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**Strengthening of the United Nations system**

**United Nations reform: measures and proposals**

## **Restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar**

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

#### *Summary*

The reform of the peace and security pillar of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital and timely step that I am initiating as part of the wider effort to reform the Organization. Today's peace and security challenges and the shortcomings of the Organization that have been identified in a number of reviews and studies call for adjustments to the architecture and working methods of the peace and security pillar of the Secretariat, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the pillar by reducing the fragmentation of efforts and ensuring a more joined up, whole-of-pillar approach to the delivery of mandates and stronger cross-pillar cooperation. The present report contains my proposal, for the consideration of the General Assembly, for restructuring the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office, as well as related changes in the Organization's working culture. It describes the basic concept, underlying principles and goals of the reform. Should the Assembly support the concept and the outlines of the reform, another report providing further details on the proposal, including its full financial implications, will be submitted.

The overarching goals of the reform and restructuring of the peace and security pillar are to prioritize prevention and sustaining peace; enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions; make the peace and security pillar more coherent, nimble and effective through a "whole-of-pillar" approach; and align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars.

The proposal has five main elements. First, the creation of a Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and a Department of Peace Operations. Second, the creation of a single political-operational structure under Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities, reporting to the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations. Third, the establishment



of a Standing Principals' Group of the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations, under my chairmanship. Fourth, the enhancement of certain priority areas to ensure coherence and coordination across the peace and security pillar. And fifth, the introduction of several non-structural changes in the way the peace and security pillar works on a daily basis.

## I. Introduction

1. The prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes is the *raison d'être* of the United Nations. While the Organization today is called upon to perform a wide range of critical roles, from development work to humanitarian assistance, to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, there is no question that it arose from the ashes of war in order to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. More than seven decades later, that goal remains as relevant and as urgent as ever. Despite its continued and relentless efforts, the multiplicity and growing complexity of today’s peace and security challenges and threats often surpass its ability to respond. Today’s global landscape demands a United Nations that is not only more effective and coherent, but one that places conflict prevention and sustaining peace at the core of its efforts.

2. While the causes of international failure to prevent some of the deadliest conflicts are diverse and complex, I have long been convinced that the fragmentation of efforts across the United Nations system contributes to undermining the Organization’s ability to respond to crises and conflicts early and effectively. The Secretariat, in particular the peace and security pillar, needs to be more nimble, pragmatic, coherent and flexible, with the ability to develop and more effectively support a diverse range of engagements, including operations, across a conflict cycle and with a range of actors within the United Nations system and beyond. The heads of the peace and security entities and their staff deserve credit for their commendable efforts to overcome those challenges through close coordination and collaborative working relations. It is now necessary to address challenges through the institutional reform of the peace and security pillar.

3. Upon taking office, I announced steps to address structural and non-structural disincentives and barriers to a more effective discharge of the Secretariat’s core peace and security responsibilities. I established an internal review team to study existing proposals for change in the Secretariat’s peace and security architecture, including the 2015 reports of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see [A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)) and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (see [A/69/968-S/2015/490](#)) and the 2015 global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), and to develop and present options for further improvements to its structures and working methods.

4. In those reviews, the following key parameters were highlighted: (a) the growing scale and complexity of modern conflict; (b) the primacy of political solutions and the need for greater attention to addressing the root causes of conflict and prioritizing the prevention of conflict and sustaining peace; and (c) the importance of nationally owned, people-centred and inclusive political solutions to conflicts and crises. The fragmentation of the United Nations system was seen as a critical limiting factor in the Organization’s ability to engage early, flexibly and effectively across the spectrum of conflict, drawing on the full set of available tools. It was indicated in the reviews that separate financing arrangements for the United Nations engagement in peace and security issues, an overly bureaucratic and non-responsive administrative framework, and institutional competition were further impediments to strategic and operational coherence. The need for stronger global and regional partnerships with non-United Nations entities to collectively address contemporary multidimensional peace and security challenges was also identified. The need for smoother and more effective transitions between different types of United Nations engagement and presences at the field level was highlighted.

