

Building Peace in a Turbulent World: Towards Sober Judgement and Effective Responses

**Annual Meeting of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform
Monday, 5 November 2017, 13.30-17.45
Geneva, Maison de la Paix, Auditorium Ivan Pictet**

In his remarks to the UN General Assembly's High-level Meeting on Sustaining Peace in April 2018, UN Secretary-General [António Guterres](#) described the current state of peace and security in the world in sombre terms:

“We must recognize that in some fundamental ways, our world is going backwards. More countries are experiencing violent conflict than at any time in nearly three decades. Record numbers of civilians are being killed or injured by explosive weapons in urban areas. Record numbers of people are on the move, displaced by violence, war and persecution. We see horrific violations of human rights, and rising nationalism, racism and xenophobia. Inequalities are increasing; whole regions, countries and communities can find themselves isolated from progress and left behind by growth. Women and girls face discrimination of all kinds. These are all indications that we need greater unity and courage – to ease the fears of the people we serve; to set the world on track to a better future; and to lay the foundations of sustainable peace and development.”

In front of an ever more turbulent world and ever stronger calls to action, this Annual Meeting of the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform sets the scene for the reflections of Geneva Peace Week 2018 on the urgency to find peaceful solutions for the growing risk of violent conflict in its many forms. Heeding the Secretary-General's call to action, the Annual Meeting aims to contribute to greater unity by distilling what we know about the coming turbulence and to greater courage across institutions and sectors to 'walk the talk' and act to prevent conflict and build peace.

Intent on galvanizing the courage to act, the Annual Meeting emphasizes that wherever people prevent conflict and build peace on a daily basis, those willing to lead have much work to do and many places to start; but they should be reassured that effective approaches are readily available. The Annual Meeting - and Geneva Peace Week in general – offer a glimpse into this practice and propose a space to broker new partnerships for action that are driven by cool heads, sober judgement, and effective action.

The Annual Meeting places a particular emphasis on the diversity of voices that are involved in shaping prevention and peacebuilding practice in specific places. It therefore features speakers from local, national and international levels to initiate the conversation across a diversity of perspectives that will go on in greater depth during Geneva Peace Week.

The Platform's Annual Meeting brings together a variety of actors and representatives from government, international organizations, business, and academia and provides a space for frank and open exchange outside of more formal policy forums. The Annual Meeting is a public event and proceedings are 'on the record'. The event is free of charge but registration is mandatory at www.gpplatform.ch.

The Geneva Peacebuilding Platform is a knowledge hub that connects the critical mass of peacebuilding actors, resources, and expertise in Geneva and worldwide. Founded in 2008, the Platform has a mandate to facilitate interaction on peacebuilding between different institutions and sectors, and to advance new knowledge and understanding of issues and contexts related building peace. It also plays a creative role in building bridges between International Geneva, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in New York, and peacebuilding activities in the field. The Platform's network comprises more than 4,000 peacebuilding professionals working on building peace directly or indirectly. The Platform provides policy-relevant advice and services, ensures the continuous exchange of information through seminars, consultations, and conferences, and facilitates outcome-oriented dialogues on peacebuilding practice.

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

Programme overview

13.30 Opening

- Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior, Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and to the other international organizations in Geneva

13.45 Session 1: Understanding the present & coming turbulence: Local, regional and international perspectives

Guiding questions: What are the key elements driving turbulence? What are the entry points for peacebuilding practice to diffuse tension and reduce such turbulence?

- Ghada Rifai, Co-founder, Mobaderoon, Beirut
- Ana Glenda Tager, Director, Alianza para la Paz, Bogotá
- Julia Bello-Schünemann, Senior Researcher, African Futures and Innovation, Institute for Security Studies, Lagos
- H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Incoming Chair of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; Former President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, Bratislava.

14.45 Session 2: Responses to the coming turbulence – local perspectives

Guiding Questions: What is peace for local actors? What are their views about how peace can be achieved in their own contexts? How can international actors support such local practice?

- Mike Van Graan, playwright and founding President of the African Cultural Policy Network, Cape Town
- Counselor Yvette Chesson-Wureh, Coordinator of the Angie Brooks International Centre and the Women Situation Room, Monrovia
- Jerald Joseph, Commissioner of SUHAKAM, the National Human Rights Institution of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

16.00 Break

16.30 Session 3 Responses to the coming turbulence – national and international perspectives

Guiding questions: How do governments and international organizations need to adapt peace policy in the face of growing turbulence? What are the roles of different actors and institutions in building peace? Who has what comparative advantage in building peace?

- Kelly Clements, Deputy High Commissioner, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva
- Dmitry Titov, former Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, New York
- Anne-Lene Midseim, General Counsel of Norsk Hydro, Oslo, Norway

17.45 Opening of Geneva Peace Week Reception