



The Peacemaking Covenant

Peace,

The International Commission on Inclusive Peace came together driven by the belief that the challenges facing peacemaking today need to be urgently and systematically addressed. Piercing the gloomy prognostics of the state of the world and tackling the widespread dissatisfaction with current conflict resolution and peacebuilding approaches is a practical, as well as a moral, imperative.

More than 1.9 billion people live in conflict affected and fragile settings, beset by cycles of insecurity and violence and struggling to build a safe future for their communities. Many conflicts are far from the daily headlines or the deliberations of international diplomats, but the lessons we can learn from their achievements, successes and failures are important.

The commissioners and the Principles for Peace partners embarked on what became an intensive and, at times challenging, journey. Our globally consultative process engaged with people in several conflict affected regions around the world and brought to the forefront the voices of countless individuals and groups, from grass roots organisations working to build local peace, to international mediators, security actors, national leaders and international officials. We were energised by their collective and individual desire to rethink peacemaking policies and practices, and their support for our initiative. We were also confronted, especially in 2022, with the difficult trade-offs and practical dilemmas that characterise our times. Our consultations reaffirmed the importance of building on existing global and local efforts at inclusive peace and supporting those who are courageously leading peace efforts despite the risks.

The fruits of our efforts, and of the countless inputs from dedicated peacemakers, have been distilled into the Principles for Peace and the Peacemaking Covenant. But for all of us, the real work is just beginning, as the principles will now be put into practice through continued and inclusive dialogue and the co-creation of practical solutions grounded in local experiences and political realities. We have built upon past insights and achievements to present a common forward-looking framework for accountable, legitimate and, sustainable peacemaking. We are launching this framework as a living initiative to catalyse the new partnerships and collaborative relationships that must lie at the heart of our collective efforts to build peace.

Join us in this important work!



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Contents

Section I. The Challenge	5
New Era, New Imperatives	5
The Vision: A Peacemaking Covenant	7
Section II. The Principles and their Implications	11
Principle 1: Dignity	12
Principle 2: Solidarity	12
Principle 3: Humility	13
Principle 4: Enhancing legitimacy	15
Principle 5: Accountable security	22
Principle 6: Promoting pluralism	27
Principle 7: Adopting subsidiarity	33
Principle 8: Embracing integrated and hybrid solutions	38
Section III. Frontiers for Peacemaking	44
The digital space and peace	44
The environment and peace	47
The economy and peace	49
Section IV: Implementing the Peacemaking Covenant	53
Annex I: Methodology and process	55
Introduction	55
Phase 1: Initial Thematic Exploration	61
Phase 2: Articulation of Principles	67
Phase 3: Validating and testing the Principles	73
Annex II: Bibliography	78

Section I. The Challenge

We are in the midst of a troubling geopolitical era – rife with wars, violent conflicts and political polarisation. Our existing institutions and mechanisms for managing these challenges are in crisis, having been actively undermined.

Working towards peaceful states and societies in the 21st century is challenging, complex, costly and time consuming. Despite some noteworthy successes, it is also prone to fail on its own terms when it is not broadly legitimate, sufficiently inclusive, or consciously transformative.

To tackle these pressing challenges we need to rethink the way we practise peacemaking: both the principles that govern peacemaking and their practical implementation.

Meeting the security challenges of this era and building peaceful states and societies requires new forms of engagement among all participants in peacemaking. These include governments, security actors and armed groups, national elites and local leaders, international agencies, and donor countries, but also local community and civil society groups, gender equality advocates, media, and business actors. Peacemaking must build upon locally successful initiatives and harness local knowledge and cumulative experiences to global action. The Principles for Peace and its flagship – the Peacemaking Covenant – will catalyse this evolution through a practical road map, codes of practice, measurement and tracking of its core principles and policy shifts to chart a path to lasting peace.

New Era, New Imperatives

Growing interconnectedness has not eliminated wars and conflicts between and within states and societies. Today, we face the challenges of political violence and polarisation, inter- and intra-state conflict, proxy and hybrid wars, military coups, and large-scale violations of human rights and humanitarian law. The voices of reason, respect and compromise are often drowned out by geopolitical tensions undermining efforts to build peace, a crisis of relevance for multilateral institutions, rising inequality, a large, illicit transnational economy, and the erosion of representative government.

More than 50 active conflicts raged worldwide in 2012, their number having tripled since the end of the Cold War and remaining stubbornly high. They caused more than 119 000 deaths in 2021 alone and have resulted in many

millions of people being injured or displaced. The 2022 war in Ukraine has added to the grim toll of death, displacement, and destruction. Almost half of the conflicts since 1989 have recurred and protracted crises persist for decades with no resolution. In many regions people live with high levels or cycles of violence, insecurity, and repression that provide fertile ground for violent mobilisation.

The global effects of the COVID19 pandemic, the intensifying climate crisis and the impact of the war in Ukraine on food and energy prices highlight our mutual vulnerabilities and the limits to international cooperation. Our digital world is tightly interconnected, with young digital natives creating new avenues for connection and spaces of encounter and empowerment. But economic, social and technological transformations have often failed to meet the aspirations of younger generations. Disinformation and manipulation in digital spaces can polarise political identities, and inequality, lack of economic opportunities, and the targeting of human rights activists and feminists have fuelled social and individual alienation and radicalisation. These challenges are manifest through waves of discontent and intolerance that can be manipulated by political elites. The case for promoting international solidarity and social justice has become greater, but collective responses to global challenges and conflicts are wanting, as the institutions designed to address threats to peace and security and promote a law-based order are being actively undermined.

The easy path would be to surrender to a pessimistic vision of a conflict-ridden future and abandon efforts to build sustainable peace. But practitioners, policy makers and “everyday peacemakers” around the world nonetheless strive to prevent violent conflicts and build sustainable peace between and within their communities. Individuals and institutions from all sectors have a responsibility to support these efforts. Together we can move towards the shared vision of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies enshrined in the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular goal 16: “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.

The past thirty years have seen significant efforts to build peaceful states and societies and inclusive economies – from conflict mediation and resolution to the ‘Women, Peace and Security’ agenda, passing through post-conflict reconstruction, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and reforms to peace operations, a focus on prevention and sustaining peace, and a wide range of policy initiatives in conflict-affected and fragile states. Many of these efforts have succeeded in ending violence and producing settlements between

warring parties, but multilateral peacekeeping or stabilisation operations have not often led to broader social and political peace that is sustainable. Some have floundered on the hard rocks of regional and global political realities. Peacemaking practices have been widely scrutinised, but reforms have often been incremental and institutional, focusing on specific policy or programmatic shortcomings and the presence and use of force. Visionary and inclusive leadership is needed that acknowledges the difficult choices and trade-offs we face and that embraces a people-centred approach to practical action.

The Vision: A Peacemaking Covenant

The Peacemaking Covenant lays out the necessary shifts in the approach(es) to peacemaking, the philosophical foundation underpinning these shifts, and the principles that accompany it. The policies and practices that follow from these principles are not a “onesizefitsall” prescription. The principles provide an overarching ethos that must be developed, refined, tailored, and applied in specific contexts and circumstances, anchored within the norms and frameworks of the various communities being engaged.

Peacemaking is understood in the Covenant to encompass all activities from mediation for conflict prevention to multilateral peace operations and security-building; from national and institutional efforts at reconstruction and transformation, to support for civil society and business initiatives laying the social and economic foundations to sustain peace. It goes beyond the UN’s narrower 1993 definition.

The Covenant emerged from two years of deliberations and sustained engagements with grassroots and high-level voices and inputs, anchored in a solid base of knowledge, evidence and cumulative learning, reflecting practical and lived experience, pragmatism, and political feasibility.

- It deliberately echoes the international community’s commitment to rights and justicebased order reflected in the International Covenant on Civil and Political, and Economic, Cultural and Social Rights, as well as to international humanitarian law and international agreements that commit to building a peaceful and secure global order.
- It embodies values of dignity, solidarity and humility based on relationships of consultation, representation and respect between international, transnational, national, subnational, business and civil society actors.

- It is addressed to all who can make a positive contribution to building peace and sustainable security: mediators and peacebuilders; multilateral and regional organisations; international actors and donors; national governments, power holders and political elites; civil society actors and NGOs; armed actors; and the business community.
- The Covenant emphasises partnerships and common – but differentiated – responsibilities.

The Peacemaking Covenant is addressed to decision makers and any actor who aims to contribute directly or indirectly to advancing peace, including mediators and peacebuilders; multilateral and regional organisations, international actors and donors; national governments, power holders and political elites; civil society actors and NGOs; armed actors; and the business community. A commitment to the Covenant is a signal of good faith and a first step towards more fully developing the Covenant's codes of practice or conduct for each community in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual accountability.

Engagement with the Covenant will involve a public commitment to upholding its core principles and establishing enduring partnerships to build sustainable peace and security. Adherence to the Covenant's principles represents a practical pledge to act in good faith as a peacemaker, based on mutual recognition and accountability and a commitment to building legitimacy.

The Covenant introduces four key shifts in policy and practice:

- how peacemaking is conceived: from a primary focus on diplomacy and negotiated settlements to end violence, to a widened approach to peacemaking as a longer-term, dynamic, adaptive process that requires broader inclusivity, sustained engagement to building and maintaining legitimacy, and responsibility sharing to promote the common good.

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- how local and international actors work together: embracing a partnership compact that supports the cocreation of locally led solutions based on relationships of respect, reciprocity and humility

- how peacemaking is implemented to reconfigure state-society relations: working beyond elite pacts and power-sharing agreements to foster political and institutional outcomes that incorporate the responsibility of all parties to work towards inclusive governance and clear lines of accountability to society
- how social groups interact: from narrow “inclusion as representation” towards genuinely pluralistic political discourses, outcomes, and social relations – all based on respect for diversity and inclusion at all levels of political and social life.

The Peacemaking Covenant and its principles will catalyse practical, long-term and equitable partnerships. It orients peacemaking efforts towards the cocreation of sustainable solutions with different time frames by actors operating at international, national and local levels. Citizens deserve to give direct, ongoing input into decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods; armed groups must renounce violence to participate in political life; national governments must be responsible and accountable to the diverse groups within their societies. Similarly, business actors should run their operations and value chains in a way that is sensitive to their impact on conflict dynamics, and international actors have a duty to protect and guarantee effective and safe participation in civil society. All have an impact on shaping political, social, and economic relationships, and a responsibility to support sustainable peacemaking.

The Covenant openly acknowledges today’s challenging geopolitical context and political realities. Powerful actors and entrenched interests, local – regional, and global – often exacerbate conflicts, oppose efforts to prevent conflicts and to make peace, and benefit from insecurity, violence and division. Only by confronting this reality can we work to overcome it. Peacemakers – especially in ongoing conflicts – face difficult trade-offs and complex power dynamics. Careful, long-term engagement with actors who undermine efforts to build sustainable peace must be coupled with strategies to empower those who strive to make peace, particularly those who have been marginalised or victimised by conflict and violence. These challenges make it even more imperative for all stakeholders to work with a longterm vision of how their efforts can nurture the conditions for sustainable peace.

Commitment to the Covenant and its principles is only the beginning of a process. Implementation will engage different communities and actors in the peacemaking space – mediators and negotiators, security forces, national

authorities, international actors and donors, civil society and business actors – working in partnership to develop practical roadmaps for implementation. The objective is to develop codes of practice, guidance, operational rules, standards, or codes of conduct that are tailored to different domains, actors and contexts, with built-in oversight and accountability mechanisms. This will be accompanied by concrete and sustained initiatives to promote the principles in multilateral and regional forums and with different institutional, security, civil society and business networks and actors. These efforts will be supported by an institutional capability to ensure effective monitoring of the Covenant's implementation to enhance its uptake and anchoring and its adaptation to local and global contexts.

Distrust, resistance and scepticism may accompany our efforts to promote renewed approaches to making peace, especially in environments where previous efforts have not borne fruit. This cannot be overcome with words on paper, but only with practical and sustained engagements and followthrough. Commitments signal a willingness to embrace new ways of working, to institutionalise these in practical guidance, and to being open to scrutiny and selfreflection.

Section II. The Principles and their Implications

The Peacemaking Covenant embodies eight interlocking and mutually reinforcing principles. The first three – dignity, solidarity and humility – provide an ethical compass to guide the individual and collective actions and decisions of peacemakers and to build trust. The fourth – enhancing legitimacy – provides a lodestar: an overarching objective or goal towards which the ethical compass points. The fifth – accountable security – is fundamental to creating the conditions for achieving other objectives. The three subsequent principles embed the whole in a practically oriented partnership compact with commitments to promoting pluralism, adopting subsidiarity, and embracing integrated and hybrid solutions for all actors in the peacemaking space.



These principles are an integrated whole that captures the comprehensive shift in philosophy embodied in the Covenant. While not every principle is equally relevant in every circumstance, they reinforce each other and are not hierarchically organised. Similar to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, the principles of the Peacemaking Covenant reflect the belief that the practical actions and concrete peacemaking programmes must embrace a holistic and ethical vision, all while recognising the serious challenges and obstacles to building sustainable and secure peace in a variety of geopolitical contexts.

The Peacemaking Covenant embodies a commitment to a set of values and ethical standards. All efforts to build peace rest upon particular norms and values that are central to the interests, identities and actions of different social and political actors. These values can and should infuse the political dynamics, difficult choices and practical steps that accompany realworld situations, while the Covenant acknowledges that such values are often challenged or opposed by actors whose interests and political visions do not align with a peaceful, just and inclusive future for all.

Principle 1: Dignity

Dignity: The idea of dignity embodies mutual respect and fair and equal treatment of all parties and individuals. It is central to building a legitimate peace – both as a guide to action and an ultimate end for sustainable peacemaking.

Implications and recommendations

A legitimate and just peace must be founded upon respect for the dignity of persons; with their interests, views and needs actively taken into consideration in decisions and actions.

- The imperative of treating people and groups with dignity holds a prominent place in many faith traditions and international human rights instruments, drawing attention to our common humanity and to the imperative of promoting just and non-coercive relationships at all levels and between all individuals. Mutual respect in individual and collective relationships must be founded on equality and social justice.
- The principle of dignity should guide the international community's engagements and interactions with conflict parties and local populations, including creating spaces for meaningful engagement with historically marginalised communities.
- A legitimate and sustainable political order requires practical measures that create trust between governing authorities (formal and informal) and populations and that permit individuals to live a dignified life with opportunities to realise their potential.
- The economic dimensions of peacemaking should promote everyone's ability to meet their basic needs to lead a dignified life.

Principle 2: Solidarity

Solidarity: Solidarity acknowledges the interconnected and interdependent nature of today's world, including "solidarity with" and support to those affected by conflict and violence, as well as "solidarity among" those involved in peacemaking. Solidarity is more than simply acting together and recognises the potential for mutual learning and influence and for sharing burdens, risks and resources. The success of peacemaking depends on the contributions of

each set of actors. International, regional, national and local actors have a common and differentiated responsibility to promote sustainable peace.

Implications and recommendations

Solidarity must be realised in concrete and practical ways.

