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Joint UNDP - DPA  
Programme on  
Building National  
Capacities for  
Conflict Prevention

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# Joint UNDP-DPA Annual Report 2015

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# FOREWORD

The capacity of the United Nations to prevent conflict and realize the ambition set out in its Charter to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” is under notable strain. Record numbers of refugees, protracted conflict and humanitarian crises from Syria to the Sahel, and the recurrence of conflict in other parts of the world, from the Caucasus to Central Africa, all point to the collective failure of the international community to prevent violent conflict in a proactive, inclusive and sustainable manner. The focus upon the UN’s conflict prevention and peacebuilding architecture has only increased following the various Peace and Security Reviews undertaken in 2015 (High-Level Panel on Peace Operations, Peacebuilding Review and the Review of the Implementation of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security). The Reviews placed renewed emphasis on the UN’s peace and conflict prevention efforts more broadly, advocating for a system-wide approach to “sustaining peace”. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a similar impetus, recognizing that peace and security are fundamental for sustainable development, and that sustainable development is critical for sustaining peace.

There is a growing need for the UN to enhance work across the pillars of peace and security, development, and human rights to advance conflict prevention. While more remains to be done, vehicles exist through which efforts can be strengthened. Since 2004, the partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) through our Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention has been instrumental in supporting the engagement of UN Country Teams (UNCTs) with national stakeholders to develop, accompany, and sustain nationally-led initiatives aimed at preventing and resolving conflict. In 2015, the demand for such support was higher than ever, with joint UNDP-DPA support provided to close to 50 countries, including through 40 Peace and Development Advisors - the highest number simultaneously deployed since the start of the Programme. In drawing on the expertise and resources of UNDP, DPA, the Peacebuilding Support Office as well as other UN entities, the partnership provides a platform for ensuring that UNCTs are able to operate in complex political environments and support national stakeholders in advancing prevention.

This report highlights the results that have been attained through joint, coordinated and early preventive action. From Bosnia and Herzegovina to Malawi, medium to long-term conflict prevention efforts have yielded concrete results, demonstrating that efforts to engage effectively with national stakeholders in addressing the root causes of conflict require sustained commitment. In **Nigeria**, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme complemented preventive diplomacy efforts carried out by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel through supporting religious and traditional leaders in undertaking local-level critical early warning and conflict management activities that contributed to a peaceful election and democratic transition. In **Sri Lanka**, the PDA played a catalytic role in guiding the UN's engagement with the newly elected government to define immediate peacebuilding priorities and opportunities for reconciliation. Numerous other examples highlighted throughout the report demonstrate the significant potential of the UN's preventive engagements when common objectives are achieved through pooled, jointly managed resources. The partnership's capacities to adapt and flexibly respond to emerging needs at country level, while also enabling innovative approaches at regional level, serve as good practices for the broader UN system.

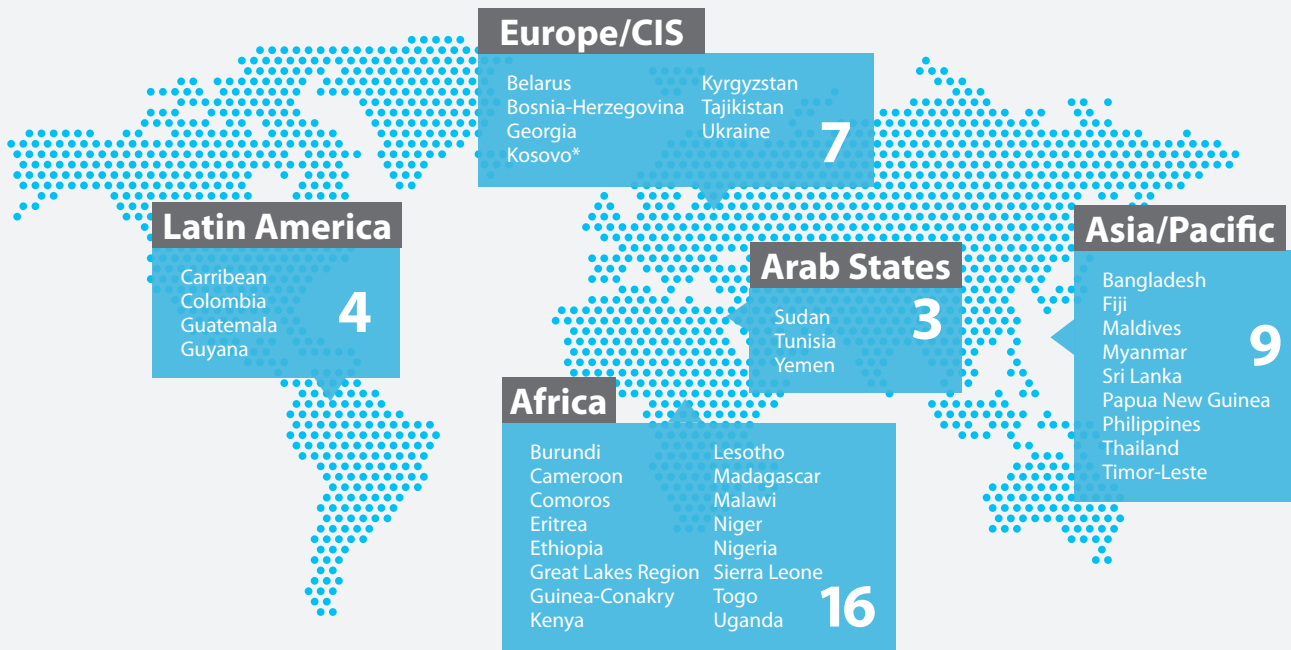
The Joint UNDP-DPA Programme continues to rely on generous voluntary contributions of Member States that prioritise investing in conflict prevention. However, there is an ongoing need to broaden the donor support base. Prevention has proved to be the most cost-effective way of sustaining peace. For that reason, UNDP and DPA remain committed to join our efforts to ensure a sustained and strategic investment in prevention. We are proud to herewith present the results achieved by our Joint Programme in 2015 and are keen to further expand the scope and impact of this partnership to contribute to the UN's work on conflict prevention.

