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Kent Global Leadership Program on Conflict Resolution

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION SUMMER TRAINING

## SUMMARY REPORT

2022



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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Today's conflict landscape is one of unprecedented complexity. Interstate conflict is back, but intra-state conflicts have not disappeared, and there is no clear separation between the two categories. States influence and manipulate intra-state conflicts, while militias and non-state actors are involved in interstate conflicts. Across this spectrum, no one single type of actor has a monopoly on conflict dynamics and on their solutions. Governments, international institutions, civil society organizations, and businesses all influence the course of conflict in many distinct but interrelated ways. That makes 21st century diplomacy much more complicated, as it adjusts to a multi-layered world shaped by the interaction between public and private actors. Diplomacy cannot succeed if it engages only diplomats. It has to transform itself. The Kent program aims at being part of the answer. It has created a platform where diplomats, civil society and business leaders can share their experiences, and it connects the dots between the transformation of societies and the transformation of conflict and conflict resolution.

This year's Kent Global Leadership Program annual training on conflict resolution was the second edition of the flagship event of the program, but the first to be held in a hybrid format, since last year's was entirely virtual. A select group of 25 diplomats coming from five continents, engaged for five days with some 40 speakers, ministers, experts, and civic and business leaders coming from all over the world, both virtually and in person.

The panels were complemented by two experiential exercises in which the diplomats put in practice the insights offered by the panelists: in the first, they negotiated the end of a civil war, and in the second, several teams explored the best ways to help a city emerging from conflict.

The unifying goal of this week of intensive work was to learn how to address complexity. No single framework can capture the many dimensions of a fragmenting world. The picture that emerged was bleak, and it became clear, over the course of the week, that there is no longer one set of agreed rules and principles that could help regulate intra and interstate relations. No country or group of countries is in a position to shape international relations, let alone enforce rules. This reflects in part a redistribution of power away from the West and away from states and public institutions. This shift makes the world more unpredictable and more dangerous. At the same time, it creates new opportunities as non-state actors, including business and civil society, can insert themselves on a stage that is no longer fully controlled by states. This broadening of the field of diplomacy generates its own challenges: can a new set of rules emerge? How to make the interaction between public and private actors productive? How to ensure mutual accountability and mutual trust? A week's intensive training could not give full answers to such difficult questions, but it prepares a new generation of diplomats for a rapidly changing world in which new thinking is required to engage with new actors and design new pathways to peace and stability.



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# Panel 1: Mapping the Landscape of 21st Century Conflict

**Jake Sherman (M) | Pekka Haavisto | Ghassan Salamé | Daojiong Zha**

In order to map the landscape of 21st century conflict, it is necessary to identify and examine today's most salient conflict dynamics. This is an imprecise science and a difficult enterprise, which the panel embarked on through an examination of contemporary conflict's trends, inflection points, and actors, as well as the impacts of exogenous factors shaping conflict. Jake Sherman, Minister Counselor at the US Permanent Mission to the UN, moderated the conversation, which included three panelists:

- Pekka Haavisto, Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Ghassan Salamé, Former Special Representative of the Secretary General in Libya
- Daojiong Zha, Professor of International Political Economy, Peking University

## Implications of War in Ukraine on the Global Conflict Landscape

The panel began with differing perspectives on how to situate Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing war it sparked within broader trends of contemporary armed conflict. Mr. Haavisto agreed with some European commentators who have described Russia's invasion as "Europe's 9/11," arguing that the invasion marks an inflection point in the European political landscape. Just as 9/11 ushered in a 'new era' in the US, Mr. Haavisto notes that the previous and tempered risk calculus that Russia made in its 2008 incursions into Georgia, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia, as well as its 2014 attack and occupation of Crimea, appear to have been replaced by a much higher risk tolerance with destabilizing implications for Europe's security architecture. He also cautioned against excess sympathy for Russia's claim that it is defending legitimate security interests, noting that

similar language was used by the Soviet Union in its invasion of Finland in November 1939, and that these 'legitimate concerns' should be brought before institutions like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Indeed, Mr. Haavisto wondered aloud how peace can be made when the "European security architecture is broken," and the 1975 Helsinki Final Act that formalized the conditions for peace in Europe has failed. Mr. Haavisto reflected that the future indeed appears uncertain and dire in this 'new era' where there is loose talk about chemical weapons and tactical nuclear weapons, in which Russia is willing to mobilize 100,000 troops on its border without a general mobilization, and in which regime change is a viable policy option.

