

Second Committee Special Event People's Empowerment: A Peace Model

**Tuesday, 18 October 2011 3-6 p.m.
Economic and Social Council Chamber (NLB)**

Background

In order for peace to be sustainable, all members of society must be empowered, engaged in the development process and allowed to fulfil their potential. Peace is not just the absence of war. Lasting peace requires opportunity and participation.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome and the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals at its sixty-fifth session both recognized that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Insuring and reinforcing sustained peace through its development linkages could be built around six elements, namely (i) eradicating poverty and hunger; (ii) reducing inequality; (iii) mitigating deprivation; (iv) creating jobs for all; (v) including excluded people; (vi) accelerating human development; and (vii) fighting terrorism of all kinds.

Since the Copenhagen Summit in 1995, the goal of creating “a society for all” has remained elusive. Although there have been some advances since the Copenhagen Summit, societies are still far from being stable, just and equal. Contrary to the principles of social justice, millions of people are unable to meet their basic needs and remain disempowered and voiceless. The systematic exclusion of selected groups and persons from employment opportunities is an impediment to political stability and sustainable peace. Eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality and promoting the active participation of all members of society in social, economic and political life are essential for the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts.

To advance peace and empowerment, political leaders should articulate a clear vision of inclusiveness within the specific context of their society and mobilize collective social will to support this vision. In order to realize this vision, it is necessary to: (a) adopt a coherent approach to economic and social policymaking; (b) identify and remove the barriers and obstacles that prevent the economic, social and civic participation of certain social groups and individuals; and (c) frame social policy within a process of participation and accountability.

Objectives

This special event will focus on the interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements essential for peace and empowerment including eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality, and accelerating social development. The discussion will promote the importance of placing people at the centre of development and empowering them to pursue a peaceful development course.

Proposed questions

- How can the global framework for social development, as defined through international conferences including the World Summit for Social Development and the Millennium Summit, be responsive to new challenges and continue to aid the international community to achieve its goals of eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving full employment and decent work for all, and attaining social inclusion and sustainable peace?
- How can the international community support national efforts to increase social, civic and economic participation and empowerment?
- Countries should strive to make economic growth pro-poor and more inclusive. How can the international community and the United Nations General Assembly address social and economic concerns in a more cohesive and integrated way?
- For most of the developing world, the provision of basic services, including education and health care, is central to advancing social integration and peace. How feasible is it for countries with limited fiscal space to implement a social protection floor?
- While social integration contributes to the peaceful resolution of disputes, successful dispute resolution also strengthens social inclusion. How can the international community strengthen the mutually reinforcing linkages between social integration and peaceful dispute resolution?
- While there is broad agreement that social integration, inclusiveness and equality are important for people-empowered development and sustainable peace, there is less awareness of how these important concepts can and should be measured. What are the existing tools for measuring social integration, inclusiveness and equality and what should be done to improve upon and strengthen measurement of these concepts?
- How can countries most easily identify barriers to economic opportunity and development? Once these barriers are identified and lifted, what benefits will accrue to a country's citizenry?

Participants

Chair of the Special Event: H.E. Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Chair of the Second Committee

Keynote speaker: Dr. Syed Modasser Ali, Adviser (Minister) to Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh

Moderator: Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Professor of International Affairs at the New School

Panellists:

Minister for State, Bangladesh (TBC)

Mr. Henk-Jan Brinkman Chief, Policy, Planning and Application Branch Peacebuilding Support Office

Ms. Sarah Cliffe, Special Adviser, Civilian Capacities, United Nations, and former Director and Special Representative, World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development