**Magdy Martínez-Solimán**

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Assistant Administrator and Director  
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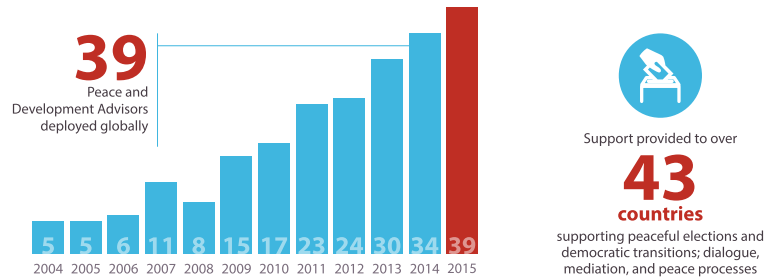
**Miroslav Jenča**

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for Political Affairs



\* With reference to Security Council Resolution 1244

# INTRODUCTION



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have collaborated on the development and implementation of conflict prevention initiatives in the field through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention (Joint UNDP-DPA Programme) since 2004. The programme provides catalytic seed funding and strategic guidance to joint conflict prevention initiatives undertaken together with, and in support of, UN Country Teams (UNCTs).

**In 2015, the  
Joint UNDP-  
DPA Programme  
supported**

**43  
countries.**

The 2015 reviews of UN Peace Operations and the Peacebuilding Architecture both highlight the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme as one of few examples of effective collaboration across the UN system on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and an effective vehicle through which the UN is able to engage with national stakeholders to prevent and resolve conflict.

The primary objective of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is to build and consolidate national capacities and initiatives for conflict prevention in conflict-affected and fragile countries as well as those undergoing political instability or difficult transitions. Following on from this primary objective, there are a number of secondary objectives which guide the support provided by the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme, including:

- To enhance, strengthen, and support the application of national capacities, initiatives and mechanisms on issues related to dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution;

- To strengthen the capacity of Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UN Country Teams to engage in, and understand, complex political situations, including through conflict-sensitive development programming;
- To enhance the effectiveness and impact of UNDP and DPA collaboration at country level on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and related areas.

In 2015, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme provided support to 43 countries through the UN Country Teams' conflict prevention programmes often led by UNDP, in many instances involving the deployment of Peace and Development Advisers (PDAs). PDAs provided technical and conflict analysis support to the UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams on politically sensitive issues. In many instances - including those highlighted in this report - this approach helped open entry points for conflict prevention initiatives and facilitating the integration of a conflict-sensitive perspective into development programming.

This year also provided the opportunity to formalize the growing collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) with the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme which is now embedded in the new programme document for 2015-2018. In recent years, PBSO through the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has been cost-financing PDA positions, reaching up to one third of deployments in 2015. PBSO has been providing critical support informing the strategic direction of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme, much in line with the recommendations of the Peacebuilding Architecture review.

This report is structured around five output areas of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme, and provides a snapshot of the support provided through it in 2015.

## OUTPUT 1

**National and local capacities for conflict prevention developed and applied, and potentially violent tensions reduced, through multi-year support – including the deployment of PDAs – for UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams.**



**In 2015,  
39  
PDAs were  
deployed, the  
highest number of  
deployments since  
the partnership  
was established.**

Peace and Development Advisors are the most visible and associated output of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme, with the overall number of PDAs deployed globally reaching 39 in late 2015, the highest number of simultaneous deployments since the partnership was established in 2004. Most deployments remain country-focused. However, to maximise the use of resources, the Joint Programme is piloting new regional and sub-regional approaches with there a small number of PDAs deployed in 2015, each supporting more than one Country Team on cross-border and regional issues.