5. Member States have asked me to deliver on key issues in prevention, sustaining peace and peacekeeping. My predecessor’s report on the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations

([A/70/357-S/2015/682](#)) contained some of the measures he had taken in his remaining tenure to address those priorities. I was encouraged to undertake a more comprehensive consideration of the Panel's recommendation to restructure the Secretariat's peace and security architecture. Strong appeals for reform were also contained in the concurrent Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture ("sustaining peace") of April 2016 (Assembly resolution [70/262](#) and Council resolution [2282 \(2016\)](#)). The Assembly and the Council called for progress across a number of core areas of direct relevance to the restructuring of the peace and security pillar, including the need to enhance policy and operational coherence within and across the United Nations system; improve internal leadership, accountability and capacities; and strengthen partnerships among the United Nations and key stakeholders. They also called for the revitalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office, on which I will report in full as requested during the seventy-second session of the Assembly. As outlined in the document shared with Member States on 3 May 2017, prioritizing prevention and sustaining peace encompasses both a surge in preventive diplomacy and effectively addressing underlying challenges through a concerted focus on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In its resolution [2378 \(2017\)](#), the Council reaffirmed its resolve to strengthen the central role of the United Nations in peacekeeping and welcomed my intention to introduce peacekeeping reform within the Secretariat as well as on the ground.

6. Against the background of the evolving nature of today's peace and security challenges and after careful consideration of the findings and recommendations of the internal review team and the priorities and needs of Member States, the reorganization of the peace and security pillar of the Secretariat, as well as an improvement of its working methods, is proposed. The proposal does not seek to change the established mandates, functions or funding sources of the Secretariat or the component parts of the peace and security pillar. On 12 September 2017, I shared an informal note with Member States summarizing this proposal. I am grateful for the positive feedback I have received from Member States so far and for their encouragement to undertake bold and meaningful reforms of the peace and security pillar in consultation with Member States. I will continue to take into account observations and inputs I receive from Member States.

7. My proposals are part of a larger agenda of reform of the Organization to make it fit for delivering on the promise of the Charter of the United Nations to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". I submitted my proposed improvements to United Nations management to the General Assembly, and have outlined the repositioning of the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda to the Economic and Social Council. I have presented my strategy to achieve gender parity, as well as a number of other internal steps within my authority to improve coherence and coordination. Member States have already acted on my proposal to establish the Office of Counter-Terrorism. I will seek to ensure that all reform efforts under my leadership are mutually reinforcing and aim to foster a whole-of-system approach.

8. My proposal for the reform of the peace and security pillar has two dimensions. First, the restructuring of the key substantive entities, namely, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office, as well as related changes in the working culture, will ensure more joined-up, whole-of-pillar and cross-pillar engagement for prevention, crisis response and sustaining peace.

9. The second dimension comprises a series of measures that I have shared with Member States in my report on shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations ([A/72/492](#) and [A/72/492/Add.1](#)). They are aimed at bringing decision-making

closer to the point of delivery; trusting and empowering managers; ensuring greater accountability and transparency; reducing duplicative structures and overlapping mandates; increasing support for the field; and reforming the planning and budgetary processes. If approved, my management reforms will strengthen the Organization's ability to deliver nimble, effective, accountable, efficient and decentralized operational support to the peace and security pillar, including peace operations.

10. The present report represents the formal presentation of the substantive aspects of my proposal for the reform of the peace and security pillar for the consideration of the General Assembly. It describes the basic concept, underlying principles and goals of the reform, and elaborates on my note of 12 September 2017 on the restructuring of the peace and security pillar, taking into account the feedback provided thus far by Member States.

11. I believe that this proposal is sufficiently far-reaching and innovative enough to improve the way the peace and security pillar functions. At the same time, it is realistic, manageable and — most importantly — achievable. It seeks to enable the more effective delivery of existing mandates and functions and to build a stronger approach to addressing peace and security challenges, underpinned by strengthened partnerships inside and outside the Organization, while also reaffirming the principle of national ownership. My aim is to strengthen and improve the Organization's engagement on peace and security matters through the reorganization of relevant departments and offices and the development of working methods and an organizational culture that supports a “whole-of-pillar” approach.

12. My proposal is intended to be cost-neutral. It does not seek any reallocation of resources from development or other areas to peace and security, or vice versa. I am hopeful that the General Assembly will approve the concept and basic elements of the proposal.

## **II. Goals of the proposal for reform**

13. Since taking office, I have tried to articulate a forward-looking vision for the United Nations and prioritized the prevention of crises and conflicts that take a high toll on humanity and undermine institutions and capacities to achieve peace and development and protect human rights. I identified preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace as the priority. I am convinced that by prioritizing prevention, we can also enhance the coherence and coordination of efforts across the pillars at all stages of a conflict.

