



SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON PEACEKEEPING AND SUSTAINING PEACE
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Introduction

Mr. President,

Thank you for inviting me to address the Council on this important subject.

The purpose of my briefing is twofold. First, to present to you HIPPO's thinking about the conceptual and attitudinal shifts that need to be internalized by peacekeeping operations if they are to unleash their potential to contribute to sustaining peace.

Second, to share with you some of the practical implications of these shifts in terms of the design, implementation and review of peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President,

The HIPPO report devotes some 10 pages to the issue of sustaining peace whose main thrust is to unpack the spirit and the letter of three key words all starting with "P" contained in its title which is: "Uniting our strength for peace: politics, partnership and people,

HIPPO views sustaining peace as the ultimate objective of UN post conflict engagements in which inclusive politics and people in their plurality, including women and youth, play the central role.

Conceptual and attitudinal shifts for sustaining peace

So what are these shifts advocated by HIPPO for the purposes of sustaining peace? Let me just mention three.

The first is to acknowledge that **countries emerging from conflict "are not blank pages and their people are not projects". Internal actors at all levels of society are the main agents of peace.** This means that our efforts to help sustain peace should be motivated by the humility to learn from what still works well in countries emerging from conflict and to respect that every society, however broken it may appear, has capacities and assets not just needs and vulnerabilities. Such an approach goes against the grain of the practices of some outside intervenors who believe that countries in conflict lack the competency and resources to address their own predicament.

This myopia leads me to the **second shift** advocated by HIPPO, namely the need to **challenge the assumptions** and values that underpin some of the “supply-driven templates and technical approaches” and solutions that are regular staples in the mandates of a number of peacekeeping operations. Strengthening central state institutions for example is believed to create the conditions for peace. However, this approach ignores that state institutions, as they are being strengthened, tend to be captured by domestic, ruling elites, concerned more about power than governance, susceptible, and I quote “to corruption by powerful groups”.

The third shift is **politics, legitimate** politics. “Lasting peace is not achieved- nor sustained through military and technical engagements, but through political solutions.” Peace processes do not end with a cease-fire or a peace agreement”. These simply mean that belligerents have decided, sometimes through coercive diplomacy, to move from violence to politics, a transition usually fraught with uncertainties and reversals. Where missions are deployed in hostile environments, politics, HIPPO contends, is the best force multiplier.

Practical implications: Peacekeeping and Sustaining Peace

A- Analysis

So what are the practical implications of these three conceptual and attitudinal shifts? Let me mention two tasks.

First, there is a need to rethink the ways we **analyze peace and conflict when planning and reviewing peace operations**. This analysis, should not only assess the factors that drive and sustain violence and instability, it should also map what is still working and not just what needs fixing. This mapping would include surveys of the resilient capacities that host societies and ordinary people are using to peacefully manage conflict and subsist in the direst of circumstances. It would also assess other determinants of peace, such as the commitments of domestic, bilateral and regional stakeholders to the cause of peace, accompanied by an inventory of their respective interests and comparative advantages.

Given that the drivers of instability tend to be transnational in origin and effect, the analysis should assess these drivers from a regional perspective. And because women and youth experience conflict differently, specific measures should be taken to ensure their unique perspectives are captured in all steps of this analytical exercise.

Mr. President,

Let me hasten to add that several peacekeeping missions are undertaking aspects of this type of analysis, including through surveys. But I suspect that sustaining peace is not the overarching organizing framework for collecting and processing information.

B--Strategic Compact for Sustaining Peace

The second practical implication of the shifts is the **development of a strategic compact for sustaining peace**. This would be initiated in response to a specific and firm request from the Security Council. The compact would articulate a shared, context-sensitive understanding of what sustaining peace means, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of Resolution 2282. It would outline, on the basis of the analysis discussed above, the primary responsibilities of the host country and other national stakeholders, as well as the supportive role of the UN system on the ground under the leadership of an empowered Resident Coordinator. The compact would also include time-bound performance benchmarks to ensure mutual accountability and facilitate reporting. This would be a strategic framework that would ensure inclusive, national ownership, and the primacy of legitimate politics. In addition, it would enable the mission to execute its mandate from a long-term, sustaining peace perspective, whether the task is the extension of state authority or the protection of civilians.

This compact would also respond to the call by the Secretary-General and others to build synergies among the UN three foundational pillars and put “we the peoples” at the center of UN engagement. The pillars, including the 2030 agenda for sustainable development would flow through this compact in an integrated manner. It would also provide a natural home for people-centered approaches, particularly if the compact is vetted through a standing civil society consultative body.

Mr. President,

I do recognize that this is a tall order, and attempts have been made particularly in peacekeeping missions serving in challenging political contexts where host governments are unable or unwilling to cooperate.

But without, a shift in mind set and an upfront investment in strategic analysis and inclusive, compact building process, the UN, in my view, will continue to deploy peacekeepers into hostile environments with little or no peace to keep, where at times, the line between peacekeeping and peace enforcement becomes blurred and where the primary focus during review periods is largely on meeting the pressing operational and logistical requirements for overstretched, missions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. President, the next time peacekeeping operations come up for review, particularly those with stabilization as their middle name, I humbly suggest that the Council consider the following four questions:

First, does the mission have dedicated capacity at the highest level to generate and cultivate legitimate political solutions?

Second, does the mission have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to regularly conduct strategic, integrated and participatory analyses to identify how it can contribute to sustaining peace?

Third, does the mission have a binding, strategic compact and an exit strategy which in addition to their intrinsic mandated objectives, are explicitly designed to contribute to the overarching goal of self-sustaining peace?

Fourth and last, does it have mission-wide consultative mechanisms that put people at the center, to ensure inclusive national ownership and effectively trust building?

The answers to these questions and the debates they would generate might offer the Council, with the advisory support of the Peacebuilding Commission-the opportunity to inject mission mandates with provisions that can enhance their potential to contribute to sustaining peace, guided by the spirit and the letter of HIPPO's recommendations and the sustaining peace resolutions.

I thank you, Mr. President