- Solidarity has not only an individual, but also a social, political and gender dimension.
- A commitment to solidarity encourages practical support to shared learning across different divides and to enhancing North-South and South-South cooperation.
- Solidarity requires support for all people affected by conflict, including attention to differentiated needs and vulnerabilities based on gender and age, in addition to services for their specific needs.
- Solidarity can be promoted through truth and reconciliation processes and transitional justice.
- Promoting solidarity across socio-political, economic, gender and generational divides is a crucial component of a legitimate, inclusive and just social compact.

Principle 3: Humility

Humility: International actors should adopt the role of midwives, not “architects” or “designers” of peace, proactively enabling peacemaking processes while ensuring the well-being and security of all. Peacemaking is open-ended, dynamic, adaptive and unpredictable and needs to be approached with humility. All peacemakers, both insiders and outsiders, must be empathetic, compassionate, open to alternative perspectives and respectful of the efforts of others, in their deeds as well as in their words. They must also be aware of the limitations of programmes and policies to achieve change in a complex environment.

Implications and recommendations

Approaching peacemaking with humility requires empathy for all people affected by conflict, pro-peace constituencies and marginalised voices, and respect for the contributions that all can make to the success of peace processes.

- National actors, including political, economic and social elites, power holders, and security actors should formally acknowledge the legitimate aspirations of the population, the limits to their power and influence, and their responsibility to act for the common good.
- International actors must be highly – and visibly – sensitive to the nuances of particular contexts and to their own limitations and biases. They should embrace the contributions of local actors and the different time scales on which peace processes and peacemaking unfold.
- Engagement with armed actors, conflicting parties and power holders requires an understanding of what different elements in these groups want and must be balanced by engagement with constituencies promoting peace, especially those groups that have been excluded from formal negotiations and processes, in an inclusive and secure environment.
- Humility requires concrete actions to set aside organisational imperatives and funding models that foster interorganisational competition rather than collaboration. Recognising that organisations have varied capacities, risk appetites and mandates can collectively ensure that all the vital ingredients of a peace process are supported.

Building upon the Bangsamoro peace process

The Bangsamoro peace process in the Philippines illustrates how the Principles for Peace are already reflected in the practice of local actors as important guides to shape conflict resolution. Dignity and Pluralism were part of the ‘Principles of Comprehensive Peace’ which guided the work of the Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process. Subsidiarity was relevant, both as a governance principle and as a guiding principle for the peace process itself. On the governance level, the negotiations centred around increased autonomy for the region and distributing responsibilities between existing and ‘to be created’ local entities. Determining the exact distribution of responsibilities remains a challenge. Subsidiarity also meant that the negotiating parties insisted on a locally led process, drawing on international support where needed. Legitimacy continues to be a key factor in the implementation of the agreement and building legitimacy around negotiations with an Islamic group was a key challenge for the government that depended on popular support to establish the legal framework for the peace process.

These three principles resonate within diverse sociocultural and historical contexts. They are also often absent from programmes and policies that place a premium on top-down and vertical accountability, abstract and technocratic indicators for design and measurement, and forms of managerial expertise (unemotional, calculating) that diminish the importance of relationships of respect, dignity, and reciprocity.

Incorporating the three principles into new ways of peacemaking can involve delicate balances and trade-offs between local approaches that privilege collective and group rights over the autonomy and equal rights of individuals. This will involve all actors re-examining and recalibrating how they engage individually and institutionally and adopting ethically responsive peacemaking practices on an ongoing basis to respect the equal status and dignity of individuals and groups.

Principle 4: Enhancing legitimacy

Enhancing the long-term legitimacy of peace processes – and of the actors involved in peacemaking – is a primary objective for successful, sustainable and effective peace. Legitimacy is not static or given but emerges and is shaped simultaneously by how political settlements are arrived at, who was involved in designing the peace, what agenda for change it articulates, what it delivers to conflict-affected societies and communities, and what kinds of relationships it embodies.

Peacemaking builds institutional legitimacy by transforming coercive capacity and personalised influence into formal and informal acceptance of transparent and agreed-upon laws, institutions and power holders. Peace processes and outcomes that support the effective participation of all social groups in public life, and in particular of women and other marginalised groups, are more legitimate. Ultimately, the goal is to generate sustainable political relationships and respect for the rule of law through transparent, equally and fairly enforced laws that are consistent with international norms and standards.

The Covenant – and the three principles of its partnership compact – promoting pluralism, adopting subsidiarity, and embracing integrated and hybrid solutions – promote efforts to build institutions and create stable and secure state-society-economy-environment relationships that produce and embody legitimacy in the eyes of the population, including vulnerable groups. Legitimacy requires concrete outcomes, relations of fairness, respect and justice, and genuine inclusion in political, social and economic life. It is difficult

to achieve in conflictual and post-conflict contexts where power dynamics marginalise certain groups, social goods are not delivered, laws and formal authorities are contested and institutions have been weakened or challenged. Legitimacy needs to be built, earned and accepted.

Legitimacy encompasses the instrumental fulfilment of needs and objectives as well as the shared values of a community regarding proper conduct, fair processes, and relations between authorities and the population. It is not a static property of a political, legal or economic system but is produced and reproduced through practical action and relationships that respect human rights, equality and dignity.

Legitimacy can be built and reinforced, or eroded and lost, especially in a contested political environment. The legitimacy of elements of a peace process can be gauged by identifying, tracing and evaluating the degree to which they have been integrated into local social norms and institutions and the extent to which individuals and groups invest in sustaining peace.

Implications and recommendations

Mediation is an ongoing process towards sustainable political settlements.

- Peacemaking recognises the primacy of politics in all efforts to build sustainable peace. Beyond initial peace agreements, successful peacemaking requires ongoing mediation and facilitation to reinforce and legitimise decisions, institutions and governance arrangements.
- Ongoing international engagement and mediation are required to support full implementation of peace agreements and to deal with actors who are not committed to sustainable peace and its core principles, or whose commitment is conditional and limited. Engagement should support implementation and mediation to facilitate the evolution of governance arrangements in changing sociopolitical contexts, to recognise the interests and identities of spoilers, and to prevent the development of public cynicism towards, distrust in and alienation from the peace process.

Inclusive power and responsibility-sharing settlements that satisfy the immediate need for an agreement and a framework for administering power are an important mechanism to build legitimacy. They must ensure representation

for a broad range of interests in shared political institutions. Greater attention must be paid to:

- Designing political settlements that are dynamic enough to allow space for new and pluralistic political configurations to emerge over time. This promotes an evolution in how key political and economic actors define their interests and can ensure that existing societal cleavages are not further entrenched.
- Legitimising political settlements through broadbased, inclusive consultations designed to ensure the participation of all, including women and other marginalised groups and to promote the legitimacy of inputs to political arrangements.
- Building the principle and practice of subsidiarity into political settlements and power-sharing agreements from the outset.
- Paying equal attention to building legitimacy through mechanisms for responsive and transparent governance, including the fair delivery of basic services and locally appropriate forms of political accountability.

Guatemala: The promise of a comprehensive peace process

In 1996, the Government of Guatemala and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union signed the Firm and Lasting Peace Agreement, ending 36 years of internal armed conflict that had left thousands dead or disappeared. The peace agreements had a transformative vision and went beyond a ceasefire or the incorporation of the insurgent forces into political life. The Peace Accords were at that time among the broadest and deepest that had been reached to conclude an internal war in the second half of the 20th century. Some 26 years later, the aspirations reflected in the agreement have been only partially fulfilled, and enormous structural, economic and social inequalities persist.

Couple power sharing with responsibility sharing that focuses on promoting the common good.

Power-sharing agreements are often complex, multilayered and based on economic as well as political interests. They should include groups beyond those directly involved in the violent conflict (such as women and other marginalised groups, or political-economic actors) and can even incorporate international actors into domestic institutional arrangements. They should also be a bridge towards more inclusive political processes.

- Power-sharing arrangements are often crucial to create a pluralistic mechanism of government that engages key stakeholders, including those who have used violence, as a transitional arrangement to more inclusive governance. However, in practice the result is often the splitting of power between groups who control different issue areas and reinforce entrenched economic, sectarian or group interests. Peace settlements that only restore order and reduce violence, while perpetuating unjust and unequal social, political or economic structures, downplaying conflictual relationships between social groups, or ignoring the importance of licit and illicit economic activities, are neither legitimate nor sustainable. In these circumstances, the fracture lines built into institutions remain under pressure for renegotiation or subversion, and statesociety and intergroup relationships remain ripe for conflict recurrence.

Colombian complexities

The consolidation of peace in Colombia has been a long, multigenerational, multifaceted and nonlinear process, not associated with a single agreement. It has been slowly pieced together like a jigsaw puzzle and still encounters setbacks and obstacles from actors who see peace as threatening their power and privileges. When progress has been made, the process has been promoted from above and below via strong leadership and commitment to consolidate and continuously re-legitimise the relationship between citizens and political authority to build a legitimate, democratic, and effective state in the eyes of its citizens.

- Bargains between parties to the violent conflict should specifically integrate long-term output legitimacy elements (what peace delivers) into powersharing agreements and develop legitimacygenerating policies and arrangement that provide incentives (and sanctions) to shift the interests of armed actors towards broader responsibility for the population through political institutions and away from the use of force to achieve their ends.
- Powersharing institutions should be embedded within strong and effective human rights frameworks that ensure the basic institutions of society are fair for everyone and that protect the rights of minorities and marginalised groups and of those who are not members of any group, who risk being excluded by new powersharing alliances.

- External support should focus on “responsibility sharing” for the common good, through support to accountability mechanisms and delivering public goods to the population in an inclusive and dignified way to make powersharing agreements sustainable and supported.

Increase both input and output legitimacy of ongoing peacebuilding efforts through a commitment to pluralism, subsidiarity, accountable security provision, and hybrid and integrated solutions.

- Legitimacy does not reduce to “what is legal”; it is tied to ideas of social justice and fairness, including protection of historically or emerging vulnerable groups in society, and access to justice and redress through formal and informal mechanisms. This involves attention to hybrid solutions that bring together international norms and local norms and traditions in a locally relevant way, especially where formal institutions are fragile, but informal social, communal and economic institutions and practices remain relatively strong and respected.
- Output legitimacy can be strengthened through subsidiarity, bringing institutions closer to the people they serve, improving access for excluded groups, and supporting the primacy of local leadership to serve the common good and deliver basic services to the population in a transparent and accountable way.
- Legitimacy can be reinforced through practical commitments and actions to promote pluralism, as well as by enabling continuous participation and inclusion in institutions and governance arrangements that are understood to be fair and just, as an alternative to the politics of coercion and violence. Efforts to build the legitimacy of peacemaking efforts must be continuously cultivated, to ensure that actors who will inevitably seek to undermine or overturn the terms of agreements to promote or protect more narrow interests do not control the process, and to allow the adaptive evolution of political and constitutional arrangements.

Support long-term, dynamic and adaptive engagement.

- Continued, predictable and changing forms of assistance are required to reinforce the social and economic foundations of sustainable peace and facilitate the emergence of new and shared forms of legitimacy

to sustain non-coercive relationships between state and society and among different socio-economic and social groups.

Rationale

A legitimacy deficit characterises approaches to peacemaking focused on mediating agreements among armed actors to the exclusion of wider social and economic needs and rights.

The Principles for Peace global participatory process highlighted the legitimacy deficit that affects the efforts of actors outside a conflict to build institutions or enact policies for peaceful, just and inclusive societies. This legitimacy deficit affects who speaks or acts on behalf of a community, who provides peace and security to whom, and the foundations for peaceful rule. The legitimacy deficit affects the perceived fairness of peace processes – who participates in decisions, how, when and at what level (input legitimacy through transparent, representative and participatory processes) – as well as the effectiveness and expectations of what peace should concretely deliver (output legitimacy).

Afghanistan: A hollow peace

Among the many failures in Afghanistan, persistent efforts to reestablish central authority, without ensuring inclusion and popular legitimacy, increased instability. Material and training support for security institutions did little to improve state-society relationships or to address deficits in political trust and inclusion. The close relationship with corrupt and authoritarian warlords and political elites, justified as a necessary evil in the fight against the Taliban, bred an illegitimate peace characterised by pervasive corruption and rent-seeking and the political and social marginalisation of Afghans committed to working towards a peaceful future. Ultimately, this undermined peacebuilding by eroding, rather than building, institutional capacity.

The contested and evolving nature of legitimacy.

In conflict-affected states, the legitimacy or accountability of institutions and power holders is often fragmented, non-existent or based on coercive relations. Non-state and civil-society actors, armed groups, political movements, as well as international agencies and business actors, often operate in parallel to national authorities and institutions. They can be providers of services, protection and voice, with some legitimacy in the eyes of the local population. They are, however, often legitimate only for a subset of the population and are seldom accountable beyond the groups whose interests they serve. The

presence of multiple “legitimacies” means that international, regional, national and local actors thus need to address a shifting set of audiences with conflicting expectations.

The consolidation of peace processes and political transformations takes time and is subject to regional and international powerpolitical considerations. Despite this, international actors should strive to make a genuine commitment to longer-term political, security and economic stability and advancement. Short-term planning horizons and time frames for international engagements, and geopolitical considerations, often affect peace operations or stabilisation missions, resulting in insufficient attention to longer-term processes of transformation and reconciliation that can leave communities more vulnerable than before the conflict. Generating legitimacy requires support for longterm, dynamic and adaptive engagement, and changing forms of assistance, to reinforce the social and economic foundations of sustainable peace, facilitate the emergence of shared perceptions of legitimacy and sustain non-coercive relationships between state and society, and among different social groups.

Delivering the peace: the effectiveness of peace processes.

High-level political decisions and peace agreements between violent or armed actors too often do not translate into tangible changes at the community level. Peace settlements are needed to end violence, but long-term violence reduction and stability require wider social buy-in accompanied by efforts to achieve social justice and an ethic of “responsibility sharing” in a secure environment.

Peace agreements are often unable to address the structural, social and economic risk factors and power dynamics that have led to violent conflicts (inequality, racism, access and opportunity, marginalisation, and group grievances), or face weak implementation when they do address these issues. Such structural transformations are often actively or passively resisted by armed or powerful actors whose interests would be affected. Without persistent and careful investment in longer-term transformations, power-sharing agreements can serve to institutionalise the root causes of conflict, entrench social divisions and allow systems of patronage and clientelism to flourish.

Legitimacy and fairness.

The architects and negotiators of peace agreements are often perceived as distant from peoples’ concerns or are not seen as trustworthy or legitimate. This creates a lack of trust in decision makers and represents an added challenge

for both international and local actors. Domestic legitimacy can sometimes be enhanced by changing the visibility and role of international actors to bolster local accountability relationships.

Corrupt procurement practices or discriminatory service provision can mean that local populations regard external support for basic service provision and infrastructure as violating principles of fairness and equal treatment.

Principle 5: Accountable security

Living in freedom from fear is a basic human need and right. There can be no peace without security. A stable and secure political order requires accountable security institutions to provide security as a public good, to respect human rights and humanitarian law and to follow agreed principles governing the use of force in society. Security institutions and forces must have sufficient capacity, clear mandates and missions, and regulatory oversight to meet the evolving security needs of a population moving towards sustainable peace.

Ending violent conflict and creating a secure and safe environment for political, social and economic life to flourish are vital for meaningful and durable peacemaking efforts to take root and should be the primary goal of peace operations. Development and military assistance should respect the dignity of affected populations and align with concrete, locally led efforts to address the underlying drivers of violence, including social and economic issues.