Mr. Salamé disagreed with the notion that Russia's invasion of Ukraine marked

Europe's 9/11.' Rather, he argued that the invasion marked a "rejuvenation of the old realist paradigm," further noting that Russia's security concerns must be listened to by the international community. First, he distinguished between terror attacks like 9/11 and interstate war, which he argued were categorically different types of conflict. Whereas the former marks the growing threat of transnational armed groups, the latter represents a *return* to a period of interstate war driven by territorial conquest and explainable within the contours of great power competition. While the 1998–2000 war between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the 1988–1994 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan present two additional examples of

interstate war over territorial conquest, these types of conflict had become the exception rather than the norm over the past three decades. Mr. Salamé contends that the projected end of interstate territorial conquest, as argued by Anna Simons in her 2003 *National Interest* essay "The Death of Conquest," must now be called into question. Second, this return to interstate conquest provides credence to the realist paradigm of international affairs. According to Mr. Salamé, the notion that liberalism's economic interdependence will prevent the outbreak of international conflict does not hold up under scrutiny, as this interdependence between Russia and Western countries has only increased over time and clearly did not prevent Russian



aggression. Rather, Mr. Salamé argues, “We are not witnessing a new paradigm. We are witnessing a rejuvenation and an updating of the realist one.” Furthermore, Mr. Salamé traces the causality of this realist rejuvenation to the “deregulation of international norms.” This deregulation of norms, comparable to deregulation in economics and in the media, began with “the original sin” of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, which the UN Security Council (UNSC) chose not to authorize, and advanced further by the Russian military conquests referenced by Mr. Haavisto. Indeed, Mr. Salamé argued that we have “seen the movie” where the leader of the aggressor nation is analogized to Hitler – Saddam Hussein, Muammar Qaddafi, and now Vladimir Putin— and that we need to refrain from personalized politics and focus on national interests.

Third, Mr. Salamé stated his willingness to believe any country that expresses urgent security concerns. However, he argued that these concerns do not justify violent action *prima facie*, and that distinctions must be made between i) legitimate concerns, ii) legitimate objectives, and iii) legitimate means. In practical terms, Russia’s security concerns, no matter how ‘legitimate,’ do not justify an unprovoked invasion and territorial conquest of its neighbors.

Mr. Zha presented yet another view regarding the implications of Russia’s invasion for the landscape of today’s conflict. Rather than viewing it as

“Europe’s 9/11” or “a rejuvenation of realism,” he argued that it is too early to assess its causes and implications. He emphasized the need for patience and prudence, noting that too much is made of an “East versus West” dichotomy and that an examination of the communications that led up to the start of the war will provide more insight into its drivers and significance in the long term. In fact, for Mr. Zha the remarkable point is not Russia’s invasion, but rather the international community’s swift and severe response, which differs significantly from the international response to Russia’s 2014 aggression. Lastly, he argued that this war does *not* augur a new paradigm or stage of international conflict. Moreover, he cautions the unpredictable and escalatory outcomes that could be brought about by external intervention based on “ideological grounds,” referencing Laos and Cambodia’s involvement in Vietnam and the need to respect the more restrained “Asian way of handling conflict.”

