

Japan's views, priorities and recommendations for a New Agenda for Peace

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I Situational overview

(1) Complex challenges around the world

Today, the international community is facing **era-defining changes**. **The free, open, and stable international order is now at stake** with serious challenges amidst historical changes in power balances and geopolitical tensions.

While a host of issues requiring cross-border cooperation among nations are piling up, **division and confrontation among nations** affects the functioning of the United Nations and the Security Council.

This is **a crisis of confidence in the United Nations and in multilateralism**.

The international community faces multiple direct threats to international peace and security. These include **unilateral changes to the status quo** by force and attempts to do so, **threats of force** including nuclear weapons, protracted **conflicts and violence, terrorism and violent extremism**, and the proliferation of **WMDs**.

The United Nations and the Security Council have played an important role in addressing these threats, but they **have not fully lived up to expectations** on some occasions. Peacekeeping is showing its limitations as seen in the absence of new missions since 2014 and a lack of tangible accomplishments of some existing ones.

Furthermore, **strategic risks** in new forms are increasingly serious. We have seen some countries **undermining the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime**. In **cyberspace, outer space**, and other areas, the risks that impede free access to and use of these areas are becoming increasingly serious. Supply chain vulnerabilities, increasing threats to critical infrastructure, and leadership struggles over advanced technologies are also becoming a major security challenge.

Today's complex risk multipliers such as **food and energy insecurity, global health challenges** and **climate change** have adverse effects on **human security** and lead to a deterioration in humanitarian situations by making it more difficult to protect people from threats to their lives, livelihoods, and dignity, and thus hinder the realization of sustainable peace. Failure to achieve sustainable peace in a country or a region has a negative impact on its neighborhood and the international community in the long run.

(2) Restore the credibility of the UN

Rebuilding a free, open, and stable international order is necessary for the security and prosperity of all nations. The United Nations, which consists of 193 countries and has various bodies

and agencies, should play a central role through **an integrated approach**.

To restore the credibility of the UN, all Member States should **return to the visions and principles of the UN Charter**. We should call for “**Uniting for the rule of law**,” breaking away from “rule by force.” The Friendly Relations Declaration of 1970 clarifies the principles of the UN Charter and serves as a foundation from which the basic principles for the promotion of the rule of law are drawn: to respect what is agreed upon (observing international law in good faith); not to allow any attempts to acquire territories through changing the status quo by force or coercion; and to cooperate with one another against serious violations of the Charter.

Strengthening the UN's functions to achieve the purpose of a New Agenda for Peace is also important to restore confidence.

Populations in vulnerable situations, including **women and youth**, are most affected by threats to peace and security. Therefore, all segments of society should be empowered and mobilized for peace.

II Update and better use the UN's toolbox for peace

(1) The Security Council

To restore the credibility of the UN, **the reform of the Security Council**, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, is paramount. The UN membership has quadrupled since 1945, and the issues facing the Council have become more complex and diverse. **Expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent seats** of the Council will reflect the reality of today. 2023 will mark the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the GA resolution which realized the previous Council reform. The Summit of the Future will be held in 2024, and 2025 will be the 80th anniversary of the founding of the UN. With these milestones in mind, we should seize the currently increasing momentum to achieve Security Council reform.

It is important to recall that **Chapter VI of the UN Charter** provides the Security Council with a number of measures for the pacific settlement of disputes. **Article 27(3)** of the Charter should be implemented in good faith.

There is an urgent need to **modernize the agenda of the Council**. Modern security challenges such as climate change, cybersecurity, emerging aspects of maritime security and dis/misinformation should be included on the list of agenda items. For that purpose, it may be fruitful for the Council to have an **interactive dialogue with non-Council members** on making the list and give itself the opportunity to consider agenda proposals from other UN bodies such as the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and the Human Rights Council (HRC).

The chairs of subsidiary bodies and penholders should be fairly and transparently allocated to secure efficiency and accountability in the Council's work.

To add value to decision-making by the 15 Council members, **Informal Interactive Dialogues** and the **Arria-Formula meetings** should be actively used to deepen dialogue with non-Council

members, other UN agencies, and civil society. Among UN bodies, there is great potential to create synergy between the PBC and the Council. Reviving the Council's "horizon-scanning briefings" with the PBC's assistance may encourage the Council to increasingly engage in **conflict prevention**.

(2) Peacekeeping, peacebuilding and human security

UN peacekeeping operations remain important to maintain public order and protect civilians in countries with limited security capabilities. Member States and the Secretariat should **give political support** to such peacekeeping operations and facilitate their better relations with host countries.

In order for UN peacekeeping operations to fully fulfill their mandates and gain credibility, their capabilities must be enhanced including by ensuring the appropriate allocation of resources and the **safety and security of peacekeepers**, as well as through **capacity building** and the introduction of modern technology. Countering dis/misinformation and preventing SEA is also important for peacekeepers to maintain their credibility.

On the other hand, given contemporary international realities and the available resources of the UN, the role of UN PKOs alone is insufficient. The Member States should consider how the UN can best **collaborate with regional and subregional organizations**. One idea is to establish a mechanism in which the PBC is requested to submit proposals about the Security Council's authorizations and financing.