14. The goals of my proposal are to: (a) prioritize prevention and sustaining peace; (b) enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, ensuring the primacy of politics and flexibility of approach; (c) make the peace and security pillar more coherent, nimble and effective through a “whole-of-pillar” approach to address fragmentation; and (d) align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars.

15. First, the peace and security pillar as a whole must increase its capacity to help prevent conflict and its ability to more rapidly and effectively respond to the warning signs of crises and the outbreak or escalation of conflicts. The Organization must identify at an early stage emerging threats to peace and engage through rapid and effective good offices and mediation to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict. Efforts to prevent conflicts and major crises from breaking out in the first place, with the support of the Security Council and working with concerned stakeholders and partners, must receive the highest priority. The Organization must significantly reduce the need to intervene through large-scale

peace operations and large-scale humanitarian responses. I have stressed the need for a “surge in diplomacy for peace” through the strategic use of my good offices, bolstered by capable envoys with different backgrounds and skills, including increased numbers of mediators, both men and women, with different geographical backgrounds and expertise. This surge should build on an enhanced United Nations prevention and mediation posture, including through regional offices as forward platforms for preventive diplomacy; strengthened support for building national and regional capacities for prevention and mediation; deeper partnerships with national and regional stakeholders and other mediation actors; more effective engagement by peace operations; and more robust and predictable funding for preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and mediation. As part of this effort, I have established the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, comprising 18 internationally recognized personalities who will provide me with advice and support on specific mediation efforts. Adherence to the vision of sustaining peace throughout prevention, conflict resolution, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding engagements, in the field and at Headquarters, and through partnerships with national, regional and other stakeholders at all stages of the conflict cycle will help to ensure that greater attention is paid to analysing and addressing the root causes of conflict in any given context.

16. Second, even with the best of efforts to prevent conflict, armed conflicts and other forms of violence will continue to threaten national, regional and international peace and security. The deployment of peace operations will therefore remain an essential and highly visible element of the peace and security repertoire of the United Nations. My intention through these proposals is that peace operations place political solutions at the centre of their efforts, and are more fit for purpose in today’s complex world, on the basis of more tailored, sequenced and flexible mandates and variable mission designs. They need to address the complexity of current conflicts, which require a context-driven approach, by working closely with national stakeholders and United Nations country teams. Peace operations must be a key ingredient in a well-coordinated institutional structure for prevention and sustaining peace, political strategies, conflict resolution and crisis management. The United Nations must also be prepared to address new and growing political and security challenges, and my proposal will help to ensure that peace operations effectively adapt to those challenges, which would require better-tailored and sequenced mandates.

17. Third, the peace and security pillar must become more nimble, coherent and effective and embody a “whole-of-pillar” approach that prioritizes prevention and sustaining peace while addressing key strategic, political and operational priorities. As outlined in the present report, both structural and non-structural elements must contribute to creating a more effective, coherent and joined-up pillar, enabling the United Nations to contribute earlier, better and more comprehensively to efforts to sustain peace, prevent conflict and respond to the escalation of a crisis or the outbreak of conflict. My proposal seeks to overcome fragmentation and facilitate the effective use of capacities across the peace and security pillar, with a strengthened focus on supporting and enabling the field and working with multidisciplinary teams drawn from across the United Nations system. In this respect, I emphasize that while my proposal, as set out below, envisages the existence of two separate departments, they would function as joined-up entities responsible for the entire range of peace and security engagements and operations.

18. Fourth, the peace and security pillar must be organized and positioned to work more effectively with the rest of the United Nations system. The pillar should ensure alignment with the human rights pillar and integrate human rights in its work. The pillar must also work closely with the development system, as well as the humanitarian arm of the United Nations. The role of Resident Coordinators and

United Nations country teams is crucial in this regard. To this end, the functions of the Peacebuilding Support Office, under the overall leadership of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, will be bolstered and assume a stronger cross-pillar bridging role in the future. Critical to this will be to ensure proper support for the Peacebuilding Commission and its strengthened advisory, convening and bridging role among the principal organs and relevant entities of the United Nations, and the management of a strengthened Peacebuilding Fund, providing catalytic, rapid-response and flexible support as a facilitator to sustain peace, on my behalf. The components of the current Peacebuilding Support Office will be empowered to connect the pillar with system-wide efforts and tools across the conflict spectrum and strengthen partnerships with United Nations and non-United Nations entities, in line with the vision of the resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