There is also a growing effort to build partnerships with entities such as those with the Folke Bernadotte Academy and United Nations Volunteers, to bolster the capacity of UN Country Teams. While the PDA role varies across country contexts, its primary functions is to undertake regular conflict and political analysis with a view to identifying concrete opportunities for strengthening the UN's support and contribution to national conflict prevention capacities.

Often, this involves engaging with governments as well as civil society partners to develop, sustain, and support national stakeholders' efforts to mediate, facilitate, or engage in dialogue processes. In many instances, such engagement provides an important complement to the UN's "Track 1" engagement, thus enabling a "whole of UN" approach whereby the comparative advantages of Agencies, Funds, and Programmes, as well as Secretariat entities and good offices are leveraged in a complementary manner.



## Supporting local level dialogue and infrastructures for peace

In **Burundi**, the rapid deterioration in the political and security situation following the pronouncement of a third term of President Pierre Nkurunziza had severe implications for the space and scope of the UN's engagement in supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities. Deployed in the wake of the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) at the end of 2014, the PDA provided valuable strategic guidance to the UN's peacebuilding programmatic portfolio, helping identify the few entry points available for supporting dialogue and social cohesion in Burundi. Supported through the Peacebuilding Fund, UN Women's engagement with community dialogue activities is one example in this regard. The PDA technical support to UN Women, guiding their efforts to support a national network of women mediators, who have subsequently helped resolve over 3,000 local level disputes pertaining to land or communal tensions, reducing the illicit flow of small arms and managing rumours which could otherwise inflame an already tense environment.

In **Malawi**, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme has continued to provide technical support to the Public Affairs Committee (PAC), a civil society, interfaith organization, building on its role as insider mediators<sup>1</sup> during the country's May 2014 elections. In 2015, the PDA engaged in supporting the PAC in the facilitation of a national debate which resulted in a PAC report on Inclusivity and Federalism. In the year following the election, the PDA has led engagement with national government and civil society to establish and strengthen the national infrastructure for peace. Following successful regional consultations in early 2015, a draft strategic plan and national policy for a National Peace Architecture (NPA) were developed and validated at a national workshop in March 2015. Three pilot District Peace Committees were also established in selected 'hotspot' areas, serving to inform the UN's ongoing support to national stakeholders in advancing and expanding the infrastructure for peace.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on insider mediation, refer to the "EU-UNDP Guidance Note on Supporting Insider Mediation: strengthening resilience to conflict and turbulence" published in 2014. [Available here](#).

## Supporting political transitions

While the political process for long-term stabilization in **Ukraine** continues, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is supporting nascent efforts to facilitate and strengthen national dialogue capacities across the government and non-government controlled areas. To support indigenous dialogue efforts in Ukraine, UNDP has partnered with the European Forum for Mediation and Dialogue (MediatEUr) in developing a Dialogue Support Platform in the country. Contributions from the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme extend to the leading role played by the Peace and Development Unit residing in the Office of the Resident Coordinator, comprised of a PDA and the Peace and Development Specialist deployed by Sweden's Folke Bernadotte Academy, in supporting the implementation of these efforts. The project has been called the "facilitator of facilitators" for its role in exploring a common understanding of dialogue and fostering cooperation. Utilizing modern interactive technology, the online platform provides a live map of dialogue initiatives across Ukraine, as well as a visual representation of issues and themes of local, regional and national concern. The broader view of the project relates to how dialogue can help deal with the consequences of the armed conflict in the East and the many internal challenges facing the authorities and civil society. In this sense, the platform seeks: to give more visibility to dialogue initiatives, making them more sustainable; to raise public awareness about dialogue efforts and their positive outcomes; to develop vertical links between authorities and civil society; as well as to promote a culture of dialogue in Ukraine.

In a number of contexts, support provided through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is often geared towards the provision of political and conflict analysis to UNCTs and UN headquarters counterparts in the context of national electoral cycles, with a view to informing the UN's engagement at both political and programmatic levels. While such engagement is inherently time-bound, timely engagement following elections can create opportunities for the UN to provide support to national stakeholders.