Implications and recommendations

Efforts to assist local security actors – formal and informal – must continuously attend to how they produce their own legitimacy.

- State forces (including the police and intelligence services) are often viewed as threatening and predatory, and international assistance (training and equipment) can shore up illegitimate institutions and actors. Private security forces often serve specific economic actors or interests. Benchmarks for assessing the legitimacy of security actors must thus be consistently monitored.
- National leadership and political elites will inevitably view central security institutions (including intelligence services) as arenas of sovereign autonomy and power, and external assistance must be linked

to concrete commitments to respect human rights and international norms, appropriate restraint and oversight, and institutional rightsizing.

Different stakeholders can take steps consistent with the Covenant and its principles to ensure accountable, people-centred security and justice provision to end hostilities and reduce the risk of the cyclical return of violence and instability by:

- Promoting horizontally integrated approaches to enhance coherence and complementarity between diplomatic, development and security actors that go beyond coordination of efforts and allow all actors to contribute effectively within their domains.
- Acknowledging the need to engage with non-state armed actors at all stages of the process, in particular when they enjoy legitimacy within a community, provide essential services and are willing to renounce violence and force to participate in peacemaking and securitybuilding efforts.
- Increasing investment in and engagement with security sector reform and governance programmes to improve robust and legitimate civilian oversight and direction of security institutions, accountability mechanisms for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and gender-responsive recruitment, policies and practices, to enhance the legitimacy (input and output) of security actors and institutions.
- Guaranteeing that stabilisation and security-building efforts are designed around the protection and security of civilians including

Armies and politics in Central Africa

A history of violent conflict in Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo means that armed forces and the integration of armed groups have been a central concern of peace makers. While efforts have focused on institutional reform – including professionalisation, socialisation, welfare-provision, and political education – to promote successful integration, this may have no positive effect on peacebuilding if the relationship between the government and the army is not subject to broader oversight and accountability.

children, youth and women in armed conflict, coupled with efforts towards positive transformations towards sustainable security and justice provision.

- Enforcing accountability for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by armed forces, non-state armed groups or other security actors. This is crucial to address grievances that could be exploited by armed groups to bolster their legitimacy and recruitment.
- Ensuring legal and regulatory oversight and that of private security providers, especially when engaged by business actors, to avoid human rights violations and other abuses.
- Incorporating the principles of subsidiarity and local hybrid solutions into the design and oversight of security provision that is gender responsive at the local and community level.

Balance stabilisation strategies with people-centred security provision as a public good.

- Stabilisation strategies must be consistent with people-centred security provision and meet a broad test of legitimacy and proportionality. They must also work to reduce physical and structural violence and towards the creation of a secure environment in which social, political and economic life can flourish.
- Exit strategies for multilateral peace operations should be designed with, and work towards, a clear, shared vision of the conditions necessary for orderly transitions and must be based on assessments of the legitimacy and effectiveness of state (and security) institutions. They should be coupled with longer-term engagements to support local communities in their efforts to build sustainable and legitimate politics.

Rationale

All peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts have paid great attention to stopping violence, bringing armed groups to the negotiating table and investing in longer-term, people-centred and accountable security provision.

Many of these efforts have been relatively successful, as peace processes in Colombia, Northern Ireland, or Liberia attest. But many have been only partially implemented or actively undermined over the longer term by spoilers fostering conflict and violence. Relapse into violent conflict is all too common, with the civil wars in Mali and South Sudan bearing tragic witness to this phenomenon.

Many international and regional peace operations have protected civilians, facilitated the disarmament and reintegration of armed groups, promoted better governance of the security sector, contributed to the implementation of peace agreements and provided security in the aftermath of conflict. The effectiveness of these peace operations is often conditional on their smooth integration with other actors, to break out of mission and mandate silos that can create conflicting objectives and operations. Horizontal integration aims for greater coherence and cooperation among security-related actors engaged in peacemaking activities and across international, regional, and national arenas.

In most contemporary conflicts, diplomatic and political engagement with armed groups is required given their capacity to undermine peacemaking efforts and return to violence. Under certain conditions, armed groups are a necessary part of the solution, in particular in situations where they perform protective functions for communities that view them as more legitimate than state, regional or international actors. Local communities can sometimes influence the behaviour of armed groups, and engaging with them involves understanding their aims, recognising their role and legitimacy (if any) and finding ways to foster an interest in contributing to sustainable peacemaking.

Beyond the short-term objective of creating a secure and stable environment lays the challenge of creating the conditions for accountable and sustainable, people-centred security provision as a public good accessible to all. Even relatively successful cases have often failed to build security institutions that allow people to live free from fear of everyday or systematic violence, whether from gangs and criminal groups, politically motivated militias, or state violence. As a result, communities often turn to informal security and justice providers, and security provision is available only to those who can afford it or who are affiliated with state elites. This deepens the vulnerability of certain groups and undermines the fundamental bargain at the heart of state authority.

Establishing accountable and sustainable, people-centred security involves policies and practices that follow the principle of subsidiarity to deliver a safe and secure environment at the local or community level.

All security institutions – from armed forces to national gendarmerie or police forces, to local, hybrid, private or community-based security providers – must be insulated from capture by regime or sectarian security interests, and overseen by and accountable to the people they serve. Accountable security sector governance is a necessary accompaniment to institution building, since capacity building of security actors, including at the community level, can easily create an enhanced tool for violence and repression.

In many contexts, state authorities and security and justice institutions operate in parallel to a variety of non-state actors who use force (legitimately or otherwise). Embracing the careful development of hybrid and integrated solutions can facilitate novel ways to bring security provision closer to (and representative of) the population. the exclusion of former armed groups from peace processes ignores that many of them evolved in response to a pervasive sense of marginalisation and exclusion that must be addressed. The “terrorist” label can also disconnect armed groups from their constituents, potentially making them more radical and violent rather than addressing the underlying sources of mobilisation for violent extremism.

Failures of or challenges to stabilisation operations have triggered serious efforts to rethink their limits and logic. Stabilisation efforts are a political as well as a security matter that should place the protection and security of

Hybrid policing in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, hybrid forms of policing delegate the resolution of particular cases to traditional leaders and use traditional justice processes (such as mediation or compensation). At the village level, community policing committees that include police and local actors (including traditional elders) blend formal and informal means of security and justice delivery. While not perfect, such arrangements often enjoy enhanced legitimacy and effectiveness, and are more closely embedded in local communities’ norms and values.

(De)Stabilising Mali

Stabilisation operations to combat violent extremism in Mali and the Sahel were entrapped by factions in the armed forces who seized the opportunity to take power from civilian authorities, further alienating the population from the political process and jeopardizing the objective of sustainable security-provision across the Sahel. Despite a strong international engagement, the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali was not implemented inclusively and thus failed to address the political, economic, security and governance roots of the crisis.

civilians at their heart and facilitate, rather than hamper, longer-term, inclusive political settlements. While a necessary first step, stabilisation operations have often entrenched existing elites and power relations, reinforced unaccountable or repressive state security forces, excluded significant groups and jeopardised longer-term efforts to build legitimate and sustainable peace. When stabilisation operations are overly militarised or securitised, they struggle to address the political drivers of violence and the role of criminal groups and non-state armed actors in creating insecurity.

Principle 6: Promoting pluralism

Promoting pluralism and embracing diversity across communal, political, social, economic and gender divides, ensuring fair and equal participation in public life and providing equitable access to institutions and services, are key foundations for sustainable peace. A pluralistic approach will not strive to eliminate differences and produce uniformity, or to simply promote tolerance in cold coexistence, but to accept differences as enriching for society and reinforcing a sense of belonging for all social groups.

The Peacemaking Covenant sees pluralism as a tool that empowers everyone to participate meaningfully, including those who otherwise remain at the margins, to cocreate outcomes that respect the dignity of all. Pluralism shifts from inclusion as token representation to authentic political processes that value the contributions of all, support the expression of diverse views and priorities for society, and create a fair space of influence for diverse groups. Inclusion and power sharing within peace processes are a crucial starting point to address legitimacy deficits but must be accompanied by efforts to promote pluralism in political, social and economic life if it is not to be tokenistic.

A commitment to pluralism must also recognise the conflict-producing cleavages, power structures and organising principles that reinforce exclusion and marginalisation in society. Vulnerable and marginalised groups are often those most affected in conflict and fragile settings, and those with least power often take the most responsibility to protect their communities, leading efforts to mediate, address humanitarian needs, prevent violence and build peace – even in the midst of war.

Pluralism can be assessed by tracing and evaluating how implementation of a peace agreement strives to overcome these political, economic and social exclusions and the degree to which all actors and groups eschew exclusionary politics.

Implications and recommendations

Complement a focus on procedural mechanisms for inclusion and representation in peace processes with attention to genuinely pluralistic outcomes.

- Promoting a pluralistic social peace requires concrete actions to respond positively to diversity in a society, rather than seeing diversity as a threat or challenge. It also requires recognising the limits of respect for diversity, in particular among groups or actors that advocate violent or exclusionary political, social or economic policies.
- Pluralism requires institutionalising arrangements, in and beyond constitutions and legal frameworks, to include and reflect the equal status and intersecting interests and claims of all groups in society.
- A commitment to pluralism requires efforts to realise the aspirations of the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security Agendas, as well as wider efforts to increase representativeness and responsive outcomes to achieve just and inclusive transformations towards a shared future for all groups in society.
- A commitment to pluralism is not just about who is included, but also what is included in different elements of peace settlements. It requires a longer-term approach that identifies and works within the multiple social, economic, political and security domains where efforts to advancing pluralism are required.

Support both the “hardware” and “software” of pluralism as a peacemaking strategy.

- Building pluralistic societies requires equal attention to the social hardware (institutions, laws, and policies) and the software (social mindsets and narratives) that shape how pluralism is understood.
- Shaping pluralistic hardware includes institutional and regulatory arrangements – constitutions, governance and legal frameworks, the relationship between the economy and society, education policies, and the media – that form the legal and political space within which social groups and individuals interact.
- Accountable and sustainable security institutions must also embrace pluralism to build legitimacy through fostering non-violent, non-

coercive social relationships to enable active participation and genuine inclusion in political, social and economic life.

- Shaping pluralistic software involves attending to the cultural habits or public perceptions of belonging and voice and supporting social norms that include diversity-embracing cultural narratives to address groupbased inequalities including, in particular, gender inequalities.
- Rules and policies to promote pluralism can only endure when they are sustained by and contribute to supportive sociocultural norms.

Promote pluralism through subsidiarity, hybrid solutions and bridging social capital.

- Social capital – the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively – is central to sustainable peace. Supporting efforts to generate bridging social capital that builds and reinforces links between and across communities to foster genuinely pluralistic societies strengthens the legitimacy of institutions and political processes, as well as reducing frictions that can lead to conflicts.
- Pluralistic politics can be promoted through hybrid arrangements (for example, in legal systems), or through institutional subsidiarity and devolution of decision making to the community level.
- Formal legal and political accountability mechanisms and procedures must be established to ensure that the principles of pluralism enshrined in agreements and peace processes are upheld and respected.

Rationale

The principle of pluralism between states is one of the cornerstones of the global order, exemplified by the twin doctrines of self-determination and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. Political communities are free to pursue their destiny as they best see fit and to make choices that are respected by others. But pluralism at the global level is also balanced with a commitment to upholding and protecting human rights within states and seeking peaceful means of conflict resolution between them – as enshrined in the UN Charter and countless other international agreements. Promoting and protecting pluralism and inclusion is thus a key dimension of any effort to build sustainable peace between states and within diverse groups in society.

The extensive process of global consultation that led to the development of the Principles for Peace identified pluralism as an essential tenet of peace in society. Discussions with traditional and religious peacemakers highlighted respect for difference and common humanity as important elements of peace.

“Peace is not just the silence of guns, peace is the acknowledgement of our common humanity, respect for our differences, and an environment in which all are able to live authentically without fear or worry for their lives.”

Social and political institutions need to accept diverse and multiple identities rather than expecting individuals to assimilate to the predominant identity. Traditional peacemakers emphasised the need to view diversity as enriching and creating common ground, not by seeking to promote a homogenous or exclusive identity, but by working towards a common purpose.

Promoting pluralistic peace processes poses considerable challenges. In today’s world, people live in increasingly diverse and multicultural environments, but many societies are experiencing greater polarisation, exclusion and even xenophobia, rather than inclusion and respect for diversity. Many of these trends have been deliberately manipulated or amplified by social media. Exclusion and marginalisation can trigger and exacerbate conflicts, thwarting the achievement of stable and sustainable peace, and are linked to conflict recurrence. Groupbased inequalities provide powerful grievances that can be used by political entrepreneurs to mobilise for protest or violence. Conversely, the fear of losing status privileges can provoke members of powerful groups to scapegoat the less privileged.

Inclusion beyond representation to inclusive outcomes.

Contemporary peace processes have predominantly sought political settlements and powersharing agreements between belligerent parties, with a strong push to make the overall process more inclusive and representative of society at large. There is a growing body of evidence that the participation of women (and women’s civil society groups) in peace negotiations (and peace operations or policing) contribute to the legitimacy and durability of peace after civil war. Women peacebuilders worldwide are doing critical work to build peace in their communities as well as on the national and international level. But despite the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security in 2000, women are often not recognised or included in formal highlevel processes, or involved at all, meaning that their knowledge and agency does not influence the peace. Similarly, there is evidence that

youth can play an important role in consolidating and maintaining peace. The groundbreaking United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security in 2015 recognised the role young people can and do play if worked with to advancing peace and development.

Inclusion has become practically synonymous with promoting the Women, Peace and Security and the Youth Peace, and Security Agendas. Often, however, inclusion is practised instrumentally by improving representation of under-represented groups and adding diversity to an otherwise identical process focused on elite bargains. This does little to enhance the legitimacy of the process if it is disconnected from a broader and transformative vision for a more pluralistic society. Fulfilling the aspirations of the Women, Peace and Security and the Youth, Peace and Security Agendas and wider efforts to increase representativeness and responsive governance are central to legitimate and sustainable peacemaking. It is important to provide support, visibility and investment to implement these commitments and to the multiple frameworks and action plans for the wider inclusion of all stakeholders, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and Sustainable Development Goal 5: “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

Pluralism does not presuppose the importance of one type of diversity; it acknowledges the varied and multifaceted ways in which particular groups or communities engage with each other. A commitment to a pluralistic social peace also implies two deeper purposes: to empower and protect previously marginalised and silenced groups, and to pave the way for antagonistic relationships to be transformed into peaceful ones and for resolving conflicts and differences.

Minority rights and representation, as enshrined in many peace settlements, have often reflected and reinforced a norm of minimal coexistence (in separate spheres) without sufficient attention to generating social capital that builds bridges between and across communities to foster genuinely pluralistic

South Africa's National Peace Accord

Societies that can sustain peace despite pressures, shocks and setbacks, invest in social institutions that work proactively to promote tolerance and respect across groups. South Africa's 1991 National Peace Accord created a network of structures to address issues related to justice and conflict management through participatory local mediation and regional and national monitoring. As a combined private, civil and public sector initiative, it provided a safety net to safeguard the peace process.

societies. Even in relatively successful peace processes – such as in Northern Ireland – efforts to augment bridging social capital that links different social groups (ethnic, cultural, religious, etc.) have had limited success, especially in political contexts that reinforce existing in-group ties through power sharing.

