Kabul, 16 May 2018 – Kids make the most of the last rays of sun to finish a game.
UNAMA Photo/Najeeb Farzad
Adapting to a Rapidly Changing World

CONFLICT PREVENTION, mediation and conflict resolution are the cornerstones of the work of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). Today, the need to adapt to deal with a rapidly changing conflict landscape is clear. Violent conflict has increased after decades of relative decline. Direct deaths in war, displaced populations, military spending, and terrorist incidents have all surged in the past twenty years, as detailed in the recent UN-World Bank “Pathways to Peace” report. Many of the risks we face today – including climate change, violent extremism, organized crime – transcend national borders and make each conflict we deal with more complex and more protracted. Meanwhile, conflict prevention and peacebuilding have remained fragmented and under-funded, while enormous human and material capital is spent on crisis management.

To address these changes, the peace and security pillar of the United Nations, along with other important parts of the Organization, is undergoing a transformation. We are changing to become more nimble, coordinated and, thus, effective in helping countries eliminate extreme poverty, prevent armed conflict and overcome other persistent ills. The adjustments will be large and small. For one, starting in 2019, DPA will be renamed the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. But the change will be more than cosmetic. We are pooling resources and capacity for analysis and action with our peacekeeping and peacebuilding colleagues to ensure that the UN can anticipate and face threats to peace earlier and with more coherence, as well as design smoother transitions away from conflict.

Success in our work depends not only on us but on the support of different parties, including those we are trying to help. I applaud the dedication and commitment shown by my colleagues around the world. And I have seen the active cooperation of parties trying to move beyond conflict. In the pages of this year-end edition of Politically Speaking, you will see some of the results of DPA’s work to prevent conflict, mediate disputes and provide electoral support, among other efforts. Come 1 January 2019, our name will change. Our commitment to helping societies avert war and build peace will not.

Rosemary A. DiCarlo
Rosemary A. DiCarlo
Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs
25 July 2018, Kabul – The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) signed an agreement with the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to commit international financial support for Afghanistan’s elections. The agreement enabled enhanced contributions to Afghanistan’s electoral budget, with donors pledging to fund an additional $57 million to the elections budget, in addition to pledging ongoing assistance to the IEC and the Electoral Complaints Commission.

UNAMA Photo/Fardin Waezi
05 November 2018, Herat – A series of UNAMA-backed theatrical performances drew hundreds of children from across Afghanistan’s western province of Herat to learn about human rights and the impact of the conflict on civilians.
On 22 September 2018, Special Representative for Central Africa François Louncény Fall participated in the Route de la Paix march calling for stability and an end to conflicts around the world. The event took place before the kick-off of the fifth edition of the Peace Tournament in Libreville, Gabon, organized by the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) with the assistance of the NGO Fédération pour la paix universelle.

UNOCA Photo/Norbert N. Ouedjji.
In October 2018, UNOCA provided technical and substantive support to a delegation from the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) during a mission to Sarh, Maro and Sido in Chad, on the border with the Central African Republic. Pictured is the exchange with local authorities about security challenges related to transhumance and pastoralism.

UNOCA Photo/Axelle Dzikongo
UN Electoral Assistance

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

provided to:

60 Countries
72 Missions conducted

including:
17 Needs Assessment Missions
5 Advisory Missions
29 Other Electoral Technical Missions

6 Workshops & roundtable discussions on key electoral matters organized

210 Officials
4 Regional Organizations
65 Countries

All figures as of 30 November 2018

Under-Secretary-General Rosemary A. DiCarlo is the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance activities and the UN system-wide lead in all matters related to electoral assistance.
A former member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the Territorial Area for Training and Reintegration (TATR) of Carrizal, Antioquia, Colombia, takes part in an event during which 2,500 trees were planted. The initiative is typical of the efforts made to assist in the social and economic reintegation of ex-combatants into civilian life.

UN Photo/Elizabeth Yarce

On 4 December 2018, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Rosemary A. DiCarlo visited one of the TATR in San José de Oriente, Cesar, Colombia to learn more about projects implemented by ex-combatants as part of their reintegration into civilian life.