In **Nigeria**, in the context of a highly tense presidential and legislative electoral process in early 2015, the PDA worked closely with the Secretary-General's Special Representative to West Africa and High Level Representative to Nigeria, SRSR Mohamed Ibn Chambas, to ensure coherence and complementarity be-

tween the UN's political engagement and technical support. This included the organization of stakeholders' dialogue sessions for peaceful elections in four, out of the six, geo-political zones in the country and provided capacity building to national institutions and organizations to contribute to mitigating electoral-related violence. The PDA provided advisory support to the drafting of an agreement between all political party candidates pledging to non-violence and non-incitement to violence (known as the Abuja Accord). The PDA also worked closely with DPA to provide assistance to setting up the National Peace Committee (NPC), the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Abuja Accord. UNDP provided technical support to ensure that the NPC could function throughout most of the Nigeria's 36 states and mobilized religious and traditional leaders to support the implementation of the Accord, while DPA, through SRSNG Chambas, engaged with different political, religious, and civil society leaders. The PDA helped in the dissemination of the Accord, as well as the capacity of the NPC. In the meantime, the PDA is providing strategic guidance for the development and the implementation of a National Infrastructures for Peace programme for Nigeria. This initiative, which is built on existing traditional skills for early warning and early response, the management of conflicts, such as insider mediation, was effectively applied to address the growing levels of election-related violence in the country. The PDA also facilitated a series of discussions among relevant institutions to reach broad agreement on the parameters of the peace architecture, as well as advocacy with civil society organizations, including women's groups and youth. In addition, the PDA has been collaborating closely with the Regional PDA based in Cameroon, to contribute to addressing cross-border instability caused by the activities of Boko Haram.

In **Sri Lanka**, the country's political context changed following the peaceful and democratic political transition in January 2015, which opened new opportunities to engage the Government and other key stakeholders on supporting the country's comprehensive peacebuilding and reconciliation agenda established within a broader transitional justice framework. The PDA has played a key role in identifying new entry points for engagement, established liaison with the key players at the national and provincial level, and provided strategic guidance on the development of programmes funded by the Peacebuilding Fund's immediate response facility, including on reconciliation, resettlement and support to the con-

sultations that will inform the transitional justice mechanisms, based on the 2015 Human Rights Council Resolution on Sri Lanka. The PDA has also initiated the use of surveys to underpin UN initiatives in this regard. On 12 November 2015, the Secretary-General declared Sri Lanka eligible to access additional resources under the PBF. The PDA subsequently led the development of the peacebuilding context analysis and managed the development of a comprehensive strategy to support the Government's peacebuilding needs, focusing on good governance, transitional justice and reconciliation. The support provided through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme to Sri Lanka allowed the UN to navigate a complex political situation and immediately capitalise on a new openness to deepen and strengthen the UN's partnership with Sri Lanka. The PDA furthermore served as an analyst informing the UN system of the rapidly evolving developments on the ground, which contributed in adopting a conflict sensitive approach and helped guide the UN's overall engagement.

While a number of examples cited above demonstrate the value of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme in serving to link the UN's analysis of the context and preventive diplomacy with programmatic entry points in the context of a national electoral process, there were a number of instances in 2015 where support provided through the partnership facilitated sustained complementarities in this regard, including in contexts where there is an ongoing national dialogue or peace process.

### Complementing formal peace and dialogue processes

In **Colombia**, the peace process constitutes an historic opportunity to end more than fifty years of armed conflict and to bridge deep socioeconomic inequalities by bringing peace and inclusive development to historically abandoned regions of the country whose neglect has fuelled the conflict. The agreement on issues of justice and reparations to victims announced in September 2015 is a major step towards reaching a final peace deal between the parties. Against this backdrop, a key focus of the UN is to provide support, as required, to the successful conclusion of the negotiations and to mobilize a coordinated and effective contribution of the UN system to the implementation of an eventual peace agreement. The UN is making a range of valuable contributions in this regard,

In noting the regional nature of many conflicts, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is piloting the deployment of PDAs with sub-regional, multi-country, or regional functions. While such modalities are currently supported for Cameroon (Central Africa), the Caribbean, and the Great Lakes (where the PDA is collocated with the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes), there are also instances where a PDA based in one country provides remote support to UNCTs and national stakeholders in neighbouring countries. In 2016, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme will commission a lessons learned exercise reflecting on the effectiveness of these approaches, while also examining the value of support provided to specific cross-border conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives.

many of which are supported by the PDA. Throughout 2015, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator played an important political role, encouraging continued commitment to the peace negotiations and serving as the primary voice of the UN system across a range of related peace, development, and humanitarian issues covered by its mandates in Colombia. Following an invitation by the parties, the Secretary-General appointed a UN Delegate to the sub-commission on end of conflict issues in September 2015. The PDA assisted in the coordination of inter-agency efforts to provide concrete support to the negotiations and the preparations for post-conflict. The PDA also led the UN's public communication on peace and development issues and strategies, leading the implementation of the UN PBF-supported inter-agency communications campaign "Respirapaz" which aimed to promote awareness and public education around the peace process, and concluded in September 2015.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the PDA's engagement with national stakeholders helped bridge divides across political factions in Bougainville and contributed to the negotiation of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Meekemui factions and the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

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## Sustainable Development Goals in the Southern Caucasus: entry point for cross-border co-operation and peacebuilding

In the **Southern Caucasus**, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme has supported efforts to facilitate and strengthen linkages between civil society actors in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular Goal 16, viewed as an entry point to identify common challenges and opportunities for advancing peacebuilding.