Mutual respect: the normative case for pluralism.

The ethical value of pluralism entails the idea that the diverse goals, histories, and practices of groups should not only be tolerated, but explicitly acknowledged as worthy of respect and treated with dignity. This means avoiding top-down approaches to peacemaking and/or the paternalistic imposition of particular models. Pluralism also requires great attention to the context of peacemaking efforts, beyond acknowledgment of historical practices that determine how and why power is distributed in a community. A richer understanding of context will focus attention on the collective experience of a community and the processes of participation that inform contemporary political decisions and actions. In conflict-affected societies, prior political experience may have been violent and exclusionary, and awareness of the fault lines in a community's shared present and past is essential to foster a peaceful transformation to a more pluralistic ethic. Ultimately, a commitment to pluralism strengthens the legitimacy of institutions and political processes, as well as reducing frictions that can lead to conflicts.

Increased support and recognition of the agency and determination of civil society actors in challenging circumstances are vital. Meaningful participation by and inclusion of these voices will help to legitimise a peace process both internally and externally. Moreover, they will contribute to the achievement of pluralistic politics and societies, where diversity is embraced, historically marginalised groups and minorities are respected, and women and youth are part of decision-making processes.

Pluralistic peacemaking requires concrete and practical legal, political, economic and social measures, based on a vision for a common future that is understood by all groups in society. Business actors should ensure that their workforces, workplaces, supply and value chains embody a commitment to diversity and pluralism. Civil society groups and political associations must commit to respect diversity and pluralism, with safeguards against discrimination, hate speech and extremist or violent mobilisation. External support to civil society groups should be aligned with adherence to these core principles and safeguard vulnerable groups that have staked their participation in peacemaking on the promises of protection from the international community.

Principle 7: Adopting subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity reorients relations between local actors and other power centres following the logic of “as local as possible, as global as necessary”. It places a central focus on national, subnational and local leadership to drive peace processes that are responsive and accountable to the needs of local communities.

Subsidiarity involves new ways of understanding accountability and responsibility for the successful outcomes of any peace process. Who is responsible for making peace sustainable? How can they be held accountable and to whom? Ultimately, local actors and individuals, including political elites, social groups and business actors, are responsible for the sustainability of peace processes. Each must also acknowledge that they are part of larger political, socio-economic and gendered dynamics that fuelled conflict and tensions in the first place, and that local conflicts and insecurities do not exist in isolation nor emerge in a vacuum.

The idea of “common and differentiated responsibility”, drawn from principles enshrined in global climate conventions, recognises that actors have different capabilities and responsibilities to contribute to peacemaking and different accountability mechanisms for their actions, consistent with the principle of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity requires active, ongoing engagement by international actors to avoid delegating responsibilities without adequate oversight, in order to hold political actors at all levels accountable for their decisions.

Moving decision making closer to communities and away from universal templates for peacemaking can unleash local initiatives for peacemaking, but support and action from other levels of authority are often needed to achieve sustainable and just peacemaking. International and national level authorities have an important role to guarantee just and fair policies for all. They must also ensure that their programmes do not hinder nor override locally legitimate solutions that respect the dignity, security and autonomy of communities.

Implications and recommendations

Recognise the primacy of local leadership in peace processes.

- A commitment to subsidiarity recognises the primacy of local leadership and locally legitimate peacemaking solutions. Respect for subsidiarity seeks to protect peacemaking from both over and

underinvolvement by international actors, characterised on the one hand by irresponsible exits that abandon critical and vulnerable local communities, or on the other by expansive claims to technical knowhow and expertise that ignore local, socially embedded knowledge.

- Subsidiarity recognises that increasing domestic legitimacy often requires reducing the presence or visibility of international actors to enhance local accountability and cultivate context-sensitive solutions.
- The cascading and delegation of initiative from the international to the community level must protect against putting local actors at risk and making them bear the costs of transformative efforts.

Promote pragmatic and hybrid solutions adapted to and embedded in complex local contexts.

- In many places, decentralised or local service delivery (education, basic health care, access to basic needs) based on the principle of subsidiarity and acceptance of hybrid solutions, can be a key building block for legitimising broader peacemaking efforts. These should be incorporated into national-level bargains, especially where the state and national government are seen as inaccessible or dysfunctional. The population must be able to freely voice their concerns to locally accountable authorities, and efforts to build sustainable peace must be monitored, encouraged, and – if necessary – enforced by the international community.
- Taking decisions closer to the people affected by them requires an adaptive approach to peacemaking sensitive to the specific needs of different social, economic and gender groups to participate in decision making at the local level. Peacemakers need to be open to hybrid and locally crafted solutions, while actively working to reconcile the tension between affirming universal norms and standards of justice and equality and respecting the diversity and pluralism of different societies.

Adopt a partnership model to accompany national actors in efforts to build responsible and accountable governance for the common good. The principle of subsidiarity involves a partnership model that translates into concrete actions including:

- supporting national authorities to uphold institutions and initiatives that respect agreements for inclusion, power sharing, political representation and promote fair social and economic arrangements

- assisting the development of a functioning regulatory framework that encourages responsible business actors and investments and helps to overcome historically gendered economic structures
- identifying local structures of power and hierarchies of influence that are embedded in economic, political and gendered dynamics shaping the structure of societal life
- removing obstacles to fair and equitable access to local institutions
- encouraging local civilsociety actors to pledge to uphold pluralism, gender equality and values of respect for all social groups and to adhere to agreed-upon rules of the game for the resolution of conflicts and differences.

Subsidiarity recognises that building sustainable peace involve a complex and interdependent exchange of ideas (and often competing interests) between national elites, business actors, grassroots civilsociety and sub-national actors, and international actors.

- Subsidiarity obliges external actors to approach complex sociopolitical and economic challenges with humility and to create spaces for partnerships as diverse sets of actors (local, national, transnational, private, international) come together to surmount challenges.

Common and differentiated responsibility.

- Local elites, political actors and power holders have a clear responsibility to enshrine a commitment to pluralism in institutional and legal practices, including protection for minority rights (linguistic, religious, gender equality, educational) and equitable access to services for all.
- Civil society, business actors and political associations must have their independence and security guaranteed, while committing to respect diversity and pluralism, with safeguards against hate speech, manipulation by media and political elites, and extremist or violent mobilisation.
- International actors providing support to local and national ones including civil society, business actors and other stakeholders, should take concrete steps to protect vulnerable groups that have invested in transformative peacemaking.

Rationale

The normative vision of subsidiarity: dignity and the common good.

Subsidiarity recognises the importance of different roles and functions for social institutions to promote the flourishing of individuals and communities, human dignity, and pluralism. Subsidiarity is valued not only because it promotes more efficient outcomes, but because its vision mediates between individualist ideas of human dignity and communitarian values of the common good.

A commitment to subsidiarity breaks with the polarising logic of international/outsider versus national/local/insider actors. It acknowledges the complex reality of peacemaking processes and promotes a partnership compact based on more equal relationships that make all actors responsible within particular domains.

Subsidiarity and outside actors.

Agreements must develop locally legitimate solutions (federal, decentralised, layered, nested or traditional), with decisions on the substance of an agreement taken at a level that involves those it affects the most. The principle of subsidiarity incorporates this, with international actors focusing on those tasks that require external support and involvement to succeed.

Efforts to build sustainable peace must be owned and made legitimate at the local level in order to succeed. The UN Secretary-General's 2020 Report to the General Assembly on "Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace" acknowledged that "peace is more sustainable when peacebuilding efforts are locally owned, led and implemented" and the "sustaining peace agenda" places local ownership at the heart of its approach. As experiences in Afghanistan and other places have shown, no amount of international support will matter if the peace process lacks local legitimacy.

Beyond local ownership.

Yet, the practice of local ownership often falls short, and the Principles for Peace consultations revealed limitations to the concept and the practice of local ownership. Discussions on local ownership highlight the potential danger in romanticising the idea that all solutions emerge from civil society and local actors, while all problems come from national governments and international actors. Local actors too need to be accountable to, and responsible for, upholding the Covenant's principles of pluralism, humility and dignity.

Local actors are at the centre of sustaining and building peace and have vital knowledge that determines the success of those efforts, but powerful local players may promote narrow agendas, entrench forms of discrimination toward particular groups (including, but not limited to, gender groups and indigenous communities), and use their influence for exclusionary purposes. Local actors are often divided over the best and most appropriate “local” solutions. These limitations can be overcome through embracing a carefully crafted concept of subsidiarity and enhanced due diligence and conflict and gendersensitivity by external (including business) actors who recognise the need to embed solutions within an acceptable national and international framework.

Local ownership can create an artificial dichotomy between international and local or national actors, while subsidiarity recognises their complex interrelationships and the need for solidarity and co-operation. Most real-world peacemaking is a mix of diverse local and international actors operating at different levels and with different contributions. While local ownership is necessary for success, so is international engagement. In Northern Ireland, sustained international support before, during and after the signing of the agreement was key to progress in the peace process. In the Sudan, by contrast, the peace process has had a high degree of national ownership and a strong gender drive, but the international community was only weakly engaged with the genesis of the agreement and the process, limiting support for their implementation and allowing the vested interests of external actors to predominate.

Subsidiarity also breaks with the assumption – still widely prevalent – that international actors have the technical expertise to analyse a conflict, identify its causes and design interventions based on international best practices, with local actors playing a subordinate or implementing role. This framing of local ownership places the onus for failure on poor implementation, insufficient resources or local spoilers, rather than acknowledging the shortcomings of externally driven solutions.

Subsidiarity is distinct from localisation and devolution.

Localisation involves local actors’ active appropriation of foreign ideas to construct institutions and practices that are congruent with local beliefs and practices. It is inward looking and focused on adapting foreign ideas to local contexts. Subsidiarity, by contrast, is outward looking in its focus on the importance of different levels and relationships between local actors and other centres of power, all of whom are involved in constructing peace.

Subsidiarity also goes beyond the devolution of power and responsibility. While moving decision making closer to the people affected and away from the universal templates for peacemaking is desirable, subsidiarity acknowledges that support and action from other levels of authority are needed to achieve sustainable and just peacemaking. There are many circumstances under which the most local or proximate authority is unable to assume responsibility for a particular function or aspect of peacemaking. This tension is recognised in human rights law, and subsidiarity reduces the risk that a global approach will impose local uniformity at the expense of social pluralism and diversity. While there is a presumption in favour of more local forms of association and decision making, subsidiarity balances the ideas of non-interference and assistance with attention to the broader common good.

Hybrid justice in Afghanistan

Since 2018, the Afghan justice system has provided for alternatives to both detention and incarceration and recognised that few Afghans have faith in the formal justice system. While large-scale international programmes to support informal justice mechanisms have often operated with limited local oversight, local justice mechanisms have had a key role to play. While the return of Taliban rule has doubtless overturned many of these fragile institutions, no durable peace will be built without attention to such hybrid justice mechanisms.

Principle 8: Embracing integrated and hybrid solutions

Embracing integrated and hybrid solutions strives to enhance the local legitimacy of and support for peacemaking initiatives. To do so recognises the latter's complex, context-specific and adaptive nature and the need to improve the horizontal integration of activities by diverse external (international, transnational and regional) actors, to embed solutions within local norms, institutions and traditions and to harmonise short- and long-term processes of transformation.

National governments and political institutions must be responsible and accountable to the population for delivering essential and basic services and representing the aims and aspirations of the entire polity. The development of functioning and efficient institutions is inevitably a hybrid process, intertwined with global and regional developments, shared histories, gender dynamics, and economic, environmental, or geopolitical structures and forces that can exacerbate or help resolve conflicts.

Implications and recommendations

Promote horizontal integration across actors contributing to peacemaking at their different levels of engagement.

- The lack of horizontal integration between different actors, operating along varied time frames and with diverse mandates, has hobbled many prior peacemaking processes. Simple “coordination” or cooperation among actors (security/political/economic/social) and at different levels (international/national/local) cannot overcome conflicting objectives, different understandings of sustainable peace, distinct lines of accountability, or the tension between short- and longer-term time frames. Integrated solutions aim for greater coherence and unity of purpose among peacemaking actors and activities across international, regional and national arenas.

Build on legitimate authorities and institutions that can contribute to peacemaking.

- Working through and broadening the scope and reach of existing informal governance and economic systems can improve service delivery to a wider population –a crucial step towards wider processes of societal transformation.
- Building on and adapting local formal and informal forms of authority and institutions should contribute to developing more inclusive and responsive peacemaking and political processes.
- Traditional and community-based forms of dispute resolution should be carefully meshed with more formal justice and legal mechanisms (for major or serious conflicts or crimes), to avoid parallel systems that serve entrenched social, political and economic interests.

Embrace hybrid solutions.

- Embedding peacemaking in the local context involves developing hybrid solutions in which formal and informal institutions and practices can coexist, overlap and intertwine, with differing levels of legitimacy and authority, especially where formal institutions are fragile and social norms and institutions are relatively strong and legitimate.

- Hybrid arrangements are not just a bargaining compromise between the proposals and preferences of international and local actors but should be coconstructed and grounded in locally legitimate norms and values that also respect global norms.
- Hybrid solutions in different issue areas (security, justice, economics, dispute resolution, and representation) are not necessarily a panacea; they must be carefully constructed to ensure that they are transparent, equitable and fair to enhance the sustainability and legitimacy of peacemaking initiatives, and as part of a commitment to subsidiarity.

Tailor programming and financing to adaptive processes and flexible time frames.

- Most peacemaking support is channelled through development assistance frameworks that assume linear processes or theories of change and relatively tight sequencing of activities. This often does not allow for sufficient local input or for adaptation to a complex, dynamic environment.
- Support mechanisms that respect both short and longterm sequencing of programmes should nevertheless facilitate adaptation based on continuous input and reflexive learning to offer creative and sustained solutions.

Rationale

All political, social, legal and economic arrangements – even in long-established states and societies – are shaped by a complex blend of local context, institutions and history as well as broader norms, practices and institutional arrangements. Processes of political, social and economic transformations cannot ever be fully preordained or designed. Embracing hybrid solutions that emerge through inclusive political and social processes that respect the principles of dignity, solidarity and humility and are embedded in local norms and institutions can be a key element in adaptive peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Hybrid forms of power sharing exist beneath the surface in most political systems, responding to the particular fault lines of the society in which they operate. Embracing integrated and hybrid solutions seeks to avoid both maladapted “onesizefitsall” political strategies and the reinforcement of historically unjust local structures and practices through too much deference to “the local”. It recognises that the reality on the ground is often a complex entanglement of local interests and initiatives with those of global actors.

Context matters: integrated and hybrid institutional solutions.

All political, social, legal and economic arrangements involve a complex mix of shared and overlapping forms of authority. Even superficial knowledge of different systems of political representation, justice and legal institutions, or varieties of open economies, highlights the diverse range of common elements that have been moulded and shaped over time by local norms, traditions and historical experiences. Ideas such as

“representative government,” “human rights,” or “liberal economies” have a common core, but are not monolithic, with countries around the world fusing such things as commonlaw and civilcode justice systems, various forms of representation (proportional, direct, indirect, etc.), and different relationships between the state and the economy. The cultural, social, economic and historical contexts in which efforts to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies are embedded greatly affect the legitimacy and effectiveness of these efforts. Transplanting particular models and templates of institutions without adaptation is not feasible.