19. There are strong linkages between the reform of the peace and security pillar and the focus on the repositioning of the United Nations development system, on which I reported earlier in 2017 (see [A/72/124-E/2018/3](#)) and will again report on in December. Building effective and resilient institutions and national capacities that can withstand shocks and stresses that lead to conflict is key to my prevention agenda. By making United Nations country teams better equipped with relevant capacity and expertise for building national capacities, I am convinced that the United Nations will be more effective in helping Member States to achieve their goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **III. Proposed reorganization of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office**

20. My proposal seeks to organize and integrate existing substantive capacities and resources more rationally in order to channel them more effectively towards achieving the goals outlined above. It also envisages important non-structural changes. It calls for the creation of:

(a) A Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, which would combine the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs and the peacebuilding responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Department would prioritize and direct capacities and resources to the prevention of conflict, mediation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as well as to enhanced cross-pillar cooperation and a variety of specialized capacities. It would provide direction, management and support for regional offices, my special and personal envoys and advisers and offices in support of political processes;

(b) A Department of Peace Operations, which would combine the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs to provide direction, management and support for peacekeeping and field-based special political missions outside the purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, as well as a variety of specialized capacities;

(c) A single political-operational structure under Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities, with dual reporting lines to the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations, which would belong to and link the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations and would be responsible for the day-to-day management of all political and operational peace and security activities. This

regional approach would enhance understanding of specific contexts and facilitate engagement and cooperation with regional and other partners;

(d) A Standing Principals' Group of the Under-Secretaries-General of the two proposed departments, under my chairmanship, which would provide unified leadership for strategic, political and operational responsibilities to ensure a coherent "whole-of-pillar" approach at Headquarters and in the field.

### **Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs**

21. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would manage a spectrum of engagements in the area of peace and security to ensure a more holistic approach to sustaining peace. These would include early upstream monitoring, early warning and response, envoys, regional political offices, offices in support of political processes, mediation and electoral assistance support and other preventive, conflict resolution, mediation and peacebuilding activities, including through enhanced cross-pillar cooperation and strategic and policy partnerships. The Department would also oversee and manage my good offices and diplomatic efforts, including political aspects of relations with Member States and other intergovernmental organizations, in its areas of responsibility.

22. The Department would dedicate institutional capacity and space to conflict prevention and sustaining peace. It would identify and analyse threats to peace and security in coordination with the Department of Peace Operations and other Secretariat and United Nations system partners, notably the human rights and development pillars. It would develop and employ relevant tools, capacities and expertise for prevention and mediation. To that end, it would rely on regional offices as forward platforms for preventive diplomacy; build partnerships with regional and other actors; and provide dedicated mediation support and electoral assistance to Member States. The Department would provide analytical and support capacities to Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams to help to develop national capacities to address the drivers and root causes of conflict. It would also engage with and through the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund.

23. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would assume the responsibilities currently carried out by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs as the system-wide focal point for United Nations electoral assistance, mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution [46/137](#) and reaffirmed every two years.

24. The components of the current Peacebuilding Support Office (policy, intergovernmental and financing) would remain integrated under the leadership of an Assistant Secretary-General, and would be strengthened to serve as a bridge for cross-pillar cooperation, managing the Peacebuilding Fund and supporting the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission has an important role to play as a dedicated intergovernmental advisory body to bring coherence to international peacebuilding efforts, bridging the pillars of the United Nations system and serving as a platform to convene a diverse and broad-ranging set of actors. Support for the Commission would be bolstered by a strong functional linkage between the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, including the single regional political-operational structure, to ensure the Commission's connection to shared regional analysis, strategies and field presences. The terms of reference of the Peacebuilding Fund would remain unchanged, and a functional linkage would be maintained with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, providing a catalytic, timely and flexible pre-positioned pooled fund as a facilitator for sustaining peace across the United Nations system. The Peacebuilding



Fund would also assume a strategic resource mobilization role for predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding.

25. The peacebuilding components of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would thus act as a “hinge” between the peace and security pillar and the United Nations development system and humanitarian actors. This arrangement would include the participation of the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support in the coordination mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group, the proposed joint steering committee for development and humanitarian coordination and the Executive Committee. With an emphasis on prevention and sustaining peace, the arrangement would contribute to the revitalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office, as mandated in the resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. I will provide further detail on this revitalization in my next report.

