

Inputs from Cuba on the New Agenda for Peace proposed by the UN Secretary General in his report "Our Common Agenda".

The founding Charter of the UN declared the maintenance of international peace and security as the first of its purposes. Although the Charter did not define these concepts explicitly, they are based on coexistence among all States, within the framework of respect for their principles and rights, and the rejection of coercion and violence in relations between States, with the ultimate aim of achieving peace through the final renunciation of war, the existence of peaceful means of conflict resolution and collective action in their defense and application.

The new Agenda for Peace proposed by the UN Secretary General in his report "Our Common Agenda", focuses on the following 6 areas:

1. Reducing strategic risks
2. Strengthening international foresight and capacities to identify and adapt to new peace and security risks
3. Reshaping our responses to all forms of violence
4. Investing in prevention and peacebuilding
5. Supporting regional prevention
6. Putting women and girls at the centre of security policy

Any agenda for peace that the international community agrees upon must endorse the central role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, and respect for its purposes and principles.

From Cuba's perspective, the following aspects should not be missing from a new agenda for peace and its corresponding policy brief:

I. Revitalization and strengthening of multilateralism

Multilateralism is the principal means of addressing threats and challenges that affect all members of the international community, including those related to international peace and security. Multilaterally agreed solutions are a guarantee for the effective implementation of international agreements.

The growing pretensions of global hegemonism by some countries undermine international security. The way to guarantee peaceful coexistence, preserve international peace and security and find lasting solutions to systemic problems is to move towards a democratic, just and equitable world, respectful of the sovereign equality of States. Multilateralism and full respect for the principles and norms of international law are the basis for reaching this target.

Any new agenda for peace requires the revitalization and strengthening of multilateralism as an essential element for achieving a more effective, balanced and sustainable UN international security architecture based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the norms of international law.

However, the non-compliance with international legal obligations, the promotion of exclusionary events or processes to address issues of global concern, the

multiplication of unilateral sanctions as instruments of pressure and other frequent violations of the UN Charter and international law have progressively eroded multilateralism. The persistent application of unilateral coercive measures is contrary to international law and its serious impact on the construction of peaceful and sustainable societies should not be ignored, hindering efforts dedicated to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

We oppose any attempt to impose a "rules-based international order" as an alternative to international law, on whose norms and principles international relations are based. The application of "special rules in special cases" based on national interests and the political agendas of some countries, as well as interpretations of international law to justify the use of force for preventive purposes, are unacceptable. This is an option open to political manipulation and double standards, which undermines multilateralism and takes us away from finding peaceful negotiated solutions to resolve existing international conflicts and new emerging threats and challenges.

The idea of applying a preventive approach to issues that are considered cross-cutting would subordinate their treatment to the peace and security pillar. At the same time, it requires strict respect for the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principle of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, in order to ensure that such approaches are not used as a pretext to justify the advancement of geopolitical agendas and interests.

No attempt should be made to selectively advance proposals or "notions" that do not enjoy the consensus of all the Member States, nor to impose concepts for which there is no clear and uniform definition accepted by all the States. The use of the term "human security" must correspond to the common understanding reached in UNGA resolution 66/290.

Any new effort to promote peace must be based on the renewed commitment of Member States to comply with multilaterally negotiated intergovernmental instruments and agreements, and to comply with the mandates of United Nations bodies.

To promote peace, the root causes of conflict must be addressed. The historical roots and conditions that have given rise to them cannot be ignored. More solidarity and international cooperation will be needed, based on the priorities identified by the States concerned. Conflicts must be resolved by the Member States, by peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiation, and guarantee the security and sovereignty of all, as well as regional and international peace, stability and security.

II. Strengthening of the United Nations General Assembly

A revitalized and strengthened United Nations General Assembly will be able to fully exercise the functions and powers conferred on it by the Charter, without encroachment of the Security Council on its work and that of its subsidiary bodies.

The revitalization of the General Assembly is a fundamental component for the improvement of the United Nations system, as well as for more efficient global governance and strengthened multilateralism.

The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly should not be understood or used to limit the rights of Member States. The rationalization, biennialization or triennialization of resolutions should remain a decision of Member States, on a voluntary basis.