Legal entanglements in Liberia

Extensive efforts to rebuild and reform the legal system in Liberia, a country that possessed a hybrid justice system combining formal and informal processes, failed to build trust in formal justice delivery. Liberians found the formal judicial system inaccessible and unfathomable, and serving the interests of powerful and wealthy actors who could manipulate it in their favour.

Actor adaptation and identifying legitimate authorities.

The actors in conflict-affected and fragile settings evolve over time. Throughout a conflict and peace process, mobilised groups may assume the form of social movements, armed groups and/or political parties (or several at once), and business actors can be involved in both illicit and licit activities. A peace agreement is an important moment to transform these actors’ roles and identities, with fundamental implications for the interests and importance of different groups in conflict. Careful attention must be paid to fostering their long-term interest in and commitment to sustainable and pluralistic peace in society. The exclusion of some non-state armed groups or criminal actors to achieve short-term stability typically backfires. International actors, often with short-term engagements or little local knowledge, can find it challenging to grasp these dynamics and must operate with strategic courage, due diligence and patience to draw upon multiple reliable sources of knowledge from local communities.

The Principles for Peace consultations highlighted the frequent exclusion of actors the local population regard as influencing the prospects for sustainable peace, such as religious and traditional leaders, who are often not sufficiently involved in peace processes. The displacement of customary and legitimate authorities as part of a centralising statebuilding project risks creating grievances that contribute to further cycles of instability. Peacemaking should work through and accompany existing informal governance and economic systems to improve service delivery and uphold locally legitimate dispute resolution mechanisms as part of a process of societal transformation, guided by an analysis of their potentially exclusionary or coercive nature.

Linear approaches in a non-linear world.

Support for peacemaking remains largely driven by a “deliberate design approach” according to a sequential and linear template. International financing also often follows OECD-DAC guidelines for development assistance, which privilege log-frames and relatively simple and linear results frameworks. These assumptions tend not to fit well with complex conflict-affected and fragile situations that are characterised by non-linear and unpredictable dynamics highly dependent on constellations of multiple actors and configurations of power. The sequencing of activities and programmes should also be able to adapt to feedback loops and non-linear processes that require the revisiting and recalibration of policies, targets and objectives.

Hybrid service delivery.

Hybrid solutions can be a practical way to generate output legitimacy. Hybrid governance forms include organisational arrangements that incorporate local institutions and organisations to fill gaps in state capacity in such areas as health care, education, or other state functions. Such arrangements, whether “from below” (fees for services), or “from above” contributions (salary supplements for state officials) can, however, have negative distributional effects and marginalise the disadvantaged, and

Hybrid service delivery in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, as well as major donors, paid salary supplements to staff to compensate them for additional work and encourage staff retention. The practice created some dependencies and was difficult to monitor. Practical hybrid solutions for service delivery can thus inadvertently favour certain interests or actors and inhibit the development of state capacity. While often a necessity, they must be coupled with longer-term institutional transformation efforts.

some of these are seen as more legitimate than others. Hybrid service delivery must be advocated for carefully and requires understanding how public/private formal/informal institutions can be harnessed to support peacemaking efforts to develop more inclusive political processes, create a safe and secure environment, and provide essential services to a wider population.

Section III. Frontiers for Peacemaking

The Principles for Peace Initiative has identified three additional forward-looking frontiers that have great potential to upset or facilitate efforts to move towards sustainable peacemaking. They touch upon issues of economic well-being, the digital world and environmental crises. Across all of these is a common concern with sustaining engagements. Each section below highlights these challenges and how the Covenant's principles can change the narrative. They also sketch some of the initial programmatic and policy implications that will shape engagements with stakeholders in these communities to realise the broader potential of the Peacemaking Covenant.

The digital space and peace

The 21st-century digital space is integral to modern political, economic and social life worldwide. Digital technologies transcend geographical borders and open new venues for global connection and cooperation, with enormous potential to develop new ideas and create new spaces of encounters and empowerment. They also, however, bring new challenges, including amplifying political polarisation and instability within and across borders, spreading misinformation and cybersexism, compromising data privacy, and facilitating mass surveillance.

Social media and political violence

Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia shows that the algorithms of social media platforms and their content-ranking systems have promoted the spread of extreme or, often, false information. As social media penetration in Africa increased after 2014, levels of conflict that had been declining since 2000 started to increase. After Facebook's 2011 launch in Myanmar, it quickly became a platform for the spread of hate speech and misinformation against the Rohingya population.

Many governments and business actors are increasingly cooperating and taking significant steps to provide digital security in cyberspace. Responses to date have mostly taken the form of state-led regulations and legal procedures, but the borderless nature of the digital space makes accountability and responsibility difficult to uphold. Much more work is needed at all levels and in all jurisdictions, and in particular with business actors, to ensure that peace, humanitarian and development interventions can meet the challenges of the digital era.

The Peacemaking Covenant aims to ensure that digital technologies are harnessed as instruments to positively influence the evolution of contemporary peacemaking, while also protecting against abuse and misuse by:

- Encouraging actors involved in peace processes to engage directly with businesses and technology companies to ensure that the tools they champion support consolidation of a pluralistic society and the public interest and prevent manipulation, extremism, hate speech and sexism in the digital space.
- Supporting and exploring innovative use of practical PeaceTech tools to: 1) transform conflict dynamics by incentivising groups to seek common ground; 2) encourage wider inclusion in processes of negotiation and intergroup dialogue to complement power sharing with a focus on responsibility sharing to promote the common good; and 3) gauge sentiments of different groups in society relating to key concerns and factors in the peace process and to seek pluralistic outcomes in society.
- Involving influential technology companies and leaders, as well as local businesses and influencers, to support legitimate peace processes and counter misinformation and bridge digital divides, by acknowledging the role and work of local institutions and respecting and protecting local priorities, specificities and concerns.
- Supporting states and institutions that have robust regulatory frameworks protecting privacy and supporting the public interest in cyberspace to engage with local actors, including business actors, to establish appropriate protection safeguards and frameworks based on good global standards and practices such as the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Sharing expertise and technologies, especially related to artificial intelligence (AI) and managing “big data” for example, to create new instruments and innovative tools to provide early warning of conflicts and contribute to sustainable peacemaking, including in the political, social, environmental and economic domains.
- Ensuring that data sharing for humanitarian and development purposes follows international standards that protect the interests of the people

to whom the data belong and supporting capacity building in national statistical offices of affected states.

- Providing peacemakers, including mediators, with appropriate and context sensitive PeaceTech tools to engage with and analyse the interests and actions of different communities represented in the digital space.

Rationale

Digital spaces and technologies, such as social media platforms, artificial intelligence and accessible communication networks, provide opportunities to build bonds and bridges between and across different social groups to enhance trust, reduce friction and resolve conflicts peacefully. They can also accelerate economic development and social transformation. The expansion or effacement of borders in a digital world provides opportunities to influence social and political orders in novel – and sometimes unsettling – ways. The role of large technology companies, or even private individuals with significant political and economic capital, cannot be underestimated.

Cyberattacks in the humanitarian space

The unprecedented cyberattack at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in February 2022, which compromised the data of more than 500 000 of their beneficiaries, shows how important is for international humanitarian actors to strengthen their digital security.

The digital revolution, however, also poses grave challenges to societal and political stability by reinforcing polarising beliefs and biases and by sowing chaos and insecurity. Democratic institutions and election processes can be undermined by the abuse of social media, misinformation and disinformation, and intergroup tensions inflamed by fake news. Cyberviolence against women and girls directly affects their sense of safety in the physical world and hampers their ability to participate fully in public life. Countering this requires investments in “digital literacy” and safeguarding, and support to multiple, local, independent and public interest media sources, as well as monitoring of disinformation and hate speech.

The mishandling or abuse of access to personal data, especially of vulnerable people and groups, represents a potential threat to sustainable peacemaking, whether by governments or by private or nongovernmental actors.

Curtailling access to digital spaces has become a powerful means by which governments silence their critics and punish citizens. At least 50 Internet shutdowns in 21 countries were documented in the first half of 2021 alone.

Digital innovation has great potential to catalyse economic growth, contribute towards sustainable solutions to developmental and environmental challenges and open new avenues for foreign investments in conflict-affected or fragile settings. Large parts of the world do not enjoy fair access to digital technologies, however, and this “digital divide” can entrench already existing privileged access and exacerbate existing tensions and social and economic inequalities, unless specific efforts are undertaken to make the benefits of the digital revolution more widely available.

The environment and peace

Peace is unsustainable without a sustainable biosphere. The Peacemaking Covenant recognises that peace, development and environmental sustainability are inseparably intertwined. Human societies have found many cooperative solutions to managing shared environmental resources, and human civilisation must reconcile economic growth and human advancement with the physical limits of our biosphere and ecosystems.

Violent conflict erodes the adaptive capacity and resilience of states and societies to manage the effects of the climate crisis and environmental degradation. Conversely, the effects of the climate crisis and environmental degradation erode societal resilience and increase vulnerability to conflict and violence. These effects can be exacerbated by poorly designed

Environmental peace and collective action in Latin America

The idea of peace in Latin America has historically been associated with peace with nature. This has always been the case among indigenous and farming communities, but climate change is increasingly affecting urban lives. From vida sabrosa in black communities in Colombia, to el buen vivir, sumac kawsay, life in plentitude and living well of indigenous and farming communities, these ideas refer to the ideal realization of the planet in dialogue with people as the foundation of pursuing dignified lives in balance and harmony. It proposes a nonlinear reading of reality and social change and understanding the importance of the “common good” and collective impact as a guide for social, political, economic, cultural and even spiritual action of peoples. It implies shared responsibility and cooperation between communities and respect for the natural world. Similar concepts are shared by all native peoples of the region, from the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina, to the Amazonian and Andean people of Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela.

adaptation and mitigation strategies. In many conflict-affected or fragile settings these challenges are everyday realities, not abstractions, and the climate crisis and overexploitation of natural resources has a direct and severe (and gendered) impact on vulnerable communities.

Recognising that existing environmental challenges exacerbate inequalities and the risk of conflicts over land, water, food, energy and other resources, peacemakers need to reinforce the capacity of social institutions to adapt to maintain peace, security, and socio-economic functionality under stress.

Actions to maximise the impact of these efforts should include:

- integrating an understanding of how the climate crisis and environmental degradation exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and stresses on communities into conflict analysis and conflict prevention, mediation, and peacemaking planning and assessments
- examining how solutions to environmental challenges can contribute to preventing or resolving conflicts, through such things as cooperation on the management of shared resources
- ensuring that peace operations and peacemaking programmes include specific support for building resilience and adaptability to the climate crisis and the adoption of sustainable environmental strategies
- supporting national actors and political leaders to adopt locally appropriate, gender-responsive and sustainable policies and investments in renewable and non-renewable resources and ensure equitable distribution of the benefits of natural resource exploitation.

Rationale

The accelerating impact of the climate crisis and global warming must be central to peacemakers' programmes and policies. While unfolding on a longer time scale and with worldwide implications, the climate crisis has profound implications for all aspects of peacemaking and requires a shift towards understanding the spaces humans inhabit (local to global) as integrated and interdependent systems of people and nature. Extreme weather, environmental degradation, resource scarcities and climate-induced displacement will only be the most visible manifestations of the conflict-inducing crises that states and communities face. Sustainable peacemaking must increase the resilience

of communities to these shocks and ensure that policies and programmes are coherent with an environmentally sustainable future for all.

The Peacemaking Covenant acknowledges that peace, development, and environmental sustainability are inseparably intertwined, and that peacemaking, sustainable environmental policies and a sustainable biosphere are mutually interdependent. Local efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of the climate crisis will achieve little and may reinforce existing global inequalities if not coupled with strong global efforts to achieve netzero emissions. In this case, subsidiarity requires acting at the global level and in advanced industrial states as well as locally in conflict-affected and fragile states. Existing international agreements, including the Sustainable Development Goals and Sustaining Peace resolutions, as well as the Paris Agreement, provide a legitimate global framework for cooperation and collaboration at the climate-peace nexus but are only a starting point.

The urgency of a transition to a netzero future underlines the need to acknowledge that a significant and rapid transformation away from fossil fuels comes with a short-term risk of political and social insecurity and can incite or ignite conflict. Mitigation measures will encounter strong resistance from some quarters and must be conflict sensitive.

A vast array of international and bilateral efforts – some with considerable financial backing – has already been launched in the environmental arena. The role of peacemakers is to ensure that their own efforts are coherent with environmentally sound peacebuilding and add value to these initiatives. Likewise, as international environmental efforts are scaled up, policy makers must ensure that their programmes do not undermine often-fragile peace and political settlements and that the burdens of adjustment and change are shared fairly.

The economy and peace

Economic issues – global and local – are at the root of many contemporary conflicts and are crucial to their long-term resolution. Economic issues are also inextricably entwined with national, regional and global political, social and gender dynamics, especially when state institutions and revenues have been a means to enrich or benefit particular social groups. But the economic dimensions of peacemaking and political economy analyses are often deferred to later phases of conflict management or treated as distinct from the political and social dimensions of peacemaking, despite being an important source of ongoing conflict and competition.

Conflicts also create war economies with new winners and losers, meshing local and global economic interests with elite networks, many of which have a strong interest in the distributional effects of any peace agreement. A post-conflict environment provides rich opportunities for criminal groups and illicit economic actors, often with links to armed groups or state elites. These powerful interests cannot be left aside as they affect everything from macroeconomic policies, infrastructure development, the provision of services, gendered access to land or employment and the distribution of state revenues from natural resources.

Conflict-affected and fragile states often have limited fiscal and revenue-generating capacities, magnifying the role of the business sector (local and transnational) in creating value and opportunities and providing basic services. Harnessing these limitations through greater advocacy and engagement with business actors can help sensitise them and their political constituencies to the importance of their role in building peace and stability and to the need for conflict and gendersensitive investment and commercial decisions. Shared norms, such as the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, can provide a framework for deeper engagement.

Today, a broader array of international development, financial and investment institutions are involved in peacemaking efforts, but more is needed to overcome the frequent misalignment of their efforts with the work of peacemakers. Sustainable development and sustainable peace considerations must advance in tandem and be mainstreamed throughout the process. Steps towards this could include:

- moving from “conflict-sensitive” to “peace-responsive” international and foreign direct investment and development assistance, in cooperation with international development banks and financial institutions
- understanding the conditions shaping effective involvement of economic actors in peacemaking and delivering the economic foundations of peace to identify the sectors and companies more likely and able to support peace-positive investments and activities
- encouraging investment in local human and social capital, and institutions and enterprises that can flourish independently over the longer term, especially in regions where youth are prone to recruitment into criminal organisations, violent extremism or illicit activities linked to war economies

- ensuring that the local economy can respond to economic shocks in a manner that protects local communities and institutions, by establishing legal and administrative frameworks that protect investments and livelihoods and minimise corruption and fraud at all levels
- establishing a rules-based market that respects human rights, facilitates the economic inclusion of marginalised groups and contributes to decent labour opportunities to provide sustainable alternatives to informal, illegal and criminal market activities
- encouraging systematic efforts to address structural inequalities and access to economic opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- supporting the establishment of a basic social safety net for the population that is able to provide services such as health care and equal opportunities to access education and training
- supporting the development of a robust transportation and technological infrastructure to better integrate distant regions into national and international trade networks
- engaging with constructively oriented diaspora communities to facilitate their economic support and investment in reconstruction and sustainable development.

