



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

7 February 2023

Contribution to the New Agenda for Peace

Since the time the report of the Secretary-General *Our Common Agenda* was presented, the world, its geopolitics, as well as the overall global security landscape have changed dramatically. Russian aggression against Ukraine showed the extent of this change by severely disrupting global food and energy security and destabilizing the world economy. We should continue with our efforts to respond to new threats, asymmetric conflicts, cyber-related risks and terrorism, to name a few, and add renewed vigor addressing the fundamental challenges arising from an unprovoked and unjustified aggression against one of the UN Member States by its neighbor, who sits as a Permanent Member of the Security Council. This cynical and cruel undertaking undermines the International Rules Based Order, International Law, as well as the Charter of the United Nations. In this sense, Russian aggression on Ukraine challenges the very core of our Organization, taking us back to the dangerous times when only might was right. Therefore, in our deliberations on the New Agenda for Peace, we should address this changed nature of the challenges we are facing, not forgetting, of course, the other security aspects.

1. Reduce strategic risks.

- a. We are in the situation where we are not talking just about risks any more, but the very concrete and potentially escalating crisis that needs to be addressed decisively by the international community, if we are to preserve and defend the Charter of the United Nations, International Law and Rules Based International Order.
- b. Disarmament. In the new circumstances, the work on the disarmament issues is stalled, especially regarding commitments for the non-use of nuclear weapons. Despite this, efforts should be made to bridge existing divides and avert current, unfortunately, very concrete threats of use of nuclear weapons. The UN needs to bring main actors back to negotiating table, giving the format and setting the preconditions to alleviate the deep level of mistrust existing between parties. That work must be based on existing rules and commitments, looking to deal with the existing drivers of risk, as well as strengthening our commitments for the future.
- c. Terrorism. With the current crisis, other challenges did not disappear. Those, like terrorism, can use the strong focus of the International Community on the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and its ramifications on the global scale, to strengthen and spread its activities. Therefore, the resuming the counterterrorism efforts with diligence within the UN system, paired with the continued work and cooperation between the UN bodies and with other international organizations



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and stakeholders should be regarded as essential part of risk management in the area of global security and pursuit of peace.

- d. Cyber threats. The same principles apply here, however with the important difference in terms of the available and universally accepted legal body of work. Lack of trust and cooperation, especially between main actors, creates a fertile ground for all kinds of cyber related threats, new and emerging. In this ever increasing area of threats and challenges, inclusion and input of all stakeholders is invaluable. Recently adopted UNGA resolution regarding the Program of Action is a useful framework to address the issues of trust and more responsible behavior in the cyber space. Moreover, the ongoing work of the Ad hoc Committee on elaboration of the new international cybercrime treaty is also expected to have a lasting effect on global cybersecurity.

2. Strengthen international foresight and capacities to identify and adapt to new peace and security risks.

- a. In order to continue our work on managing and alleviating new and existing peace and security risks, it is of a paramount importance to avert further escalation and resolve the crisis in Ukraine and in other crises spots in the world, based on the International Law and Charter of the United Nations.
- b. New peace and security risks need new ways of addressing them. The United Nations needs to adapt its procedures and mechanisms and stop working in silos, but have a truly holistic approach to the new peace and security risks. When we discuss potential future threats, we also need to put together our knowledge and foresight regarding climate change and its impact as a security and threat amplifier. A clear picture is needed regarding energy supply, where possible disruptions, including those latest caused by the war in Ukraine, also have security implications. These elements have a clear potential to create new, stronger migratory movements of people, and can lead to security disruptions. The notion of setting up both a forward-looking, anticipatory and preventive Strategic Foresight and Global Risk Report as well as the mechanics of an Emergency Platform to respond to complex global crises seems very enticing. Ideally, all the existing bodies and entities within the current structure of the UN should already be involved in similar activities. If both proposals are envisaged as adjacent but still additional new tools to the existing ones, the obvious concern lies in regards to the availability of necessary expertise and financing by all stakeholders.

3. Reshape responses to all forms of violence.

- a. We often talk about the holistic approach to the phenomena of violence which needs to be further strengthened. Those efforts must go beyond just response to the violence when it occurs, regardless of its form. They should include prevention through education, social work, humanitarian work, clear rules and standards, especially those related to the rule of law and human rights,



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empowerment of women and girls, as well as sustainable development, including job creation, reducing social and economic gaps within and among societies, decreasing impacts of climate change and preventing further environmental degradation.

4. Invest in prevention and peacebuilding, including Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund.

- a. As a newly elected member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Croatia is eager to contribute to its mission, and is keen to make every effort in order to contribute constructively to the work of the PBC, including through its contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund.
- b. Investment in conflict prevention is far more cost effective than investing in the conflict resolution and recovery *post festum*. We need to continuously rethink our efforts and future oriented strategies in order to further strengthen our existing prevention mechanisms (especially regarding early warning), in order to address root causes that have a dangerous potential to turn an environment of risks into environment of conflicts. In addition, we have to work closer with International Financial Institutions, as well as the private sector, in order to create robust foundations for sustainable development, which is essential for lasting and sustained peace.
- c. Since 2005, when we all unanimously agreed that it is the responsibility of the international community to protect populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, the R2P principle has been our shared commitment. The GA adopted a resolution that put R2P permanently on the annual agenda and mandated the SG to submit his reports ahead of the annual debate. As co-chair of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect, Croatia is contributing to bridging the gap between prevention and peacebuilding. Adopting an atrocity prevention perspective in all areas is crucial to realize efforts by the United Nations to enhance international foresight.

5. Support regional prevention.

- a. United Nations should continue to work with regional organizations that are engaged in prevention of conflicts in their local area. That cooperation would benefit from development assistance and strengthening of necessary capacities and capabilities. Regional organizations are often also an important part of the early warning process, and possess in-depth knowledge and expertise in the regional affairs. Synergy of the efforts invested by the UN and regional organizations would produce better results in the preventive work. At the same time, more effort should be given to address non-military and civilian security concerns, and strengthen regional cooperation in that respect.

6. Put women and girls at the center of security policy.



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- a. The existing Women Peace and Security framework and its pillars provide a good basis, but continued work is needed for its implementation. It is crucial that we fight against all forms of gender-based violence, including in conflicts, where that violence is all too often used as a weapon of war, making it a war crime. We must ensure that women have opportunities to fully participate and contribute to all aspects of peace and security sector, including in leadership roles. Only a fully inclusive approach to these issues can produce long term and sustainable results.