In addition to their varied framings of the war’s causes, each panelist held a different view on the trajectory of the war. Mr. Haavisto emphasized that Ukrainians have been unified by the war and predicted an entrenched conflict, noting that a near-term ceasefire may even be a ploy for one side to later launch an even more aggressive attack, and that neither side would have trust in an agreement signed by the other after the failed Minsk I and II Agreements. Similarly pessimistic about a





short war, Mr. Salamé viewed the war within the context of a return to intractable realism where viable forums for addressing security issues are becoming increasingly scarce. Mr. Zha, however, stated that the war will likely last a relatively short time, and argued that the international community should not become too wrapped up in the conflict to the detriment of other global issues. These three different interpretations of the war's implications for the contemporary conflict landscape—a critical inflection point, a return to an earlier paradigm, and 'too early to tell'—reflect the contemporary debate in the international affairs field and the global perspectives that shape this debate.

### **Double Standards in Collective Security**

While no panelist put forward the view that the international community embodied a beacon of fairness and integrity, perspectives differed on the degree to which 'double standards' governed the apparatus of collective security. Mr. Salamé noted that double standards "*are* the daily life of international politics," and that no country is—or ever has been—committed to treating everyone equally. These double standards should not, however, obscure real progress that has been made in reforming the UN security

apparatus. Indeed, Mr. Zha pointed to the Lichtenstein Initiative (formally titled "Standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council") as a step forward in creating a more democratic UNSC and possibly the biggest check on the veto since it was introduced. This new protocol has already been implemented to force China and Russia to explain their decision to veto a draft UNSC resolution in May 2022 aimed at tightening sanctions on North Korea. At the same time, Mr. Zha contends that this is also an example of international double standards in singling out China among the P5. Furthermore, if the protocol is used more for political convenience than for transparency and procedural integrity, the impetus of the reform could backfire.

Mr. Haavisto concurred that Western powers have at times acted with double standards not only with regards to their treatment of Russia and China in the UNSC, but also in relation to regional organizations like the African Union (AU) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Given these tensions and the double standards in the international system, Mr. Haavisto doubts that an institution comparable to the UN could be built today if it did not already exist. He also highlighted recent successes in multilateral diplomacy, namely the durability of the truce in Yemen, the



advancement of negotiations to resolve the Safer oil tanker issue, and European Union-led dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan as examples of progress and successful diplomacy despite the double standards embedded in multilateralism.

### **Geopolitics and the Conflict Landscape**

A central topic in contemporary international affairs discourse is the end of a unipolar world and the rise of China, which Mr. Zha spotlighted when contrasting a weakened US battling a populist movement on the one hand with a rising China on the other. However, not all panelists viewed the

rise of China and decline of US hegemony through the same lens. Mr. Zha stressed that China's growth means an even more interconnected and rule-based world because of China's reliance on other countries for its raw material imports and commodity exports. As a result, the most significant cause for concern would be a coordinated effort to 'fence off' China from the rest of the world, for instance by delisting Chinese companies from foreign stock exchanges and decoupling China's economy from the global market. Moreover, he argued that we might see a self-fulfilling prophecy in which concerns about a 'darker China' lead to policies that cut China off from the

world, in turn sparking reactionary policies in China that bring about escalation towards conflict. The risks of heading down this path increase when national political narratives, particularly in the US, focus on displacing domestic grievances about inequality and corruption on foreign governments rather than framing these as domestic issues driven by domestic policies. He also noted that US leadership has lost credibility in talking about a rules-based international order, noting that any country can look back in history to a time when it did not respect ‘the rules’ and notions of legitimacy to which it claims adherence today.

Additionally, China’s growth will slow due to a variety of factors including its demographic decline, presenting it with the question, as posed by Mr. Haavisto, of whether China can “get rich before it gets old.” While China had previously risen to power as the self-proclaimed leader of the Third World, most explicitly in Deng Xioping’s 1974 speech at the UN General Assembly, China’s leaders have embraced a new role at the helm of the international system. This role, Mr. Zha explained, is one in which China’s aid and development projects become tied to expectations that donor recipients will align their votes on human rights issues with China’s national interests. These three factors –China’s commitment to economic interdependence, its foreboding demographic barriers, and the primacy it places on aligning countries with its human rights positions– all project

what Mr. Zha refers to as “an eerie peace,” or a peace marked by an absence of war but not of tension.