Rationale

International and private sector investment is often promoted as a panacea for peacemaking, based on the idea that development and growth will lead to peace and stability. This hands-off vision minimises the more direct positive – and negative – role that business actors can play in the entire process of peacemaking.

Although their actions can directly advance sustainable peace, businesses' practices that are not conflict- nor gender-sensitive, and that do not follow due diligence and appropriate investment rules and practices, can exacerbate intercommunal and state-society tensions and fuel unrest, instead of contributing to dialogue and confidence building.

The transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy is challenging, given the opportunities created by the existence of large-scale illicit or criminal activities

and networks. “Crowding out” such large-scale activities through promotion of legal markets and opportunities to provide people with licit opportunities for income, as well as enforcement against illicit activities, are central to stifling criminal and armed group activity. The domestic business community has a particularly important role to play in this regard and must also follow guiding principles on best practices for business and human rights.

The role of natural and renewable resource exploitation, including who accesses, controls, or profits from it, is a critical dimension of sustainable peacemaking. In conflict-affected counties, where human capital and other forms of investment may be scarce, the exploitation of natural or prominent renewable resources becomes an important revenue source for the state, which can be captured soon after violence ceases – or even as violence continues. Given the relatively great importance for state revenues, opportunities for corruption and unsustainable exploitation exist, and tensions often arise between the interests of local communities (who often face the negative externalities from resource exploitation) and revenue-seeking national authorities or multinational corporations. Natural and renewable resource exploitation is a sensitive economic sector that needs to be monitored carefully. While advances in corporate social responsibility and due diligence have been made, major actors (including international financial institutions and multinational corporations) often do not fully incorporate local interests or concerns around equitable distribution and shared benefits for the common good in their decisions.

The principle of subsidiarity can help address this issue by encouraging and supporting legitimate partnerships with diverse actors, including local, national, regional, international and business sectors. This differs from top-down approaches where development partners or business actors align with state institutions that have authority over local and civil society actors, often inhibiting genuinely inclusive ownership. Subsidiarity in economic terms can promote more efficient outcomes, while also mediating between individual and local community needs and interests and the broader common good. It can help align sustainable economic development policies with sustainable peacemaking programmes.

Section IV: Implementing the Peacemaking Covenant

The Peacemaking Covenant is a living initiative – not a report to gather dust. Its principles need to be implemented in practice and to inform appropriate policies and programmes. The Principles for Peace follow-on mechanism will catalyse efforts to gain adherence and endorsement of the Covenant and its principles. The follow-on mechanism will also serve as a custodian of the Covenant and the partnerships around it. Its ultimate success will depend on renewed commitment, anchoring in the international system and continuous engagement to chart a path to lasting peace.

The Covenant's eight principles are a broad guide to action not bound to any particular time, place or peacemaker. Their practical implementation in concrete policies and practices through the cocreation of codes of conduct or practical guidance will require careful reflection and tailoring to the specific settings in which different peacemaking actors operate.

Following its launch, the Covenant will be presented in various forums to allow states and other stakeholders to pledge their support for the adoption and implementation of its principles. Efforts will promote uptake and anchoring of the Principles and the Covenant throughout the international system and regional bodies, and among key global actors.

The overall objective will be to work closely with, and draw deeply upon, policymakers' and practitioners' experiences and insights to cocreate practical guidance and/or codes of conduct to pinpoint the specific ways in which a commitment to the Peacemaking Covenant can catalyse real change in peacemaking efforts. The goal is to move from what should be done to how it can be achieved concretely; from rethinking principles to overcoming implementation challenges.

The launch of the Peacemaking Covenant is accompanied by the establishment of a Principles for Peace follow-on and implementation mechanism to catalyse global, regional, and local efforts to build support and buy-in, as well as to institutionalise, monitor and track the principles and the quality of peace processes. The Principles for Peace mechanism will maintain the participatory, collective and evidence-based nature of the effort behind the Covenant and will serve as the custodian and curator of the Covenant to bridge the knowledge-practice gap.

The “howto” implications of the principles will vary according to the issues at stake and the actors involved in each context. The Principles for Peace follow-on mechanism will support efforts to embed the Covenant in national and/or local processes and assist in the cocreation of guidance and tools for relevant stakeholders in different constituencies and settings. The Covenant will work with those actors engaged in its practical implementation towards the longer-term objective of enhancing the accountability and sustainability of peacemaking at all levels.

Monitoring and measurement of the quality of peace processes, uptake and adherence to the Covenant and its principles will include self-assessment and independent tools for different stakeholders, as well as overall assessments of peace processes and their outcomes. This will include periodic reviews and flagship reports.

Annex I: Methodology and process

Introduction

The Principles for Peace initiative was conceived to fundamentally rethink the way peace processes are conceived and implemented and to establish a coherent set of principles, informal norms and guidance for how to structure, sequence and build more inclusive and sustainable peace processes. These standards and principles were to accomplish three goals: to become a mechanism to generate greater legitimacy, accountability and long-term oversight of peace processes and their subsequent implementation; to shape the incentives of national and international actors engaged in peacemaking and peacebuilding interventions; and to deliver strategic coherence to achieve sustainable peace outcomes.

The task of designing a set of Principles for Peace that resonate globally, across different types of conflict and for different actors required a deep and iterative participatory approach. The principles must be shaped by complementary processes that blend extensive local inputs and lived experiences of conflict and peacemaking with cutting edge research and expert analysis. They must also be continually refined and validated so that what emerges is politically and practically feasible. Only then could the principles hope to respond to the need for a fundamental and comprehensive evolution in how all actors with a stake in peace think about and approach peacemaking processes, be they governments, local community and civil society groups, everyday citizens, armed actors, national elites, the media, private sectors actors, international agencies, or donor countries.

This document outlines the methodology behind the process, the main features of consultations and engagement with different constituencies and the key steps in the final articulation of the Peacemaking Covenant and the Principles for Peace.¹

1 This document is a linear presentation of what was fundamentally a non-linear, iterative process with various parallel processes of articulation and rearticulation. The consultations and research pieces highlighted serve to illustrate the iterative process, and do not provide an exhaustive account. Please refer to our website for a full list of all consultations and research.

Organisational structure

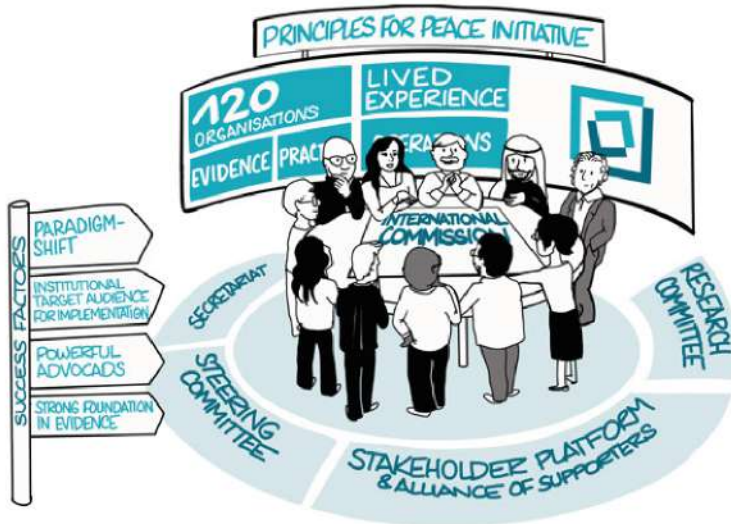


Figure 1. Organisational set-up of the Principles for Peace initiative

The initiative was spearheaded by the International Commission on Inclusive Peace (ICIP), whose members represent a geographic balance and a diversity of experiences. The commission provided thought leadership and led the global consultation with the Principles for Peace secretariat process to develop new international Principles for Peace over two years. The ICIP was explicitly and deliberately a listening commission. Its work focused on global political engagements that sought to give prominence to local perspectives, lived experiences and everyday aspirations for peace. Members of the commission were in frequent contact and convened seven times over two years to take stock of the results of the consultations, research inputs, and findings from global consultations. Commissioners also participated in global, regional and country consultations, including country and regional visits in Jordan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala, the Philippines and Burundi to meet national leadership, relevant policy makers and experts to discuss and validate the principles.

The work of the ICIP was supported by an independent secretariat, hosted at the Interpeace headquarters in Geneva. The secretariat and the ICIP were supported by three enabling bodies. The stakeholder platform included diverse organisations and networks spanning the conflict space to test and hone the

themes emerging from the design process. A research committee was established to support the design and production of knowledge products and act as a critical sounding board and peer review body. An evidence consortium, consisting of leading research organisations with expertise in specific relevant thematic fields, further surveyed existing research on and practical experiences with the principles. Finally, the initiative was bolstered by the support of a ministerial level steering committee with representatives from the governments of Germany and Sweden and a representative of the host organisation, Interpeace. The entire architecture and process were generously supported and accompanied by the Governments of Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland and by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Stakeholder platform

The stakeholder platform brought together representatives of local, regional and international organisations working in the wider peace ecosystem, research institutes, private sector entities and other relevant networks. It accompanied the work of the ICIP throughout by providing a sounding board in the process of principle development. Members of the stakeholder platform had an integral role in the global consultative process, with more than 20 member organisations co-convening the work along different thematic tracks, carrying out in-country consultations for the initiative, conducting in-depth contextual and thematic studies and actively participating in workshops to provide feedback on early drafts of the Peacemaking Covenant.² Nearly all the work of the initiative was carried out in collaboration with different members of the stakeholder platform who shared the cost of the research and the consultations. The stakeholder platform thus enabled and realised the participatory process and was instrumental in amplifying the outreach and advocacy of the initiative.



Figure 2. Members of the Principles for Peace Stakeholder Platform

² Please refer to the website for a full list of consultations and studies carried out by members of the stakeholder platform.

The platform initially included 33 core members, and by November 2022 it had expanded to 43 members and 120 affiliated organisations. Members were diverse, including local and international organisations, practitioners, researchers, donor representatives, youth groups and women's groups. Beyond its work in the global participatory process, the platform met five times over the course of the initiative, providing important moments of reflection and critical review by ensuring that the emerging principles and policy proposals reflected the practical considerations and lessons learnt by practitioner organisations in different contexts.³

Research committee

The Principles for Peace research committee served as a sounding board and peer review body to accompany and support the work of the International Commission on Inclusive Peace and to anchor the emerging principles in evidence-based research. The research committee reviewed and validated research products and outputs and provided overall guidance to the initiative. Members of the committee also contributed by providing input papers to address gaps identified through the iterative process that provided a foundation for the commission's discussions and consultations. Research committee members were selected for their broad geographic and thematic representation, with a mix of senior and early career scholars covering diverse topics pertaining to the practical and policy aspects of peace and conflict. They represented leading academic institutions, think-tanks and research organisations engaged in studying, working with or advising on engagement with peace processes.⁴

Evidence consortium

With the support of the German Federal Foreign Office, a specialised evidence consortium was also established, consisting of research organisations with expertise in specific relevant thematic fields. They were then mandated to

³ There was overlap between the evidence consortium and the stakeholder platform. The purposes of the stakeholder platform were to provide a sounding board for the work of the ICIP, to ensure that practical considerations were duly considered and to provide a space where both practitioners and researchers would meet. Members of the evidence consortium, meanwhile, led the research process on specific themes. Many members of the evidence consortium were also part of the stakeholder platform. Similarly, many organisations that were members of the stakeholder platform were targeted for consultations as a part of a specific constituency or community of practice (for instance mediators).

⁴ See our website for the members of the research committee.

further survey existing research and practical experiences on the initial thematic issue areas. Their work helped create the knowledge base on peacebuilding and peacemaking experiences that could provide material for reflection and guidance to catalyse change among practitioners, governments and researchers. It aimed to bridge the gap between scholarly research and practice in the field and to ensure that the Principles for Peace Peacemaking Covenant was rooted in a solid evidence and analysis base.

Both the evidence consortium and the stakeholder platform helped create a space for conversation between researchers and practitioners to anchor the principles in research, practice and the lived experiences of people affected by conflict. In selecting partner organisations, the secretariat prioritised diverse thematic expertise in relation to the emergent themes identified through the initial consultation and desk reviews. The members of the evidence consortium, in addition to the individual scholars who collaborated with the initiative, represented cutting edge thinking in their respective thematic areas. Their involvement ensured the initiative acknowledged and valorised the positive experiences of the field, building upon already existing bodies of knowledge without “reinventing the wheel”. They also played an important part in building support for and broader ownership of the principles, to contribute towards the wider aim of shifting policies and practices of peacemaking.

Overview of the approach

With this infrastructure, the initiative worked through three complementary, multi-stakeholder and iterative approaches. These three are best considered as “anchors”, safeguarding the procedural comprehensiveness and quality of the principles’ incremental design and articulation. The three anchors were

1. Consultations with local, regional and global members of civil society (including youth and women peacebuilders, and traditional and religious peacemakers), parliamentarians, non-state armed groups, as well as with ordinary citizens directly affected by conflict, to elicit genuine societal perspectives. This work was led by members of the stakeholder platform.

- Carrying out cutting edge research to anchor the process in evidence.
2. This was guided by the evidence consortium and leading peace and conflict scholars, as well as the research committee comprising eminent scholars to provide expert inputs and peer review of emerging themes and principles.

3. Navigating operational dilemmas and realpolitik considerations by soliciting expertise from a stakeholder platform of more than 120 practitioner organisations in the field of peacemaking, conflict resolution and peace-building and drawing from the high-level political experiences of the members of the International Commission on Inclusive Peace itself.

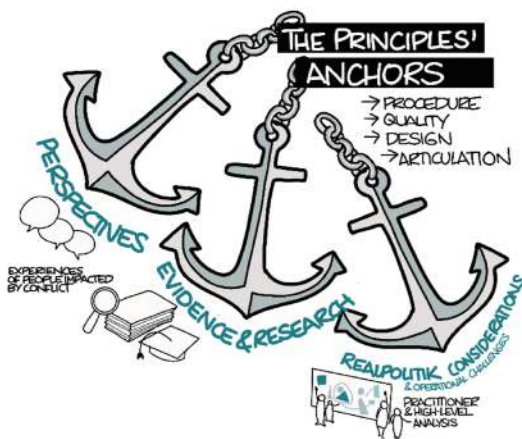


Figure 3. Three sources of knowledge anchoring the design process

This exercise of evidence building ensured the methodology was deliberative and inclusive, reflecting the initiative's core belief that addressing today's peacemaking challenges requires engagement by the broadest spectrum of relevant actors.

The multipronged approach followed the logic of grounded theory,⁵ bringing together different experiences and perspectives on how to build peace via deep and iterative consultations with a wide and diverse network of organisations and individuals, ranging from those at the highest political levels to everyday citizens. As a result, the ultimate articulation of the Principles for Peace emerged from a genuinely participatory and multi-stakeholder process.