In view of existing high tensions in the South Caucasus region, including over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the lack of any direct contact between civil society groups from Armenia and Azerbaijan, the PDA in Georgia in close collaboration with DPA, UNDP, and the RC Offices in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, set up UN-led South Caucasus-wide regional platform for dialogue.

To date, this has involved two sub-regional roundtables on the SDGs and Goal 16 on peace and security, leveraging the SDGs as a universal and non-political instrument to facilitate sub-regional exchange and inform parallel country-level activities.

The PDA was able to bring together and facilitate the interaction between these various stakeholders. The roundtables were very successful, in that interaction between participants from all three countries, and in particular Armenia and Azerbaijan, who have little opportunity to engage in a bilateral dialogue, were constructive and led to identifying common issues, opportunities and challenges.

During discussions, participants recognized the need for increased cross-border cooperation and the importance of constructive and inclusive channels of dialogue between governments and civil society. These meetings opened entry points for further cooperation between the three countries, with participants noting the need to continue this engaging through this new south Caucasus-wide format that crosses conflict divides. Proposals made for concrete next steps for 2016 included regional cooperation in areas such as youth participation, environmental protection and civil society monitoring of the SDGs under auspices of the UN.

## Addressing cross-border and sub-regional conflict dynamics

In **Central Asia**, the PDAs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, have served as the driving force behind the design and implementation of innovative cross-border peacebuilding efforts, initially funded through UNDP and subsequently scaled-up through the support of the PBF and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation. Border areas are often the scene of tensions that may result in open clashes and conflicts between border communities. Increasingly, these conflicts have been taking on an inter-ethnic character and involve border guards, security, and law enforcement officials, which substantially raises the risks of conflict escalation from the community-level to the inter-state level. The peacebuilding activities involve a combination of cross-border and parallel country-based activities that seek to strengthen mechanisms for dispute resolution and common management of natural resources.

At the border of **Kenya** and **Ethiopia**, PDA deployments have served a similarly catalytic function in facilitating collaboration between the respective national stakeholders and UNCTs. Launched in December 2015 by the Heads of States of both countries, with support from both UN Country Teams, this initiative seeks to reduce conflict and promote sustainable peace and development in the marginalized regions on both sides of the border.

In **Tunisia**, the regional spillover of the ongoing conflict in Libya continues to have a destabilising effect. The PDA has worked closely with the UN Mission and UN Country Team Libya currently located in Tunis, as well as with a number of national and international actors, to ensure analysis is adapted to inform the UN Country Team in Tunisia. In particular, the PDA has led the framing of a Country Team approach towards the issues of radicalization and the prevention of violent extremism, and has been critical in supporting the ongoing engagements with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate to implement programmatic country-based capacity building initiatives which respect human rights. The PDA has led capacity building for the Country Team in the area of conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity, as well as in translating socio-political and legislation's analysis into the establishment of monitoring systems and scenarios-based programmatic recommendations.

## A large scale confidence-building exercise: the Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes Region

“Because leaders recognized that peace and development are two sides of the same coin. They understood that the lack of jobs and opportunities creates a breeding ground for conflict – and that conflict itself is the biggest obstacle to human development.” **Address of the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference.**

The Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes region took place on 24-25 February 2016, in the Congolese capital, Kinshasa. For the first time, it brought together more than 500 public and private sector stakeholders from within and outside the region to discuss investment into regional projects, as envisaged by the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSC-F) and its Regional Action Plan endorsed in 2014. The presence of the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Joseph Kabila Kabange, brought weight to the event by drawing attention to the challenges, as well as opportunities to enhance peace, security and shared prosperity and development in the region.

The event was co-organized by the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes along with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The regional Peace and Development Adviser (PDA), deployed in 2015, was part of the team spearheading the organizational efforts on the ground. The regional role of the PDA, sitting in the Special Envoys’ office in Nairobi, placed him in a unique position to engage with authorities of over 12 countries of the sub-region, as well as with regional organizations, development partners, and representatives from civil society and academia. A key aspect of the PDA’s work was to raise awareness on how this event aimed at strengthening regional cooperation could be a catalyst for enduring peace dividends through the engagement of the private sector.

The Conference proved successful in bolstering the nexus between peace, security and development process during the event itself, as well as throughout the two year planning process.

