelines.
2) Introduction to CMI's approach to foresight, which lies somewhere in between transformative and strategic foresight. In practice this means that CMI both uses collected data to inform the development of future scenarios while leaving space for imagination and more innovative thinking. CMI has a long history in using foresight methodologies, and there is a recent publication on their use in peace practice co-authored by Andreas Hirblinger, Ville Brummer, and Felix Kufus.
3) Foresight exercise using the Inclus software to map signals indicating change within the peace and conflict space that relate to technology. Signals were collected in relation to four pre-defined categories: AI, social media, cyber/digital risks, and other. The participants could upvote each

other's ideas and the four most voted signals were selected for further analysis. As a second step, the participants were requested to assess the selected signals based on their overall impact for peace and relevance for their own work/organisation. Open discussion on the signals and the changes they indicate was facilitated after the exercise.

Accountability and oversight in state responses to cybersecurity incidents: preparing for the future

ORGANISERS:
DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Urgent need for better coordination between government institutions and between states to respond to cybersecurity incidents.
2. Importance of addressing challenges posed by digitalization and cybersecurity in parallel, and of investing in a stronger cybersecurity response capacity at the national level.
3. Accountability and oversight of government responses to cybersecurity incidents can be achieved by different actors, including by parliaments, civil society, thinktanks, and individuals, etc.

QUOTES:

- **Franziska Klopfer**, *DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance*:
  - "We need a human-centric approach to cybersecurity."
  - "How do you bridge the gap between least developed countries, and countries which have the capacity to invest in resilience?"
- **Dawn Lui**, *DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance*:
  - "We do not know the extent digitalization and cybersecurity impacts on different communities differently, be it women, minorities, or other marginalized groups."
  - "There is a growing digital divide between those who have access and those that do not."
- **Besmir Semenaj**, *Kairos Beteiligungs GmbH*:
  - "For each dollar invested in digitalization, there is a need to double the investment in cybersecurity."
  - "Digitalization worked well. Cybersecurity worked bad."
- **José Cepeda**, *Former Senator of Spain and Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Inter-Parliamentary Union*:
  - "Most States have no capacity to respond to attacks."

    - “The definition of critical infrastructures and cybersecurity framework should be renewed every year.”
- **Marie Humeau**, *Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament*:
    - “Cybersecurity is a common good.”

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION:

This policy briefing sought to explore accountability for cybersecurity incidents from five distinct perspectives: government, parliament, civil society, policy and research, and in-country programming. All the experts on this panel agreed that there should be greater coordination both between government institutions, and between states by sharing information and lessons learned. As society becomes more digitized, there is an urgent need not only for government personnel to keep abreast of developments and risks in cyberspace and be prepared for any cybersecurity incidents, but also for people to know their rights and be able to hold the government to account for any cybersecurity breaches.