The process followed three iterative phases (Figure 3). These are described in depth in the rest of this chapter.

5 Grounded theory “begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis” (Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 2nd edition (London: Sage Publications, 2014), p. 1).

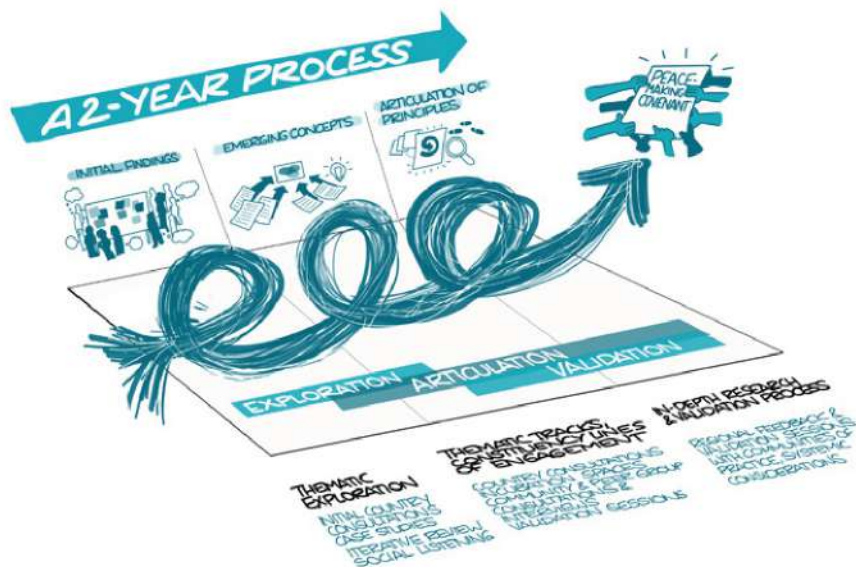


Figure 3. The iterative development of the principles

Phase 1: Initial Thematic Exploration

The process of development of the Principles for Peace began with an thorough evidence mapping exercise conducted by the secretariat to identify shortcomings in the current peacebuilding ecosystem. This entailed the systematic review of 270 articles and reports.⁶ In addition, a series of in-depth case studies of past peacebuilding processes were conducted in early 2021, with Inclusive Peace leading the work on a study of the Aceh peace process in Indonesia, while Trias produced case studies in the contexts of Northern Ireland and the Sudan.

The initial country case studies were complemented by a process of consultation with local stakeholders led by Search for Common Ground in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, Syria, Yemen⁷ and by International Alert in Ukraine and Nigeria. These were designed to uncover the “positive core” of peace (“What does peace mean to you?”), to assess the “challenges and fears” (“What are the current challenges facing your community?”), to envision peoples’ “hopes and aspirations for the

6 This would grow to more than 700 articles and reports reviewed for the different knowledge products of the initiative by the end of 2022.

7 Available at: <https://principlesforpeace.org/resources/principles-for-peace-local-insights-on-building-lasting-peace/>

future” (“What do your aspirations for peace look like?”), and to design “how to get there” (“What should a peaceful society deliver for you, personally?”). The consultations followed a detailed facilitator handbook that clarified the scope of the research, key aspects of the Principles for Peace initiative, an overview of the appreciative inquiry methodology and guidance on safe and ethical evidence generation.⁸ In bringing people together for the consultation, careful consideration was given to ensure that the voices of those who are rarely heard in peace processes were included. To maintain conflict sensitivity, and because focus group discussion reflected broader societal power dynamics, separate consultations were conducted for members of conflicting groups, and sometimes participants were divided by gender and age to encourage a freer exchange of views.

Another method used was social listening.⁹ This entailed analysing publicly available data to gain insights into everyday online conversations around a topic. The methodology allows for identification of resonant themes and patterns of behaviour among key individuals and of the online structures through which they communicate and operate. This approach gathered and analysed more than 93 000 individuals’ insights on peace processes.

Thematic tracks and constituency lines of engagement

Thematic lines of consultation

Multiple initial themes emerged through this exploration. At the first meeting of the international commission in January 2021, findings from the global consultations and an initial literature review were presented as background material for discussion. The aim of the conversation was to identify thematic tracks to guide the work of the Commission. This led to six initial themes for further development that reflected the three anchors behind the design – they were based on genuine societal perspectives, rooted in evidence and able to navigate realpolitik considerations and operational challenges. These themes were:

1. sustainability
2. local ownership and responsibility
3. stabilisation and security actors
4. pluralism and inclusion

8 Appreciative inquiry gives attention to people’s stories, experiences, and interpretations about the past and present, to inform the future (facilitator handbook).

9 Nigam, Dambanemuya, Joshi, Chawla. 2017. Harvesting Social Signals to Inform Peace Processes Implementation and Monitoring. Big Data 5(4).

5. institutionalisation, tools and monitoring
6. values and cultural integrity.

To situate these themes within current peace and conflict realities, partnerships were formed to begin a process of co-convening.

- On questions of sustainability, the initiative partnered with the United Nations Development Programme and explored the interconnections of humanitarian action development aid and peace with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.
- A series of consultations engaging peace activists and practitioners working in different country contexts on the theme of local ownership was co-designed with Peace Direct and organised through the Platform4Dialogue. The series of three consultations brought together more than 360 people from more than 45 countries.
- On stabilisation, the Principles for Peace initiative drew upon the consultative process of the Rethinking Stability initiative at Interpeace, which allowed for mutually beneficial cross fertilisation between the two initiatives.
- On security actors, two partnerships served as avenues for exploration. The Centre for the Study of Armed Groups at the Overseas Development Institute convened a group of experts on the study of non-state armed actors and consulted directly with members of non-state armed groups. The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies explored the role of security actors through a series of six consultations focused on different angles of the question including politics, spirituality, social media and disinformation, the role of children in conflict, and the security sector more widely.
- A deeper interrogation into the meaning and concepts behind pluralism was initiated in collaboration with the Global Center for Pluralism.
- Regarding questions of institutionalisation, particularly as it relates to maximising the prospects for success, a partnership was formed with the Centre on Conflict, Development & Peacebuilding at the Geneva Graduate Institute.

- In terms of tools and monitoring, an initial exploration of issues relating to measuring peace, as well as potential strategies for monitoring, was carried out by the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at the University of San Diego.

Constituency lines of consultation

In addition to the thematic tracks of the commission's work, the ICIP and the secretariat considered it important to have dedicated lines of engagement with key constituencies and stakeholder groups. This targeted engagement enabled the principles to build on and contribute to the ongoing work on policy agendas such as those on Youth, Peace and Security and Women, Peace and Security. It also ensured that the perspectives of key stakeholders who are often not involved in shaping policies could influence the development of the Principles for Peace. This will increase the chances of uptake across the peace and security community and beyond. Moreover, engagement with these constituencies contributed to avoiding the "siloing" of different thematic tracks through cross-cutting considerations.

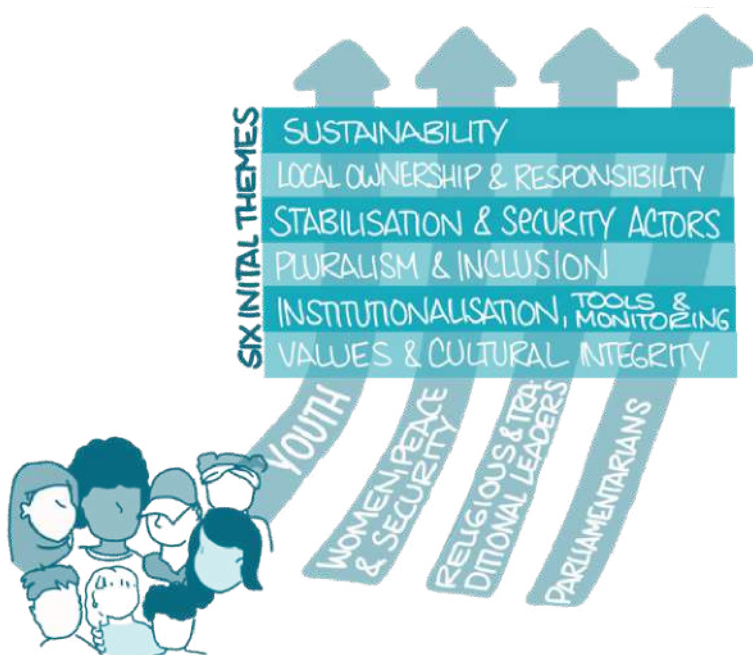


Figure 4. Constituency lines of consultation

As with the thematic work, the initiative again formed partnerships for co-convening.

Through a two-part dialogue co-organised with Search for Common Ground, young practitioners, activists and leaders engaged in an intergenerational dialogue with the ICIP and shared their experiences, lessons learnt and recommendations for future policy and standards for peace processes and youth, peace, and security.

In addition, building on the social listening study, the initiative designed a non-traditional track to engage a broad section of youth globally through social media. This contributed to expanding the initiative beyond the more institutionally oriented youth involved in the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. Live broadcast events on social media included direct polling and engagement with the audience, led by commissioner Ilwad Elman, who has a large youth social media following.

To further deepen the engagement of young people in the development of the principles, the initiative partnered with the Kofi Annan Foundation and two youth-led organizations, 180 Grad Wende in Germany and HIVE Pakistan, who implemented youth-focused consultations to gather input from youths in both rural and urban areas. The organisations deliberately mapped and targeted marginalised young people, ensuring representation of various religions, genders, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Governing institutions and legislative and political bodies such as parliaments play a crucial role in enabling lasting peace. Yet their role is often overlooked. Perspectives of members of these institutions need to be part of reshaping global and national approaches to peace. To that effect, the initiative partnered with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to engage parliaments and parliamentarians in the development of the principles.

Meanwhile, members of the International Civil Society Action Network and the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL) joined working group discussions on different themes and issues to contribute their insights and experiences as women peacebuilders. Members of WASL were also consulted directly in the development of the principles.

Finally, together with the Network for Traditional and Religious Leaders, the initiative organised 15 online consultations in different languages and different regions of the world, including the Middle East and North Africa

(MENA), sub-Saharan Africa, South America and Central America, and Asia. This line of engagement took place between October 2021 and October 2022 and was particularly relevant for exploring questions relating to values and cultural integrity due to traditional and religious actors' centrality in many cultural practices and their position as arbiters of cultural norms.¹⁰

Outcome of phase 1

The work of each thematic track started with a draft analytical paper on the “state of play” and practical dilemmas relating to each theme. For the themes of sustainability, local ownership and responsibility, and stabilisation and security actors, the Principles for Peace secretariat drafted conversation starters, while for the other themes, respective partner organisations took the lead, drawing on their topical expertise. The dilemmas, challenges and tension points provided the basis for conversation and consultation through the thematic tracks.

In addition to the thematic research, the ICIP felt it necessary to gain a better understanding of the changing peace and conflict landscape to ensure that the Principles for Peace would be fit for purpose. To this effect, three members of the research committee provided an overview of the most important factors, key trends and changes that will shape peace and conflict in the coming decades and how these impact the development of the Principles for Peace and the work of the commission. They represented different geographic vantage points from Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The findings touched upon the following topics: 1) the changing geopolitical environment and its impact on dominant approaches to peacebuilding; 2) the changing nature of conflict; 3) how understandings of peace have changed and the changing role of the international community in enabling peace; 4) the climate-peace nexus, and 5) how technology is affecting conflict dynamics and, in particular, the ways in which digitalisation impacts conflict and peace, both positively and negatively.

Forward-looking research was also conducted on how best to maximise the initiative's political and operational impact through the working track on institutionalisation. To that end, the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding undertook a review of past policy initiatives and international commissions.¹¹ The study concluded that similar initiatives and commissions

10 Appreciative inquiry gives attention to people's stories, experiences, and interpretations about the past and present, to inform the future (facilitator handbook).

11 NNannerini, Krause, Jütersonke, 2021. “Maximizing Impact” Briefing paper, Principles for Peace.

in the past have taken a long time to succeed and have required long-term strategies and follow-through. This demonstrated that beyond a flagship report, successful initiatives have coherent visions and theories of change for achieving long-term impact. In addition to contextual factors (e.g. timing), success seems to require:

1. simple and clearly articulated new concepts, principles or key messages to challenge an existing paradigm
2. an institutional target audience (or targets) for change (global, regional or local) in which new norms and principles could be embedded and implemented on the ground
3. a core of powerful advocates (states and/or transnational civil society actors) to advocate for and promote the new principles
4. a strong foundation of evidence to support the paradigm shift.

This study informed the initiative's process by providing a reference point against which to weigh the likelihood of long-term success. So, many of the success factors could be "baked into" the design of the iterative process. These included maintaining a broad consultative process, rigorously using evidence and actively building a core of powerful advocates. The study, furthermore, reaffirmed the commission's and the secretariat's belief in the need to design and establish a follow-up mechanism and strategic capability that could ensure the principles are advocated for, operationalised and monitored.

From the outset, therefore, the principles were designed to be more than words on a page. Instead, the Principles for Peace initiative sought ways to explicitly induce and catalyse policy and programmatic change. This directly shaped the broader consultations in the second stage of the process, where the key findings regarding best practices in peacebuilding and peacemaking were articulated as principles.

Phase 2: Articulation of Principles

As multiple themes were explored and specific proposals started to emerge, the secretariat and the commission sought to review and synthesise them systematically, grouping similar ideas under emerging concepts for further discussion and validation.

The various consultations and convenings increasingly served as a reality check to test the practical feasibility and political relevance of the emerging concepts and the proposals associated with them. This lent itself to

continuous evaluation and evolution of the concepts.¹² This phase entailed managing several complementary methods to elicit feedback from a broad range of stakeholders. This included holding iterative consultations with women's organisations, youth groups, government representatives, peacebuilders, human rights organisations, humanitarians, academics, non-state armed groups, parliamentary groups, religious groups, the private sector and multilateral organisations.

Much of the work in this phase took place through parallel working groups that delved into the initial themes. Groups were led by a member of the international commission and included expert representatives from research and practitioner organisations relevant to each theme. This working group process facilitated dialogues between actors that would otherwise not likely find the political and operational space in which to collaborate. This included dialogues between people affected by conflict and political actors at the highest national and multilateral levels; and between in-country peace practitioners and senior research scholars. This iterative back-and-forth kept the emergent concepts inclusive and repeatedly validated, and the articulated principles that followed both politically relevant and normatively driven.

As an illustration, the emerging concepts of hybridity and legitimacy were discussed in relation to the theme of security actors. The Centre for the Study of Armed Groups produced a paper focused on engaging non-state armed groups as an essential part of violence reduction and conflict resolution. The study was informed by an expert group convening and interviews with members of non-state armed groups and helped the principles articulate a nuanced concept of hybridity and legitimacy.

Additional considerations

Parallel to this consultative process, two additional cross cutting areas of exploration were identified at this stage. These two themes – environment and peace and the digital space and peace – were reviewed by research committee members and specialists. Research products confirmed that these were vital domains for the present and future of peace but were better reflected as cross-cutting issue areas.¹³

12 See our website for a full chronology of consultations.

13 See, for example, Schirch. 2022. "The digital space and peace: a thought piece" Briefing paper, Principles for Peace; de Coning. 2022. "The climate-peace nexus: connecting the dots between climate change, environmental degradation and peace" Briefing paper, Principles for Peace.