The event also served as a large scale confidence-building exercise bringing together for the first time high-level representatives speaking together on various panels and providing opportunities for bilateral cooperation on development issues. It also served as a forum for a variety of meetings, including one between the Prime Ministers of Rwanda and DRC, many business-to-business, business-to-government and government-to-government meetings as well as exhibitions from States of the region, international organizations, embassies and private sector whose interactions, while not systematically recorded, indicate positive trend of engagement. The Conference’s success clearly indicated the relevance of the approach of using development incentives to convene public-private sectors in peacebuilding, but also in implementing the PSC-F.





## OUTPUT 2

**Specific tensions reduced through time-bound dialogue facilitation initiatives supported through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme.**

**In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the PDA has led the support to a national dialogue initiative intended to strengthen grassroots initiatives by linking them to higher politics in order to give them greater visibility and impact.**

In a number of contexts, the deployment of a Peace and Development Advisor is complemented by the provision of the additional technical or financial support from UNDP, DPA, or PBSO to strengthen UN engagement on particular time-bound dialogue or facilitation initiatives.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the PDA has led the support to a national dialogue initiative intended to strengthen grassroots initiatives by vertically linking them to higher politics in order to give them greater visibility and impact. This platform has been used to inform conflict sensitive approaches into ongoing and planned UN Country Team programmes in the areas such as protracted displacement, human security, and local development. Following the approval by the Peacebuilding Fund in October 2013, project implementation of the USD 2 million began in July 2014 by UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO.

In June 2015, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme provided support to a national social dialogue initiative in the **Comoros**, which sought to complement ongoing activities supported through the Peacebuilding Fund. In partnership with Interpeace and convened by the Government of the Union of Comoros, the exercise brought together representatives from across civil society, media, government, political parties, religious and community leaders and the international community to discuss key challenges pertaining to political and social stability. These included issues pertaining to the perceived absence of the state and the need for institutional reform; limited rule of law; reconciling the dichotomy of modern and traditional norms in Comorian society; as well as the perceived lack of Comorian identity that seeks to unify the inhabitants across the archipelago. While noting the significant challenges that remain, the workshop was widely viewed as a valuable contribution to strengthening collaboration across Comorian society, with a view to serving as a foundation for subsequent dialogue initiatives and national consultative processes.



## OUTPUT 3

### Joint UNDP-DPA analyses and strategies for supporting preventive action developed.

In noting the opportunities for broadening the scope of collaboration between UNDP, DPA, and PBSO beyond (and in complement to) the deployment of PDAs, there is an increased emphasis placed on supporting joint analysis exercises and coordinated technical engagement with UNCTs and national stakeholders.

In **Cambodia**, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme has provided regular support to the Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team and national stakeholders in an effort to identify and help advance nascent efforts for dialogue, while also assisting the UN Country Team agencies ensure conflict-sensitivity is integrated across programmatic engagements. In October 2015, a UNDP-DPA joint mission assessed the situation in the country, reviewed the status of electoral reform that has been undertaken since the agreement between the ruling and opposition parties in July 2014; and, identified the specific support needed by the UN Country Team in the period leading up to the 2017 and 2018 elections, in particular in the area of conflict analysis. The mission team met representatives of the government, opposition, civil society, diplomatic community, National Elections Commission (NEC), and representatives of UN offices and agencies. Following the joint mission, UNDP and DPA provided remote support to the RC, to be complemented through intermittent missions to work closely with the UN Country Team on integrating conflict-sensitivity across programming. UNDP and DPA will also continue to engage frequently with the RC and the UN Country Team, with a work plan of support for 2016 subsequently finalized. The ongoing support to Cambodia is a temporary measure within the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme in lieu of the presence of a PDA.

In **Lesotho**, under the auspices of Human Rights Up Front (HRuF), the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme facilitated support to an inter-agency assessment that took place in August 2015. The mission sought to assess the deteriorating political en-

vironment, and identify options for engagement across the UN system. The mission coincided with the arrival of the incumbent PDA, who has since spearheaded much of the follow-up efforts. Many of the recommendations pertain directly to the support to be provided by the PDA. For example, the mission noted the need for UN COUNTRY TEAM programmes to increase collaborative capacity by putting greater emphasis and strengthening local governance, participation of youth and women, as well as gender and human rights programmes. The HRuF mission also recommended the deployment of a Dialogue and Consensus-Building Advisor hosted in the Office of the Prime Minister and tasked with advising the Prime Minister on options, best practices, approaches and experiences in fostering dialogue and consensus-building towards national reforms.



## OUTPUT 4

**Short-term frameworks for effective and integrated UN responses in emerging crisis situations developed through deployment of specialized advisors through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme.**

### **Specialized advisers were deployed for short periods to Benin, Cameroon and Guinea-Conakry in 2015.**

Specialized advisers were deployed for short periods to **Benin, Cameroon** and **Guinea-Conakry** in 2015, with longer-term PDAs arriving in the latter two countries in late 2015 and early 2016, respectively.