26. As mandated in the resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would draw together the expertise of the United Nations system to facilitate coherent system-wide action and support partnerships for conflict prevention and sustaining peace. This would include intensified collaboration with international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank, as well as civil society, women’s organizations and the private sector. The Department’s work on partnerships would also include support and capacity-building for regional and subregional organizations and entities, as well as the development of regional initiatives and strategies, together with the Department of Peace Operations and other United Nations partners.

27. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would provide substantive and secretariat support to the Security Council, and some subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the Security Council, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It would provide administrative and substantive support to sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels, and other mechanisms. Electoral assistance and mediation support would be located in the Department. The Department would provide support to non-United Nations entities on peace and security issues, as mandated.

### **Department of Peace Operations**

28. The Department of Peace Operations would provide integrated strategic, political, operational and management advice, direction and support to peacekeeping operations, as well as to field-based special political missions outside the purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. This would ensure greater nimbleness, coherence and consistency and encourage the creation of an integrated “centre of excellence” for United Nations peace operations. I wish to emphasize, however, that this proposal fully recognizes the distinct nature of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as their different financing mechanisms.

29. The Department of Peace Operations would be responsible for preventing, responding to and managing conflict and sustaining peace in countries and areas in which peacekeeping missions and field-based special political missions outside the purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs are deployed. Its responsibilities would include facilitating and implementing political agreements, providing advice and support through thematic experts in a range of areas and leading integrated analysis of and planning for peace operations and the countries and areas

in which peace operations are deployed, in coordination with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and other Secretariat and United Nations system partners. They would also encompass the development of relevant programming at the country level to address drivers and root causes of violent conflict. The Department would also continue to enhance effective partnerships and coordination in support of the mandates and strategies of United Nations missions under its purview.

30. The Department would support diplomatic efforts by peace operations under its responsibility, including relations with Member States, intergovernmental bodies, regional and other organizations and other stakeholders, as relevant and in coordination with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and other partners. To this end, the Department would ensure that it uses the full range of relevant tools, capacities and expertise to enhance its support for peace operations and the countries and areas in which they are deployed, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. Where mandated, the Department would also provide support to non-United Nations entities and missions on peace and security issues.

31. The Office of Military Affairs, led by an Assistant Secretary-General, will be located in the Department of Peace Operations. It will carry out its core mandated tasks, including capability definition and force generation, deployment and oversight of military components of missions. The single regional political-operational structure will facilitate and increase the effectiveness of many activities of the Office, such as the provision of technical military advice and support to political and peace processes, including those in which no United Nations operational deployment is contemplated, and the provision of military planning and deployment advice to partners.

32. The Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, led by an Assistant Secretary-General, will provide operational and advisory support to rule of law and security sector institutions, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and mine action. It will ensure systematic collaboration with all relevant United Nations and non-United Nations actors, as is currently done through the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and Other Crisis Situations and inter-agency working groups on security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The Police Division and other components of the Office would work with the single political-operational structure to support stabilization and help to carry out protection-related tasks in field missions, as well as capacity-building and advisory functions. The location of the police and military components in one department would help to maintain the necessary links between police and military elements in planning, force generation, deployment and protection-related activities.

## **IV. “Whole-of-pillar” approach**

### **Single regional political-operational structure**

33. Central to my proposal would be to combine the current regional divisions of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations into a single political-operational structure to be shared by the two new departments. The structure would be headed by Assistant Secretaries-General with defined regional responsibilities. The shared capacity would be responsible for the entire range of political and operational engagements on peace and security issues, including the provision of strategic, political and operational guidance, analysis and direction and integrated operational support for prevention and sustaining peace, as well as crisis monitoring and response. The Assistant Secretaries-

General would develop integrated strategies and approaches for prevention, crisis response and sustaining peace in their respective regions.

34. The establishment of a single political-operational structure would ensure that field presences have one point of entry for political and operational requirements from Headquarters. It would also facilitate smoother, more coherent and effective transitions between different types of United Nations engagement. The use of the support account for peacekeeping operations and the regular budget will remain unchanged.

35. The single political-operational structure would also enable improved regional analysis, strategies and responses with combined regional expertise under a single regional leadership; strengthen the coherence and integration of political and operational mandates and engagements; facilitate early warning and the activation of preventive measures, and crisis response; provide substantive guidance and support to field presences; enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, among other partners; and ensure continuity in transitions between mission and non-mission contexts, as well as between special political missions and peacekeeping operations. All peace and security presences would benefit from strengthened and coordinated political and operational guidance as a result of combining all regional teams and capacities in one structure. Member States and other partners would find it easier to engage the relevant interlocutor on a wide range of issues applicable to a particular country or region.