The central role of the General Assembly, the only body with universal membership and exclusive function for the progressive development and codification of international law, must be consolidated. Likewise, the role of the General Assembly in the system of world governance must be strengthened.

Proposals to establish new structures, such as the "Emergency Platform to respond to complex global crises" should be the result of an intergovernmental negotiation process. The main bodies and mechanisms for responding to global challenges must preserve the intergovernmental character of the Organization. Similarly, the expansion of existing structures or their work, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, which must fulfill its mandate under General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), must be the subject of decisions negotiated and adopted by the Member States of the Organization.

The contribution of civil society to the efforts of States and the UN in solving today's complex challenges is unquestionable. However, the United Nations is and must continue to be an intergovernmental organization, and its major interlocutors should be the Member States.

There are well-defined rules and practices governing the participation of non-State actors in the work of the Organization. Any process to evaluate and modify these rules and practices must be carried out in consultation with Member States, and proposals should not be aimed at altering the intergovernmental character of the United Nations.

III. Reform of the Security Council

A new agenda for peace must include the need for an integral and comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council, including its working methods, in order to achieve greater transparency and inclusiveness in its work, making it a more democratic and representative body, without double standards, which would contribute to preserving the credibility of the Organization.

A Security Council that is more transparent in its work will contribute to the effective exercise of collective responsibility. In this regard, informal consultations of the Council should be the exception rather than the practice. Minutes of such consultations should be issued. The agenda of the Security Council must better reflect the needs and interests of developing nations.

The number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council should be expanded, with the objective of rectifying the under-representation of developing countries, which constitute a significant part of the membership of this Organization. Until the veto is eliminated, which we oppose, the new seats to be created in the category of permanent members should have the same prerogatives and rights as the current ones, including the power of veto.

Another way to ensure greater transparency and legitimacy is to guarantee that the Security Council's annual report to the UN General Assembly is explanatory, comprehensive and analytical of the Council's work.

The mandate of the Security Council, as conferred by the UN Charter, must be strictly respected. This body must cease to interfere in matters outside its competence, in particular those that fall within the mandate of the General Assembly.

In accordance with its mandate under the UN Charter, the Security Council should focus its attention on addressing problems that threaten international peace and security. Chapter VII of the Charter should be invoked, as envisaged, as a last resort.

The relationship of the organs of the United Nations with other bodies such as regional organizations should be strictly limited to the mandates and provisions of each of the organs and should be developed in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It should not be overlooked that each region has its own particularities.

IV. Revitalization of the disarmament machinery

Humanity is facing serious security challenges as a result of the proliferation of the arms race, predatory wars and unconventional wars.

The modernization and development of new nuclear weapons systems, the strengthening of their role in military doctrines, and the disregard for international commitments undermine international peace and security.

A new agenda for peace could only be effective if each organ of the disarmament machinery fulfills the mandate for which it was created, since the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, where each of its components has a fundamental role and specific functions, which must be preserved.

The actions stemming from the new agenda for peace in the area of disarmament should help to reverse the stagnation faced by the UN disarmament machinery and promote progress on the issues that are immobilized in this area. This would make an effective contribution to achieving a world of peace, and to complying with the Declaration and Program of Action adopted at the first special session of the UNGA devoted to disarmament. The organs of the disarmament machinery must cease to be hostages to the struggle of geostrategic interests between

certain powers and their allies. Efforts should be directed at revitalizing the existing mechanisms.

The Conference on Disarmament has an indisputable and essential role as the sole multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament treaties. It is regrettable that this body has been paralyzed, undermining its mandate and the proper functioning of the disarmament machinery. We draw attention to the fact that, beyond the methods of work, the situation in the Conference on Disarmament is the result of a lack of political will on the part of some of its member states, which seek to maintain the status quo. The Conference is prepared to negotiate several items on its agenda simultaneously, if the will of all prevails.

A comprehensive strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is required. The immediate resumption of multilateral negotiations for a protocol or a legally binding instrument is the only effective method for this, which would implement and develop in a balanced and comprehensive manner all the articles of the BWC, including the need to establish a verification mechanism and an institutional mechanism to strengthen Article X.