Special political missions also have an essential role to play in embedding norms of dialogue, adherence to agreements, good governance, and protection of human rights when a country is transitioning from conflict resolution to peacebuilding. They **should be more actively established and used**, even on a small scale.

Peacebuilding, an integrated and coherent approach across humanitarian, development, and peace actors (the **HDP nexus**), should be the basis for creating and sustaining a stable order – not only during or after deployment of peace operations but even before conflicts erupt. The advent of interconnected threats and risk multipliers highlights the significance of peacebuilding all the more.

The key is to **build resilient institutions by focusing on the role of individuals**. The UN should encourage Member States to promote **inclusivity** (implementation of the WPS and YPS agendas) and to **protect human rights**.

By **realizing human security** through strengthening "investments in people," institutions and systems become resilient at the community, national, regional and global levels, which contributes not only to peacebuilding but to conflict prevention.

The convening power and advisory role of the PBC, the establishment of which was unanimously decided by Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit, **should be more actively and better used**. The Secretariat's role should also be strengthened to support the PBC's work. We should seek more occasions to utilize the PBC's advisory role, and expect the **Security**

Council, the General Assembly, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to proactively request the PBC's advice and take such advice into consideration when making decisions.

(3) General Assembly

The functioning of the "Uniting for Peace" resolution and GA resolution 76/262, which requires permanent members to face more accountability for their exercise of the veto, showed **the importance of the General Assembly expressing its will** when the Security Council fails to fulfill its responsibility due to the use of the veto. We should now consider **further expanding the role of the General Assembly** in international peace and security.

The General Assembly should not hesitate to make recommendations based on the "Uniting for Peace" resolution or to **call the attention of the Council** to situations of concern. In addition, **the annual report by the Council to the General Assembly** created in June every year should be enhanced to include an explanation of any use of the veto.

It is desirable for the General Assembly to actively make **recommendations to the Security Council** in accordance with Article 11(1) of the Charter or hold an interactive dialogue with the Council regarding such issues as strategic risks that could affect international peace and security, including in the fields of disarmament, cybersecurity, and the use of outer space.

From the viewpoint of supporting discussions among Member States, it is important to **strengthen the functions of the OPGA** and reduce the number of agenda items to focus on priorities.

(4) Disarmament and non-proliferation, cybersecurity, and outer space

The first priority in the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda should be to **maintain and strengthen the NPT regime**. While the 10th NPT Review Conference failed to adopt an outcome document, it is necessary to continue seeking realistic and practical efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, continue the record of non-use of nuclear weapons, enhance the transparency of nuclear forces, maintain the downward trend of the global nuclear stockpile, secure nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and promote an accurate understanding of the realities of nuclear weapon use.

Early entry into force of the **CTBT** is also important. **The Conference on Disarmament (CD) needs to be revitalized** to immediately commence negotiations on the **FMCT** and deepen discussions on **PAROS**.

With regard to biological and chemical weapons, it is necessary to take effective measures to strengthen the implementation of the **BWC** and **CWC**.

Furthermore, it is necessary to address various challenges in the area of **conventional weapons**, taking into account recent reports on civilian harm and casualties caused by the use of weapons including like anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. In addition, in light of the rapid

development of new technologies, it is important to discuss **the promotion of responsible behavior with regard to the military use of emerging technologies.**

A greater role for the Office for Disarmament Affairs in advancing international efforts in addressing challenges and promoting discourse in disarmament and non-proliferation issues is largely expected.

With regard to cybersecurity, we need to deepen **a shared international understanding on how international law applies to cyber operations** through the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) and deter malicious cyber operations.

Regarding outer space, we need to deepen discussions on **responsible behavior in outer space** and promote international rule making, especially through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) of the General Assembly.

(5) The Secretary-General and the Secretariat

The Secretary-General **should play a proactive role with the support of Member States** in a way complementary to the functions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. To this end, the rules and timeline for the Secretary-General's **selection process** should be more transparent. In this regard, we would like to recall that Japan submitted reflections based upon the experience of the selection process of the Secretary-General in 2016, entitled “Selection Process of the Secretary-General of the United Nations: Achievements and Lessons Learned.”

We should recall that the Secretary-General’s function under **Article 99** of the Charter. Member States, the Council and the Secretariat should interact with each other to explore the best way to reinvigorate this function.

Mechanisms should be developed so that the Secretary-General and the various UN organs can **accumulate available information**, which will contribute to strengthening their **fact-finding** and **early warning** functions. In this regard, the Security Council can, if appropriate, endorse reports from them, bearing in mind that Article 34 of the Charter stipulates that the Council may conduct investigations to determine whether the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Secretariat should be the hub for **measuring the impact of peacebuilding support** and should have the capacity to provide guidance on peacebuilding.

(6) Commitment to reform

Member States should not hesitate to update articles of the Charter, while preserving its visions and principles. Member States are already committed to UN reform and therefore should urgently develop modalities for substantive discussions to that end.

Let us take actions to realize what Member States have agreed to in a series of anniversary

declarations of the United Nations.