36. The Assistant Secretaries-General would report to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on issues relating to non-mission settings, regional offices, offices in support of political processes and offices of my special envoys and advisers, and to the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations on issues relating to peacekeeping missions and field-based special political missions outside the purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the countries and areas in which they are deployed, while keeping the other Under-Secretary-General informed. The dual reporting arrangement represents a new and innovative way of working that enhances coherence between the related responsibilities of the two departments. It will require significant leadership and management investment and highly collaborative working relationships, embodied in a new, more synergetic working culture. The respective regional areas would be organized by regional divisions and further organized into teams tailored to the specific context and needs, with the aim of enhancing intra-pillar and cross-pillar coherence. Reporting lines to both the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would ensure access to relevant specialized capacities, as well as the flow of information to and from and coordination with the other Assistant Secretaries-General in the two departments.

37. I am committed to providing effective Headquarters support to peacekeeping and special political missions. Mechanisms for ensuring integration and coherence with regard to political engagements and operations will be reviewed and enhanced.

38. Structures and internal measures would be designed to allow the Assistant Secretaries-General to ensure that crisis management and operational exigencies in the backstopping of peace operations do not draw capacities away from the work on conflict prevention. A clear division of labour would be fostered and maintained to allow staff both to dedicate more time to political analysis, devising strategies and process design, as core functions of prevention, and to fulfil the political and operational requirements for backstopping peace operations. As such, these proposals will seek to foster sufficient space, capacities and resources for preventive diplomacy and other prevention activities. The Assistant Secretaries-General would also ensure that regional dimensions of conflict inform mission-specific strategies and are

addressed systematically through the development and implementation of regional strategies, in coordination with relevant partners and United Nations field presences.

39. The success of the single political-operational structure will depend on strong partnerships and coordination mechanisms that unite all peace and security pillar stakeholders. It would benefit from collaborative approaches and resources for deeper cross-pillar cooperation, including through institutionalized cooperation models, such as the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and Other Crisis Situations, the Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention of the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political Affairs, existing capacities relating to electoral assistance and mediation support, and the role of the peacebuilding components of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs in fostering system-wide coherence.

40. Relevant coordination mechanisms will continue to bring together political, security, development, human rights, humanitarian and other key stakeholders. These mechanisms will be enhanced to ensure the provision of coordinated support to the field and conduct joined-up analysis and planning.

41. Coordination mechanisms would be put in place to ensure that the Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities adequately address cross-cutting and cross-regional matters.

#### **Standing Principals' Group**

42. In order to provide leadership for all strategic, political and operational functions and ensure a coherent “whole-of-pillar” approach across the peace and security pillar, a Standing Principals' Group of the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations would be established under my chairmanship. The Group would ensure coordination, communication and coherence in the implementation of peace and security priorities, support managerial and leadership coherence, both at Headquarters and in the field, and support senior leadership appointments in missions. It would also provide a high-level entry point for the development and human rights pillars and other entities. Interaction with the operational support and management departments would be facilitated at the level of the Standing Principals' Group. Appropriate mechanisms and procedures would be put in place to ensure coordination and collaboration among all the Assistant Secretaries-General in the two departments, as well as with the relevant Assistant Secretaries-General in the envisaged global operational support and management departments.

## **V. Link to global operational support and management departments**

43. The close cooperation of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations with the two new departments proposed within the management reform stream, namely, the Department of Management, Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support, will be essential. This will be achieved through the representation of the peace and security pillar on the Management Client Board, as well as dedicated support capacities. Appropriate field-focused policies, procedures, mechanisms and structures will be established between the pillar and the Department of Management, Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support to ensure coherence in all aspects related to the field.

## VI. Gender

44. As acknowledged in the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and in Council resolution 2242 (2015), additional efforts are needed to ensure adequate attention is given to priorities under the women, peace and security agenda, in particular women's meaningful participation in all peace efforts at all stages of the conflict cycle. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations would maintain their respective specialized gender capacities and functions with a view to ensuring the mainstreaming of gender at all levels and in all areas of the Organization's work. These dedicated capacities will work closely with each other and with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to provide technical, political and policy expertise to the preventive diplomacy and peacemaking engagements and the gender units of peacekeeping and special political missions, as called for in the global study. Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure the coordination of efforts, the participation of gender expertise and capacity in all mission assessments and their rapid deployment to mission and non-mission contexts at critical periods, including during transitions.