In contrast, Mr. Salamé is skeptical of interdependence as a deterrent of conflict. For instance, the interdependence of Britain’s and Germany’s economies prior to World War I did little to prevent the outbreak of war. Rather, he argues that one of the most important dynamics influencing the future of the conflict landscape is the blurred line between geographies and their respective actors. “Where does the West end and where does the East start?” Mr. Salamé asked rhetorically. This led him to agree with Mr. Zha that the geopolitical landscape is characterized by “peace with a climate that is not peaceful.” Mr. Salamé added that it is difficult to definitively identify tension within the international system because, due to these blurred lines, one cannot easily identify the most important actors and geographies of conflict.

Within this ambiguity, the most powerful countries can no longer impose a unilateral agenda on others, or even map the conflict landscape with enough detail to manage risk properly. As Mr. Salamé put it, “the tension in the system has not structured itself into a new constellation of forces.” This instability is not likely to be conducive to effective multilateralism, with formerly soft” issues like pollution, migration,

and “transfer of technology likely to face more intractability in future negotiations. Mr. Haavisto turned from developments in China to developments in the US and Europe in order to understand geopolitical shifts and their implications for the conflict landscape. The primary foreign policy issue in his country is Finland’s application, alongside Sweden, to join NATO. The discussions regarding this application have brought out distinctions in geopolitical lenses, with the US much more focused on the potential threat from a rising China than European countries, which are understandably more concerned about the Russian threat and war in Ukraine. These differences in geopolitical outlook and threat assessment, even among soon-to-be official allies, could significantly impact the conflict landscape in the future.

### **Contemporary Drivers of Conflict**

“While geopolitical tension shapes aspects of conflict throughout the world and the ripple effects of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine are widely felt, a multitude of other conflict drivers and exogenous forces shape this landscape. Some of the most notable factors include transnational non-state armed groups, climate change, corrupt and predatory governments, disinformation in an unregulated media landscape, coup d’états, competition over natural resources, and foreign mercenaries. For instance, conflict in Ukraine and drought in India and Pakistan

have constrained the world’s food supply, particularly with regard to wheat supply in conflict-prone countries such as Lebanon and Ethiopia.

Mr. Salamé argued that these “external factors” must be seen as a part of geopolitical tension. As an example, if the world’s great powers cannot forge an agreement for a wheat corridor in Ukraine, food prices will rise precipitously in countries such as Egypt and Lebanon. Given the internationalization of conflict around the world (no less than seven countries directly interfere in Libya, for example), tension among great powers will impact every other conflict dynamic, from climate change to coup d’états. Indeed, he noted that there is “no civil war in the world that I know of, past or present, that has no foreign interference in it,” and that “civil war” is a misnomer that should be reframed as war among local actors with a high level of foreign interference in it. This increase in coup d’états has been accompanied by democratic backsliding. Mr. Salamé noted that the world reached a democratic apex in 2004 when 119 countries had electoral democracy and only 49 were considered “Not Free” by Freedom House. This trend has since reversed, with coup d’états and electoral ambivalence marking a democratic contraction in recent history. Mr. Haavisto agreed and highlighted the importance of disinformation in muddying effective diplomacy and exacerbating hostile narratives that lead to conflict. Each of these issues, and especially the

internationalization of conflict, the decline of democracy, and disinformation, will continue to shape conflict in the years ahead.

### Conclusion

The landscape of contemporary conflict is complex and multifaceted. Currently, the war in Ukraine and its geopolitical implications dominate this landscape, hindering the forums that can address conflicts around the world and shaping the dynamics of foreign interference in these conflicts. In the long term, China’s rise and role in shaping the geopolitical landscape is likely to be central in the future of conflict and peacemaking. Although the current state of conflict is grim and marked by democratic backsliding, a paralyzed UNSC, a return to significant interstate conflict marked by territorial conquest, and a host of external forces from climate change to coup d’états, there are signs of hope and progress amidst this turmoil. These moments of progress should be viewed not only in contrast to the bleakness of the conflict landscape, but also as lessons to guide conflict resolution efforts in the years to come.