UN Verification Mission in Colombia Photo/ Liliana Garavito
The United Nations helps keep the peace in Cyprus and hosts a good offices process between the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. On 27 October 2018, the peacekeeping mission in Cyprus, UNFICYP, in partnership with the Embassy of Netherlands in Cyprus and the Centre for Visual Arts and Research (CVAR), co-organized a walking tour in South Nicosia followed by a discussion on “Women as Vanguards of the Peace Process in Cyprus.” The Head of UNFICYP and Deputy Special Adviser of the Secretary-General Elizabeth Spehar opened the forum.

UNFICYP Photo/Priyanka Chowdhury
As of 30 November 2018, the Standby Team of Mediation Experts has been deployed 116x in support of mediation and capacity-building efforts and has provided 8x remote support.

Regional Breakdown of Deployments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the Pacific</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More than 80 former colonies have attained independence since the creation of the United Nations. But the process of decolonization is not complete. Presently, 17 territories home to nearly 2 million people in Africa, Europe, the Atlantic, the Caribbean and the Pacific remain on the UN list of Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs). In March 2018, the Special Committee on Decolonization, supported by DPA’s Decolonization Unit, conducted a visit to New Caledonia to support “the Territory in its preparations for the referendum on self-determination”. The referendum was held successfully on 4 November 2018. DPA’s Electoral Assistance provided support to the organization of the referendum.
The UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit (left), along with Deputy-Secretary-General Amina Mohammed (centre), a Joint UN-AU Solidarity Mission to South Sudan in July 2018. This was part of a series of missions that also took the Special Envoy to Burundi (9-12 August), the Central African Republic (13-15 August) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (16-19 August) to obtain a political commitment from the leaders of those countries to fully involve women in political and peace processes in the region. Pictured are the Special Envoy, the Deputy Secretary-General, and the African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security Bineta Diop (right).
Iraq

Baghdad electoral recount centre on 1 August 2018 during the manual recount of votes from the 12 May 2018 national elections.

UN Photo/UNAMI PIO
Lebanon

Acting UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Pernille Kardel visited Lebanese army positions along Lebanon’s north-eastern border in Ras Baalbek and Arsal, seeing first-hand how the Lebanese army presence had succeeded in extending state authority and security and stability in those areas. Her office plays a central role in encouraging coordinated international support for the Lebanese army and security institutions to reinforce the country’s sovereignty, security, stability and territorial integrity.

UN Photo/UNSCOL PIO
Security Council in 2018*

114 Consultations
In-depth, closed-door meetings

260 Meetings
Normally public

Top 3 Country-Specific Items Discussed

Middle East mostly Syria and Yemen
Sudan/South Sudan
Middle East mostly Israel-Palestine

41
27
14

49 Resolutions
Formal expressions of the opinion or will of the Security Council, generally legally binding

18 Presidential Statements
Statement made by the President of the Security Council on behalf of the Council, not legally binding

*as of 30 November 2018
more information: un.org/sc

79 Press Statements
Declaration to the media made by the President of the Security Council on behalf of all 15 Members

3 Visits
Afghanistan in January 2018
Democratic Republic of the Congo in October 2018
Bangladesh and Myanmar in April/May 2018
In September 2018, the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) hosted successful talks between armed groups, ending a month of fighting in Tripoli and initiating a series of security arrangements intended to replace Tripoli’s disruptive militias with professional police and military and deter them from interfering in the functioning of Libyan sovereign institutions. UN Special Representative Ghassan Salame (right) traveled across the country, to leverage the UN Action Plan in order to finally close Libya’s long transitional period.

An UNSMIL-facilitated reconciliation agreement resulted in the displaced Tawergha community being allowed to return to their hometown after eight years of exile.
26 October 2018, Mogadishu – The first-ever Mogadishu Tech Summit took place in October 2018. The participants – hundreds of Somalis from young entrepreneurs to potential investors – shared perspectives on how digital technological innovations can drive sustainable development, while sharing perspectives on various issues ranging from environmental conservation and overcoming challenges linked to climate change to developing smart cities and building community resilience in the face of challenges that come with urbanization. This UNDP initiative was supported by the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and backed by the local innovation hub iRise, the Federal Government of Somalia and other partners.
As of 1 January 2019, DPA becomes DPPA, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. Look out for corresponding changes in handles and addresses of our web presences.