## VII. Priority areas

45. In addition, I will propose a number of measures to enhance certain priority areas that are essential for the success of my reform proposal, including to ensure coherence and coordination across the peace and security pillar. Work is ongoing, for example, to identify additional ways to create greater coherence among the various components of the two departments, such as in the specialized capacities and services in the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions and other relevant specialized capacities, including the electoral assistance, mediation support and peacebuilding components of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, will deepen their collaboration, leading to a more integrated peacebuilding approach. These specialized capacities will serve all missions, as well as non-mission settings. Policy, guidance, knowledge management, evaluations and training responsibilities across the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office would also be adjusted to reflect the new structure.

46. I also foresee that a number of priority areas to support conflict prevention, crisis response and sustaining peace will require particular attention, such as analysis, planning, partnerships and communications.

47. The establishment of the single regional political-operational structure will help to enhance conflict analysis by allowing staff to dedicate more time to analysing peace and security trends in a particular country or region. In addition, joined-up, system-wide analysis of a particular context and of key stakeholders is a critical first step to more coherent strategies, political engagement and more effective prevention, programming and, where mandated, operations. That will boost the ability to develop a shared and comprehensive understanding of a situation and of drivers and root causes of violent conflict. Analysis must also be reinforced with better links to the rest of the system and greater coherence with the development and human rights pillars.

48. Planning will be reinforced by the establishment of the single political-operational structure, including through the development of regional strategies. At the same time, greater attention should be directed at building planning capacities, in

particular with regard to integrated planning and system-wide engagement, as well as more proactive engagement with Member States and key partners during analysis and planning processes.

49. The United Nations must embrace a dual role as one partner responding politically and operationally alongside others, and as an enabler and facilitator for others to play their role. This should be achieved through enhanced triangular cooperation and deepened ties with regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union and subregional African organizations, as well as other partners such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Pacific Islands Forum. Partnership agreements with regional organizations will frame enhanced cooperation at all levels. The Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities will provide an entry point for the political and operational engagement of regional partners with the Secretariat. There is also the need for more consistent engagement with other partners, including national and local actors and other key stakeholders, as well as women's groups and youth organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia and think tanks. The World Bank and other international financial institutions are also priority partners in the light of their important and growing role in support of prevention and sustaining peace. A key example of the joint work is the recent United Nations-World Bank study entitled *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*.

50. Effective strategic communications are required to build stronger relations with partners and stakeholders, dispel misconceptions, manage expectations, protect the safety and security of United Nations personnel and improve awareness of the work and contributions of the United Nations. They are a core element of United Nations diplomacy and successful peace operations. Going forward, the Organization will be much more innovative and strategic in utilizing this tool better.

51. There is also a vital need to address the current fragmentation of funding streams for activities to sustain peace, which weakens the ability of the United Nations to effectively, coherently and comprehensively engage, at an early stage and throughout the conflict cycle, in the relevant actions to prevent or resolve conflict, build peace and facilitate recovery and development. In the resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, I was mandated to provide options on increasing, restructuring and better prioritizing funding dedicated to United Nations peacebuilding activities, including through assessed and voluntary contributions; this will be addressed in detail in my forthcoming report on sustaining peace. I have already called on Member States to significantly strengthen the Peacebuilding Fund as an instrument to help sustain peace in the field and to catalyse the United Nations system in working together better and more effectively. More detailed proposals in that respect will be provided in that report.

## **VIII. Changing how we work**

52. The goals of prioritizing prevention and sustaining peace, enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions and facilitating a more coherent, nimble and effective peace and security pillar, aligned more closely with the development and human rights pillars, cannot be achieved through structural reforms alone. Non-structural factors, including working methods and the overall work culture of the Organization, are key to realizing my vision of a United Nations that is ready and able to change. Structures can serve as enablers of these essential elements, but cannot, in and of themselves, deliver them. Above all, staff and management must commit to and be appraised on their delivery

of a whole-of-pillar and cross-pillar approach. In this respect, managers will be expected to enhance collaboration in thematic areas across the Secretariat and different agencies, funds and programmes. Building on lessons learned from successful models of cooperation, opportunities will be explored in other relevant areas to provide consistent and integrated support to all field presences through appropriate joined-up arrangements across the pillars.

