



Accelerating the Implementation of SDG 16 in support of sustainable development and sustaining peace:

Leveraging partnerships on SSR between the Peace & Security and Development Pillars

2023 High Level Political Forum Side Event
co-hosted by Costa Rica and DCAF

Thursday 13 July, 08:00-09:30, Conference Room 12, UN Secretariat

Concept Note

Peace and development are two faces of the same coin. As reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda: “Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development”.¹ The SDGs provide an approach to addressing many of the factors that contribute to violent conflict, including poverty (SDG 1), economic stability and opportunity (SDG 8), and structural inequalities (SDG 10).² Of particular importance is SDG 16, which recognises the need for accountable, effective, and inclusive institutions to promote peaceful societies. The 2030 Agenda is therefore implicitly linked to the New Agenda for Peace in that it is “not only a roadmap for sustainable development but also for sustaining peace [...]”.³ And investing in sustaining peace is in turn essential to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

While SDG 17 calls for enhanced partnerships and policy coherence, the linkages between efforts to promote sustainable development and sustaining peace are not always pursued. Security sector reform (SSR) is an important tool for bridging peace and security and development objectives. It not only supports the implementation of SDG 16, but by virtue of contributing to more effective, accountable and inclusive security institutions, also plays an important role in contributing to prevention. Indeed, it is recognised that a poorly governed security sector can contribute to grievances which fuel violent conflict.

Leveraging SSR as a tool for implementing SDG 16 in support of sustainable development and peace sustenance goals requires enhanced partnerships to build on the comparative advantages of different actors. Mitigating security sector related risks requires political dialogue delivered by peace and security actors and institution-building efforts often supported by development actors. To promote synergies, SSR support should be integrated into broader institutional reforms aimed at addressing issues of good governance at large.⁴ Thus, in the words of former President of UN ECOSOC, H.E. Colleen Vixen Kelapile,

¹ UNGA, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 2015. Preamble, paragraph 35.

² Alex J. Bellamy, ‘The 2030 Agenda Reducing All Forms of Violence’, UN Chronicle, Volume 52, Issue 4, Mar 2016.

³ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Contribution to the New Agenda for Peace, March 2023.

⁴ United Nations and World Bank, Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict, March 2018.

“Partnerships are [...] critical to support SSR as an important tool to achieve peaceful societies and sustainable development”.⁵

While partnerships are essential, experience shows that leveraging SSR as a tool for sustainable development and peace sustainment frequently suffers from the fragmented international approaches that emerge from different agendas, mandates and capacities. The operationalisation of the security-development nexus remains challenged, in part due to “silo[ed]-thinking [which] continues to hamper the holistic implementation of the SDGs and hinder action to ensure that no one is left behind.”⁶ And in the field of SSR, it has been recognised that “[...] conceptual confusion and institutional silos, coupled with funding challenges, continue to hinder optimal collaboration.”⁷

Reflecting the spirit of SDG 17 on partnerships, this side event will bring together international actors representing peace and security and development communities to identify lessons and good practices in bridging the security-development divide towards supporting the implementation of SDG 16. In doing so, it aims to foster reflection on lessons from SSR support which are of relevance to the broader discussions of Member States in the run up to the Summit of the Future.

Agenda

Moderator: H.E. Maritza **Chan**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations in New York

High-level opening Remarks (20 minutes)

- “Welcoming remarks”, H.E. Maritza **Chan**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations in New York
- “The role of SSR in accelerating the implementation of SDG 16”, Nathalie **Chuard**, Ambassador, Director of DCAF, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
- “The importance of SDG 16 through a national perspective”, H.E. Arlene B. **Tickner**, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations
- “The synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the New Agenda for Peace”, Brian J. **Williams**, Chief, Financing for Peacebuilding Branch, UN DPPA

Expert-level panel on opportunities for strengthening the peace and security-development nexus in support of SDG 16 and sustaining peace (40 minutes)

- Vincenza **Scherrer**, Deputy Head of Policy and Research Division, DCAF
- Christophe **Pradier**, SSR Officer & Team Leader for Knowledge, Research & Guidance, UN SSR Unit
- Sofiene **Bacha**, Policy Specialist, Rule of Law, Security and Human Rights, UNDP
- Betty **Wainaina**, Associate Director, Center on International Cooperation, New York University

Q&A Session (25 minutes)

Closing Remarks (5 minutes): TBC

⁵ Statement of the President of UN ECOSOC, H.E. Collen Vixen Kelapile, at the joint DCAF-Slovak 2022 HLPF side event on ‘Building Partnerships to Promote Security Sector Reform and Sustainable Development’.

⁶ UN ECOSOC, Committee of Experts on Public Administration. Promoting effective governance and institutional reform to accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. 2020.

⁷ Alejandro Alvarez, Marije Van Kempen, and Helen Olafsdottir, The UN approach to SSR from a development perspective, in Adedeji Ebo and Heiner Hänggi, The United Nations and SSR: Policy and Practice, DCAF/Lit, 2020.