In **Benin**, the short-term deployment was geared towards providing the Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team with regular political and conflict analysis ahead of the country's Presidential elections in early 2016. The short-term deployment also supported electoral violence prevention initiatives, including identifying appropriate vehicles for dialogue and mediation, while also providing support to UN COUNTRY TEAM to mainstream conflict-sensitivity in light of the polls.

In **Cameroon**, the short-term deployment facilitated a regional conflict analysis exercise involving national stakeholders, sub-regional actors (such as the Economic Community of Central African States), UN Regional Offices (such as the UN Regional Office for Central Africa), and UN Country Teams in Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a view to informing the design of regional programmatic engagements.

In **Guinea-Conakry**, the short-term deployment ensured the continuity of critical peacebuilding activities. In this instance, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme piloted the deployment of internal expertise from PBSO to undertake a detailed assignment. This was followed by the PDA in Togo undertaking a detailed assignment to provide political analysis and support the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity across the UN Country Team's engagements during the period of the country's elections. Similar arrangements involving appropriately qualified staff from UNDP, DPA, and PBSO staff, as well as PDAs and national staff already deployed in a particular region, will continue to be explored, as appropriate, in an effort to effectively draw on internal capacities and improve response time.



## OUTPUT 5

### **New skills and tools effectively acquired and applied by PDAs and other conflict prevention specialists.**

This output area captures a growing range of activities and partnerships where the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is involved in supporting and strengthening the PDA community of practice, and leveraging the comparative advantages of both UNDP and DPA to advance UN system coherence and coordination on issues pertaining to conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and the UN's engagement in complex political situations more broadly.

#### **PDA Annual Retreat**

From 10 to 13 November, PDAs and a number of conflict prevention specialists, together with counterparts from across the UN system and donor partners participated in the Global PDA Retreat held in Istanbul, Turkey. The retreat provided an opportunity for practitioners to exchange lessons learned and good practices across a range of substantive and technical areas pertaining to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, while also identifying concrete recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of support provided through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme.

#### **Partnerships**

Recognizing the importance of leveraging the capacities and comparative advantages across the UN system, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme continues to develop and pursue a number of strategic partnerships. In noting the number of countries where both PDAs are deployed and the Peacebuilding Fund active, UNDP, DPA, and the Peacebuilding Fund have agreed to share the costs of PDA deployments in countries of mutual interest. By the end of 2015, the Peacebuilding Fund was cost-sharing 10 PDA deployments, with the overall number expected to increase to approximately 15 by the end of 2016. In such instances, the

PDA provides strategic and technical support to Peacebuilding Fund supported activities, while maintaining the dual role and engagement in support of the Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team. The collaboration is based on the recognition that Peacebuilding Fund activities benefit significantly from the strategic guidance and technical support provided by PDAs, while also providing PDAs with a vehicle to translate political and conflict analysis into programmatic engagements. Countries where PDA positions are currently cost-shared include Burundi, Comoros, and Papua New Guinea, with possible future opportunities to partner in Niger, and Kyrgyzstan, and Sierra Leone.

The Joint UNDP-DPA Programme is also working with United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and Sweden's Folke Bernadotte Academy to deploy additional capacities to work alongside PDAs. These partnerships are to support the sustainability of the PDA cadre through facilitating the development of the "next generation" of PDAs, with the collaboration with UNV also placing an emphasis on building local capacities in this field.

### Support to PDAs

From early 2015, newly deployed PDAs could apply to the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme for up to USD 50,000 to undertake conflict analysis and conflict prevention initiatives with the UN Country Team, in countries where appropriate. This support is intended to, firstly, serve as an introduction to the PDA function for the UN Country Team, and, secondly, generate entry points for the PDA's support to UN Country Team agencies based on a thorough understanding of the country context and, importantly, how the UN can adjust or develop programming in a manner that advances conflict-sensitive development. To date, PDAs in Cameroon, Comoros, Honduras, and the Maldives have successfully accessed the funding to undertake activities ranging from conflict analysis to national dialogue workshops.

### Review on PDA Gender Disparity

In 2015, with the support of Sweden's Folke Bernadotte Academy and in partnership with the International Civil Action Network (ICAN), the Joint UNDP-DPA Pro-

**In an effort to address the gender disparity within the PDA cadre, a target has been set to achieve**

**50**

**percent gender balance for all new PDA deployments**

programme commissioned a study to identify the structural causes of the historical gender disparity of the PDA cadre. With women historically comprising less than a quarter of the PDA, the study identified a number of key findings, including:

- The current concept of an 'ideal' PDA candidate profile must be revisited;
- Numerous false assumptions about the existence, availability, willingness, and capabilities of qualified women affect staff attitudes and perpetuate the gender disparity in the PDA cadre;
- Stronger emphasis on the gender dimensions of the PDA's analytical and programmatic work will positively affect the numbers and quality of female applicants with expertise in gender and peacebuilding;
- Many qualified women surveyed had never heard of PDA positions, an issue compounded by the general perception that the UN generally does a poor job of recruiting externally;
- Inadvertent gender biases affect the hiring process.