53. In line with my strategy to achieve gender parity, greater efforts will be made to promote gender parity, in particular at senior levels, both at Headquarters and in the field, including by actively preparing and supporting mid-level United Nations career professionals, notably women, for leadership positions in the field and at Headquarters. I remain deeply committed to both achieving gender parity and creating an enabling and supportive work environment that addresses unconscious bias and structural impediments to promote the full participation of women in all areas of work of the Organization.

54. I envisage a number of other concrete changes in the way the peace and security pillar works on a daily basis. Burdensome business practices that hamper decision-making and delivery will be addressed, as will transaction costs that slow the Organization down and increase costs. Routine processes must be significantly streamlined and simplified in order to enhance capacity and space for tackling pressing departmental priorities in a more effective manner, as well as dedicating more time to learning. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations would work together to identify key mechanisms, procedures and processes that can be standardized and shared.

55. The Organization must also become less risk averse when it comes to innovation. Innovation must not be for its own sake; it must have a real impact on the Organization's field presences and the people and countries it serves. Change and innovation must be encouraged, and managers should motivate their staff to find innovative solutions to challenges and recognize this in their evaluations. To improve the lives of the people it serves, the Organization must continuously generate and test new ideas, building on lessons learned from the past. It must simplify overly bureaucratic approaches and mindsets that constrain it, and it must constantly challenge the status quo.

56. Greater leveraging of technology, including what is already available within the system, must be vigorously pursued to enhance analysis, the sharing of data and collaboration. To this end, the departments will identify shared technology platforms that will enable them to interact more productively on specific topics and foster more collaborative working methods.

57. I am also working to change the system's organizational culture. This includes my efforts to strengthen coordination across the United Nations system, as promoted by the establishment of the Executive Committee, as well as the changes I have made to my Executive Office.

58. Enhanced leadership, accountability and performance management, including in the implementation of the whole-of-pillar approach and cross-pillar collaboration, will be critical to success in this regard. The establishment of the Executive Committee in January 2017 represents an important step towards greater cross-pillar coherence and accountability. I am certain that the addition of the Standing Principals' Group for the peace and security pillar will further improve efforts in this direction. In my report on shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations, I proposed to put in place a robust performance management and evaluation system that holds leadership and staff at Headquarters and in the field accountable for delivery and for upholding United Nations norms and values.

59. To enhance leadership capacities and further strengthen the organizational culture, I intend to develop a 360-degree evaluation mechanism and to place greater emphasis on investing in staff training and development. This includes offering leadership coaching for key managerial personnel and increasing the opportunities for mid-level staff to benefit from leadership and management training.

60. I will take appropriate steps to strengthen management delegation to and within departments, as well as to the field, and to promote a more participatory and less hierarchical culture. Steps will be taken to delegate greater authority to different levels, as appropriate. Workplace decisions must be transparent and information should be shared widely, including with field presences, as relevant.

## IX. Conclusion

61. My proposals are aimed at constituting a more coherent and effective peace and security pillar that is better equipped to support Member States in addressing the disparate challenges we face in the world of today. If approved, these reforms would introduce significant changes. Thus, it is my intention to closely monitor their implementation and assess their impact on the Organization's work and ability to deliver, with a view to making the necessary adjustments and changes in consultation with Member States, as appropriate.

62. A rigorous change management process will be key in implementing these proposals. Under the overall direction of the Chef de Cabinet, the change management process will be led jointly by the Under-Secretaries-General for Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support. Expert external assistance on change management may be called upon, as needed. The team will also engage with the change teams in other areas of reform.

63. The support and commitment of Member States to these reforms will be crucial throughout this process. I have thus far been encouraged by the strong support voiced by the membership for my proposals. In particular, I appreciate the strong backing and commitment to my vision for prevention, and am confident that the current proposals will significantly improve the quality of the United Nations support to Member States in addressing today's peace and security challenges. The proposals contained in the present report are meant to be cost-neutral and will not require any reallocation of resources from other pillars or areas to peace and security.

64. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) **To take note of the report of the Secretary-General and endorse his vision for reforming the Secretariat's peace and security architecture;**

(b) **To request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at the second part of the resumed seventy-second session a comprehensive report on the implementation of his peace and security architecture reform proposals;**

(c) **To support the creation of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, and to request the Secretary-General, in the context of the above-mentioned comprehensive report, to provide detailed information on the functions, structure and staffing requirements of the new structure.**