Country visits and incubation spaces

In addition to its consultations, the initiative used incubation spaces oriented towards a concrete context or point of reference that allowed for a more detailed exploration regarding the key decisions and scenarios affecting the peace process from various vantage points. Often, those taking part in the conversation had been involved in decision-making affecting the peace process in a particular context. This helped bring to the fore the assumptions, incentives and constraints that inform the moment of decision making. The conversations in incubation spaces were conducted under the Chatham House rule to ensure a safe space to discuss sensitive issues.

The incubation space on stabilisation was launched in co operation with the Rethinking Stability Initiative. More than 60 high level participants, including representatives from foreign offices, the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union, as well as international and national NGOs, took part in the session examining the flaws of current approaches. Under the leadership of General Roméo Dallaire, a member of the ICIP, a common theme emerged around the notion of integration between actors and sectors (as opposed to merely collaboration or co ordination). In essence, integration denoted the importance of actors having a shared responsibility based on mutual respect, humility, and equal partnership.

An incubation space on sustainability and long-term solutions was co-organised with the China Foreign Affairs University as a dialogue between Chinese scholars and the ICIP. This was part of a series of engagements with China and the broader Asia Pacific region, focusing on alternative approaches to peacebuilding. This included reflecting on the risks and benefits of hybrid peacebuilding models and political orders that, at times, called into question the existing dominant peacemaking model.

Another incubation space focused on the key decisions and moments that led to the current conflict situations in Somalia and in Afghanistan. Two perspectives were presented to ground the conversation – one from an insider’s point of view from the local perspective, while another presented the point of view of an “outsider”. The conversations focused on what principles or shifts could have made a difference in these situations.

Gradually, the focus shifted from exploration to refinement. Multiple consultations were organised, with some returning to previously consulted

constituencies and others engaging new ones. For example, the Berghof Foundation conducted an in-depth country case study on Colombia which utilised a desk review and expert consultations including workshops, focus group discussions and key informant interviews.¹⁴ The study reflected directly on the initiative's emerging concepts and assessed their validity in relation to the peace process in Colombia. Its findings largely resonated with the need to view peace processes as long-term, non-linear, multi-stakeholder processes reaching beyond the parties to the conflict.

In addition, hosted by the Shared Society and Values Foundation Sarajevo, a delegation from the commission met with the Head of State and a cross-section of society including youth activists, parliamentarians, women's organisations, civil society organisations and religious leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina in February-March 2022. Taking place under the shadow of the war in Ukraine, the conversations underlined the challenges to peace in the country and the current concerns of its population. Discussions revolved around the Dayton Agreement and its impact on the current political situations, as well as the current geopolitical environment. The incubation space demonstrated that, without a mechanism for revising or revisiting a power-sharing agreement, the risk of locking in conflict drivers existed.¹⁵ Overall, people in Bosnia and Herzegovina believed that the Dayton Agreement, while successful in halting the violence, has entrenched ethnic divisions and has not allowed for a continued process of transformation. Furthermore, the power-sharing arrangement has seemingly legitimised corruption by institutionalising a "division of spoils" approach to peace, resulting in a widespread lack of faith in political processes.

Another incubation space was arranged in Berlin, prior to the fourth convening of the ICIP in March 2022. Participants engaged with different readings of the current peace and conflict landscape and discussed the policy shifts required to address the current and future challenges. The workshop brought together perspectives from scholars, policy makers, diplomats, peacebuilders, mediation practitioners and civil society actors. Most participants were from partner and stakeholder organisations. The insights reaffirmed the centrality of legitimacy in peace processes and the associated legitimacy deficit in terms of who is involved in peace processes and how, as

14 Paladini Adell, García Muñoz, Unger, Dudouet. 2021. "The ongoing quest for peace in Colombia", Berghof Foundation.

15 For further information in this regard, see Dizdarević and Hasić. 2021. "Stakeholder consultation report: Bosnia & Herzegovina" Shared Societies and Values Foundation, Sarajevo.

well as what peace delivers to the people. Similarly, subsidiarity was discussed as a potential criterion for clarifying complementary and differentiated forms of responsibility. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina was also discussed, particularly as it relates to moving beyond simplistic or romanticised readings of the “local” and the international. Conversations in Bosnia and Herzegovina had underlined the complexity of the relationship between international community and national actors, whereby participants simultaneously problematised both over- and under-involvement by internationals.

Synthesising phase 3

Taking stock of the findings from the iterative process – including research papers, deliberations from the working groups and incubation spaces, country consultations and case studies – the relationship between each of the emerging concepts and policy shifts became clearer. As this relationship was investigated, a common appreciation of legitimacy as a central principle for peace emerged, in terms of both its ends and the means through which it is built. This remained a constant from this point forward. Beyond the “legitimacy deficit”, the findings indicated that peace processes often break down because of their exclusive nature or their inability to generate a process to transform the root causes of conflict.

As concepts were further refined, the importance of contextual approaches, of long-term engagements and of adaptability also became central to the emerging articulation of the principles. It became clear that delivering on the emergent notions called for much more openness to embrace hybrid and integrated approaches. This meant space had to be made for approaches that acknowledge the reality of multiple and different sources of power within a given context.

Building on these conclusions, the secretariat and the International Commission on Inclusive Peace turned their attention to articulating what “shifts” were needed in the current approaches to peacemaking to overcome these deficits. Through think-pieces, iterative feedback sessions with the secretariat, working group deliberations, and discussions among commission members, four necessary shifts were articulated:

1. longer-term, dynamic, adaptive peace processes
2. local and international actors working better together
3. peace processes that can contribute to reconfiguring state-society relations
4. supporting more constructive interaction between social groups

To capture how these concepts fit together, the secretariat and the ICIP agreed to articulate the findings in the form of the Peacemaking Covenant. Drafting this covenant and opening it up for critique, revisions and improvements were the primary tasks in phase 3. The research committee played a significant role here. They provided time, expertise, access to networks, and peer reviews, ensuring the analytic rigour of the outputs. The chair of the research committee and the secretariat continuously fed the results of the global consultations and research into updated articulations of the covenant to ensure it reflected the iterative deliberations. The secretariat and members of the research committee then presented progress at the fourth meeting of the International Commission on Inclusive Peace, in March 2022.

At this stage, to understand how this feedback affected the draft principles, members of the research committee were tasked with investigating the conceptual underpinnings of the principles. This entailed think-pieces delving into the debates behind the principles, seeking to clarify what was meant by them, given that some of the terms are contested, complex or both.¹⁶ As in the earlier phases, this work also maintained a pragmatic focus on how each principle could be practically useful.

Incorporating contrasting opinions and feedback coming from the consultations was a challenging endeavour. There were compromises and trade-offs along the path of honing the Principles for Peace to reconcile multiple and differing normative standards and practical approaches espoused by participants. However, it is precisely from this process that the principles derive their strength and legitimacy: they have been inclusively designed and are anchored in evidence, meticulously validated by expert analysis, and they reflect people's diverse needs and lived experiences. They are politically feasible, pragmatic and practical and explicitly depart from the language and assumptions behind "liberal peacebuilding", embracing instead co-creation and partnership rather than top-down solutions. In so doing, they provide a unifying framework able to wed a forward-looking set of principles to improved ways for all actors to put them into practice.

16 For example, see Welsh. 2022. "Ethical and philosophical underpinnings of the Peacemakers' Covenant" Briefing paper, Principles for Peace; Bell. 2022. "Beyond power-sharing: embracing its benefits and remedying its inadequacies" Briefing paper, Principles for Peace.

Phase 3: Validating and testing the Principles

Contextual testing

Following the commission's visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which provided valuable insights and in depth contextual field knowledge that helped enrich the emerging principles, the secretariat and commissioners saw the need for demonstrating a "proof of concept" through an examination of additional regional and country cases. Individual commissioners subsequently participated in country visits to meet relevant experts to discuss and validate the specifics of the principles. Country selection was based on a matrix of countries with current or recent (within 30 years) peace processes, including both those struggling with cyclical violence and those that had successfully established positive peace, as well as a wide geographical representation. Countries were also ranked on their estimated levels of state fragility (low, moderate or high), their degree of accessibility (poor, good or passing), the possibility to establish a local partnership to host a consultation, and the commissioners' familiarity and experience in the context.

An incubation space was organised in Amman (Jordan) in June 2022, bringing together the ICIP, research committee members, and political actors, diplomats, mediators, peacebuilders, academics, and civil society from the wider MENA region. The incubation space was co-hosted by the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa. The session focused on analysing flaws and opportunities in the current practice of peacemaking and peacebuilding from a regional perspective. As with all validation sessions, participants engaged with the working version of the covenant to reflect on its resonance based on their personal and professional experience. Overall, participants agreed that the contents of the covenant resonated with their different contexts. Participants, moreover, appreciated the opportunity to shape the principles rather than being invited to "rubber stamp" them. It is worth noting that while the word subsidiarity was somewhat alien to workshop participants, the fundamental idea behind the concept – the desire to move decision making as close as possible to those who live with its consequences – was welcomed. Participants, however, highlighted the importance of thinking about the transfer of responsibility closer to the people as a process that takes considerable time and that should not be equated with a delegation of responsibility without accountability. It was noted that one of the key challenges in Libya is that nobody has been held responsible for failure. An approach utilising the principle of subsidiarity could provide clarity on responsibility and accountability throughout the process.

The second incubation space was conducted during the country visit of the International Commission on Inclusive Peace to Guatemala in July 2022. For the visit and incubation space, the Principles for Peace secretariat partnered with Fundación Propaz.¹⁷ The delegation met with a cross section of society including representatives of indigenous groups, the peace secretariat, members of congress, government representatives and former and future presidential candidates, women's groups, youth, and private sector representatives. The discussions revolved around the peace processes in Guatemala as well as the draft Peacemaking Covenant. Principles such as pluralism were seen as particularly relevant considering that inequality and structural racism continue to be deeply engrained in Guatemalan society. The need to rethink partnerships and international engagement resonated, especially considering a sense of abandonment by the international community following the signature of the agreement. It was highlighted that the covenant should focus more on criminal violence and the political economy of conflict as key obstacles to achieving lasting and legitimate peace. Similarly, a mechanism for continued dialogue, something akin to a "coalition of the responsible" to ensure implementation and continued legitimacy of the process, was brought up as a notion that should be explored further.

A similar visit took place to the Philippines in October 2022, co-organised with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, Initiatives for International Dialogue and the Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute. The session brought together participants from the region, including from Aceh (Indonesia), Timor Leste and Thailand, as well as those who had been integral to the Bangsamoro peace process in the Philippines. Participants highlighted that the target audience of the covenant should be defined more clearly. Many argued that they are already abiding by the principles and that their work was already effectively guided by them. While participants argued that the covenant is an important document that formalises and combines the different principles, they stressed that the covenant should avoid being interpreted as dismissing the work of local actors, many of whom feel that their work is already consistent with what is being proposed. They stressed that the principles seem more relevant for international actors who often do not act in accordance with the principles. Moreover, participants suggested that the humility principle could be strengthened by more focus on the importance of respect. While part of the dignity principle, participants argued that respect for the work of local actors needs to also be part of the humility principle.

17 See Ramires. 2022. "Stakeholder consultation report: Guatemala" Report for the Principles for Peace initiative, Fundación Propaz.

A further visit was carried out to Burundi in November 2022, where the focus was forward-looking in focusing on the potential to and anticipated challenges of promoting the policy shifts proposed in the Peacemaking Covenant. Meanwhile, a regional validation session, complemented by in-depth interviews, was organised by the Berghof Foundation in October 2022, bringing together peace activists from various Latin American countries.¹⁸

The co-creation aspects of the Principles for Peace and of the Peacemaking Covenant were paramount throughout the various visits, which included a combination of in-depth consultations, incubation space discussions with peacemakers, desk reviews and key-informant interviews. Each of these approaches was used to validate and elaborate on the form and function of the principles, with particular care taken to ensure that what was being designed was relevant to different experiences of peace and conflict.

Constituency testing

Input was also sought from specific constituencies. Sessions were held with young people, youth organisations, women peacebuilders, gender experts, peace mediators, security sector actors, peacebuilding organisations, traditional and religious peacemakers, and many more, each of whom provided feedback on draft versions of the covenant. For example, an incubation space bringing together conflict prevention and mediation practitioners, co-organised with the International Crisis Group, was held in Geneva in September 2022. Participants included members of mediation organisations, such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, the European Institute of Peace and the Berghof Foundation, which are members of the Principles for Peace stakeholder platform, in addition to the Dialogue Advisory Group, which includes representatives of regional and international organisations such as the European External Action Service, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations, as well as donor representatives from Denmark, Germany, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates. Two research committee members and two members of the International Commission on Inclusive Peace also joined the incubation space.

Participants overall viewed the covenant as a timely and forward-looking proposal for an international community which is trying to reorient itself amid

18 See Paladini Adell, García Muñoz, Muñoz Hernández. 2022. “Principles for Peace: consultation with Latin American actors”, Berghof Foundation.

amid various new challenges. Many participants noted the importance of the covenant's emphasis being placed on local actors, structures, agency, and discourses – without romanticising them – and of its proposal to encourage productive collaboration between international, national and local actors under the banner of “hybrid and integrated approaches”. Participants called for more conceptual clarity. They also pointed out that the shortcomings of mediation processes are not only a result of exclusive processes or lack of attention to necessary long-term transformation. The increasingly complex conflict context also partially explains limited success. Power disparities, geopolitical tensions and the fragmentation of armed groups undermine attempts to conclude negotiated settlements. Participants also emphasised the need to acknowledge the continued relevance of power-sharing and elite pacts – as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for peace. Finally, participants wished to see more connections and anchoring in existing norms and policy documents – to reflect that the covenant is part of a wider evolution in policy and programme thinking and practice.

Similar validation sessions were held with youth, together with Interpeace. In addition, four validation sessions in different languages, targeting traditional and religious peacemakers across different regions of the world, were organised with the Network for Traditional and Religious Leaders.

Concluding phase

The feedback received through the validation and consultation sessions on the one hand, and reviews of the covenant drafts on the other, were reflected in a matrix that captured different inputs and outlined the decisions taken and revisions adopted. The main categories of feedback related to: 1) delineating more clearly the document's target audience; 2) the plan for its implementation and function as an accountability tool as well as the process for developing its implications for different actors; 3) the tensions between the principles and their interrelationships; 4) explaining how the covenant is positioned vis-à-vis those who are not necessarily invested in peace, as well as wider considerations relating to questions of power and politics.

In October 2022, the final principle, accountable security, was introduced. It drew together existing elements in the draft covenant and served to recognise the feedback on its own importance, which was common across various consultations. The articulation of the principle of accountable security sought to bring considerations around security and power closer to the forefront of

the Peacemaking Covenant, to ensure its practical relevance for current and pressing challenges. Finally, during the concluding rounds of feedback from the commissioners on the draft of the covenant, it was agreed to include a section of further reflections on the practical implications of the principles, along with their linkages with cross-cutting and future-oriented themes including the digital space, the environment and sustainable development. By doing so, the covenant aims to pave the way for the next phase of the Principles for Peace initiative and to lay the ground for the uptake and implementation of the policy shifts proposed by the Peacemaking Covenant.

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