We are concerned about the growing tendency to establish groups of experts of limited composition to analyze issues on the disarmament and arms control agenda that are highly sensitive and of interest to all Member States. The establishment of these groups should be the exception and not the rule; their operation should be based on the principle of transparency, allowing Member States to participate on equal terms in their work.

Cuba is also concerned that decision-making is increasingly moving away from the rule of consensus, instead of preserving this method, which has made it possible to move forward jointly in important disarmament processes. The First Committee of the General Assembly has become the Committee where most resolutions are submitted to vote, with almost no negotiation. We call for a true exercise of reflection on the attempts to impose agendas and initiatives that lack consensus and affect the future development of certain emerging issues.

Emerging challenges require analysis and responses within the Organization. New treaties and international legal instruments must be developed within the framework of the UN, as the main bulwark against global threats.

To reduce strategic risks, the Secretary-General has proposed broader support for non-proliferation and the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Non-proliferation should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a step toward achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is vital. The balance of the three pillars of the NPT must be ensured as a *sine qua non* for the legitimacy, integrity and effectiveness of this instrument.

We agree with the Secretary General on the need for a stronger commitment to the non-use of nuclear weapons and a timetable for their elimination. The only

sustainable solution to the existential problem posed by nuclear weapons is their total elimination, in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner.

The new agenda for peace must recognize that, more than half a century after the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, there has been no concrete progress in implementing the nuclear disarmament measures to which all States Parties committed themselves at the 2000 Review Conferences and in the Nuclear Disarmament Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

The principles of verification, transparency and irreversibility should be essential components of multilateral treaties, bilateral treaties and unilateral measures on nuclear disarmament. There is no justification for non-possessor States Parties to the NPT to continue to be subject to strict verification regimes while possessors have not taken concrete steps in this direction. Political manipulation and double standards in non-proliferation must cease. All States Parties must strictly comply with all their obligations under the NPT, without selective application.

As the Secretary-General notes in his proposed New Agenda for Peace, the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in January 2021 was an extraordinary achievement and a major step towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. The NPT was a milestone in the history of the United Nations, codifying the illegitimacy and illegality of nuclear weapons in international law, outlawing in its entirety the existence, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons and all nuclear testing. It would be important for a New Agenda for Peace to urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the NPT, with a view to its early universalization.

It would also be important to reflect in a new agenda for peace a call for all States that have not yet done so to join similar international instruments that establish the prohibition and elimination of other weapons of mass destruction, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

By virtue of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, that region identified the promotion of nuclear disarmament as a priority. Based on the experience of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the creation of and full respect for other Zones of Peace in the world should be considered in any peace agenda.

In the area of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, multiple challenges continue to hinder the full implementation of the Program of Action (PoA) and the International Instrument on the Marking and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons (ITI). A new agenda for peace must also focus on resolving and addressing these challenges, which implies enhancing all international cooperation and assistance activities by strengthening capacity building, ensuring financial and technical assistance, transferring equipment and technology, and increasing funding for activities related to the implementation of the PoA and ITI.

We reiterate that, to eradicate illicit arms trafficking, there is no need for more measurable tools or forced synergies with non-consensual instruments, but rather to address the root socio-economic causes that foster this scourge and to promote greater international assistance and cooperation to combat it.

The contribution of scientific and technological development to the progress of our civilization is irrefutable. In the light of new advances, it is necessary to adopt concrete measures to address the ethical, legal, security and humanitarian problems that emerging technologies pose for the maintenance of peace in the field of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

The use of lethal autonomous weapons systems would mean a change in the paradigm or the way war is waged, would seriously affect international security and would bring about an unprecedented increase in the arms race.

Autonomous weapons should be banned, as they are incompatible with international law and international humanitarian law. With regard to lethal autonomous weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be adopted as soon as possible to prohibit the manufacture, possession and use of fully autonomous weapons and to establish specific regulations for the use of semi-autonomous weapons and military attack drones.