In response to the recommendations and findings of the study, the Steering Committee of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme endorsed the following measures with a view to addressing the gender disparity of the PDA cadre. This includes:

- Setting a 50 percent gender balance target for all new PDA deployments (from December 2015 to January 2017);
- Revise recruitment practices and guidance provided to UN Country Teams, including establishing gender parity targets for long-listing; short-listing; and interview panel stages of PDA recruitment process;
- Expand outreach of PDA vacancy and roster announcements to relevant civil society networks;
- Adjust standard PDA Terms of Reference to place less emphasis on UN expertise and more on peacebuilding skills, while also making reference to gender dimensions of PDAs analytical and programmatic work and Security Council Resolution 1325;
- Strengthen the gender component of PDA induction programme conducted with FBA, with PDAs to be systematically invited to DPA-led training on Women, Peace, and Security.

## Update on Management Response

The management response to the external review was formally adopted in February 2015 following consultations across DPA, UNDP, and PBSO, with PDAs, Resident Coordinators, and donor partners. Since that time, progress has been achieved in a number of areas, while others require additional attention.

Areas of progress:

- Enhanced ownership and engagement across UNDP, DPA, and PBSO;
- Predictability of PDA deployments and support;
- PDA learning, induction, and handover.

There are a number of ongoing initiatives that are set to be completed in 2016, including:

- Establishing a roster for PDA deployments;
- Mapping national officers working on conflict prevention and peacebuilding and providing opportunities for detailed/short-term assignments.

While notable progress has been achieved, there are a number of areas that require further attention. These include:

- Enhancing the consistency and quality of PDA reports with a focus on results and impact;
- Ensuring adequate HQ support to PDAs;
- Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and exchange amongst PDAs.



## LOOKING AHEAD

**... the partnership is particularly well-placed to contribute to subsequent and ongoing efforts to strengthen system-wide engagement on prevention, and to move towards a more holistic, systemic approach that fully realizes the potential and complementarities across the UN system.**

The Peace and Security Reviews place renewed emphasis on the UN's conflict prevention efforts, underlining the need to draw on the comparative advantages across the UN system in order to effectively support national stakeholders "sustain peace". The Joint UNDP-DPA Programme was frequently cited as one of few effective inter-agency mechanisms designed to this end. As such, the partnership is particularly well-placed to contribute to subsequent and ongoing efforts to strengthen system-wide engagement on prevention, and to move towards a more holistic, systemic approach that fully realizes the potential and complementarities across the UN system. In leveraging this broader normative and policy environment, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme continued to expand its support in 2015 to countries in an effort to strengthen conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacities at national and local levels. Suitably timed in parallel to the reviews taking place, a new and ambitious programme document was developed providing the framework for the partnership through to 2018. Taking stock of the previous 11 years, as well as building on the recommendations of the external review finalized in late 2014, this exercise provided the opportunity for UNDP, DPA, PBSO and key stakeholders to renew their commitment to the initiative, and reflect on the priorities going forward. Recognizing the need to further draw on the respective comparative advantages of DPA and UNDP, the new programme document put stronger emphasis on 'non-PDA' areas of collaboration, such as joint conflict analysis and assessment missions, or the deployment of short term experts, while seeking to maintain the PDA cadre between 35 and 40 at any one time.

While efforts to broaden the scope of the partnership continue, 2015 saw the highest number of deployments since the partnership was established, reaching 39 PDAs positioned in the field. To ensure the PDA function continues to play a niche role, focused around entry points available to the UN to support the strengthening of national capacities for conflict prevention, there is a need to make better use of the other tools available to the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme.

A new trend which was confirmed in 2015 has been the growing number of PDAs playing regional or multi-country roles, as well as greater interaction between neighbouring PDAs on joint projects. With the increasingly transnational nature of conflict, as well as the spill-over effects of some crisis to neighbouring

countries, there is an assumption that an integrated and cross-border approach is needed to address these challenges. Lessons from this new modality of deployment will be emerging in the upcoming year.

In leveraging the momentum gained through the Peace and Security Reviews, while continuing to strengthen the partnership in response to the 2014 external review, the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme remains on a solid trajectory going into 2016. Sustained support from current partners from within the UN system and amongst Member States, and bringing in additional partners, will be critical to ensuring the partnership is able to move towards achieving its potential.





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**Joint UNDP - DPA  
Programme on  
Building National  
Capacities for  
Conflict Prevention**

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