V. Fight against terrorism

It is the responsibility of the United Nations, due to its universal character, to lead international efforts to prevent and fight against terrorism, within the framework of respect for the purposes and principles of its founding Charter and International Law. The fight against terrorism must be holistic, through direct actions aimed also at prevention in order to eradicate its root causes.

There is a need for increased international cooperation, without obstacles or restrictions, to prevent and counter terrorism. Given that terrorism is a growing threat to the world, a new agenda for peace should consider a greater allocation of resources to cooperation programs of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism for the benefit of developing countries.

The lack of a comprehensive convention reflecting a definition of terrorism and encompassing the international legal provisions adopted against this scourge in a single binding legal instrument has limited the scope for more effective results in preventing and combating terrorism.

The policy brief could address the need for a comprehensive legal framework to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including, among other issues, preventing and combating the harmful use of information and communications technologies for terrorist purposes, which violates the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The fight against terrorism should not be subject to political manipulation or double standards. We oppose linking terrorism to ethnic groups or religions.

VI. Cybersecurity

The use of information and communications technologies has transformed the international security environment.

In the area of cybersecurity, it is necessary to move towards the adoption of a legally binding instrument to regulate the behavior of States in this area.

The ongoing discussions in the Open Ended Working Group on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security established by the UN General Assembly, should be the basis for making progress on this issue. No parallel or alternative mechanism that does not have the support of all States that attempts to impose the approach of a group of countries over the majority of Member States will be able to guarantee, as the report "Our Common Agenda" points out, collective peace and security in the face of the emergence of new risks and trends that are complex to address in traditional ways.

Similarly, the current legal regime on outer space has proven to be insufficient. Member States must move towards the negotiation of an international instrument prohibiting the weaponization and militarization of outer space. In both cases, we are extremely concerned about the attempts of some States to impose a warmongering approach in the United Nations, trying to legitimize both cyberspace and outer space as a scenario of conflict, and thus justify punitive actions of use or threat of use of force, which is unacceptable for our country.

VI. Development

There is a close relationship between peace and development; peace and development are mutually reinforcing. A climate of peace and international security is an essential condition for the achievement of sustainable development. There can be no peace without development, and no development without peace.

There can be no peace while the military doctrines of some countries or groups of countries proliferate, violating the principles of the UN Charter and contemplating the expansion of their hegemonic interests to the detriment of the sovereign rights of other nations. While exorbitant resources are wasted on armaments, development aid commitments are not fulfilled and millions of people continue to be victims of hunger and poverty.

A fund managed by the United Nations should be created to which one percent of current military expenditures should be allocated to meet the economic and social development needs of nations and contribute to the promotion of peace.

The 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda cannot be translated into real benefits if they are not accompanied by a profound rethinking of the current economic, financial and trade order, in which new bases of justice, equity and solidarity are favored, where cooperation among States prevails and the

purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and International Law are strictly respected.

The current system of governance of the international financial institutions was created almost a century ago and today does not represent the interests and needs of most of the countries of the world. Nor do their policies provide developing countries with the spaces for national development strategies of their own or the stability needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

While a policy brief on the reform of the international financial architecture is planned, a new agenda for peace should reflect the urgency of such reform, which must be deep and comprehensive, and aim, among other outcomes, at greater and more effective participation of developing countries in the governance and decision-making processes of these institutions.

The new agenda for peace should also reaffirm the call to fulfill and increase Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments, as well as the need for developing countries to be able to count on fresh, additional and predictable resources, which must be backed up by concrete actions in the areas of market access, capacity building and technology transfer.

Similarly, developing countries' access to technical cooperation and financing on favorable terms must be defined. The implementation of a multilateral mechanism for the renegotiation of sovereign debts would allow for fair, balanced and development-oriented treatment. It should be ensured that developing countries have the fiscal space needed for post-pandemic recovery and to achieve the SDGs by mobilizing significant investments in quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure. Nor can a new paradigm of cooperation be envisaged without addressing the problems of the international trading system, which also needs to be reformed.

A new agenda for peace must point out that the responsibility for increasing investment, technology transfer, trade and cooperation with developing countries, and for making a decisive contribution to creating a new international order conducive to sustainable development, lies first and foremost with the developed countries.