# Panel 2: The Golden Triangle: Transforming Conflict through Cooperation

**Merit Janow (M) | Rémy Rioux | Matthew Devlin  
Ameerah Haq | Muhtar Kent | Hamdi Ulukaya**

One of the founding ideals driving forward the Kent Global Leadership Program on Conflict Resolution is the Golden Triangle. Brought to the fore by the program's primary sponsor, Muhtar Kent, the Golden Triangle is a symbol for the business community, civil society actors, and public officials working together in partnership to address violent conflict. In this panel, moderated by SIPA Dean Emerita Merit Janow, three business leaders unpacked the Golden Triangle alongside a high-level government official working in development and a senior UN official. These panelists include:

- Muhtar Kent, Retired Chairman and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company
- Hamdi Ulukaya, Founder of Chobani
- Matthew Devlin, Head of International Relations at Uber
- Rémy Rioux, CEO of France's development agency (Afd)

Ameerah Haq, Former Under-Secretary-General (USG) of the UN Department of Field Support  
This panel focused on five themes: i) the necessary conditions for cultivating partnerships among these actors in order to transform conflict, ii) the limitations of these partnerships, iii) instances of companies acting for the public good while advancing their interests, iv) the opportunities provided by the institutionalization of the Golden Triangle, and v) steps that are needed to embed the Golden Triangle in policymaking. This overview addresses each of these five areas in turn.

## **Working Together: Pillars of the Golden Triangle**

All five panelists agreed that the Golden Triangle represented symbiotic relationships between business, civil society, and government actors, and if leveraged in the right way had the potential to address conflict more effectively than initiatives taken by only one of these groups. Mr. Ulukaya stated the opportunity succinctly, noting that the capacities of policymakers and civil society actors are magnified significantly when their efforts are tied to the private

sector, which creates "win-win-win" scenarios. At its best, this three-way partnership leverages the specialized expertise—often related to humanitarianism and the provision of public services—of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the knowledge and connections of public officials needed to navigate governmental regulations and laws, and the hiring and training capacity provided by the private sector. Once formed, these partnerships can more

effectively address issues driving and resulting from conflict, including managing the flow of displaced persons and mitigating economic instability that can drive disaffected citizens to join armed groups.

For these partnerships to work, however, each group of actors must take responsibility for addressing conflict drivers and engage in productive dialogue with one another. For instance, Mr. Ulukaya remarked that government and civil society actors must accept that businesses can play a more central role in society and that companies are not driven solely by a profit motive. On the other side, businesses must shoulder a responsibility to do more. This cooperation

also requires stakeholders in each of these groups to look beyond biases they may have that members in the other group are self-serving or unworthy partners. Mr. Ulukaya emphasized that dialogue built on these premises can, for example, allow NGOs to tap into the potential of businesses to provide certain basic services so that NGO staff can focus on humanitarian service provision. In order to realize the Golden Triangle, therefore, everyone must engage in a spirit of good faith and a trust.

### **Business, Development, and Inclusive Interventions**

While the Golden Triangle unlocks non-zero-sum potential, it is not a panacea for addressing conflict and faces inherent



limitations. First, Mr. Rioux provided a sobering reminder that the Golden Triangle's utility for conflict prevention and humanitarian intervention should not be conflated with the long-term work of development. Unlike its US counterpart, the Agency for International Development (USAID), AfD abstains from humanitarian intervention and only focuses on issues of development. Mr. Rioux described AfD's "obsession" with long-term and sustainable intervention founded upon principles of working with and through local actors. Indeed, AfD passes 94 percent of its aid through its local counterparts, in contrast to only 6 percent at USAID. As these local actors may be in the private sector, public sector, or civil society, this type of partnership goes beyond the Golden Triangle to describe the need for development to take a 'bottom-up' approach to programming in a way that is scalable. With a focus on pragmatism and financing the Sustainable Development Goals in line with Agenda 2030, the AfD works alongside 550 development banks around the world that can leverage \$2.7 trillion per year in development assistance. At this scale, Mr. Rioux argues that there are sufficient resources to make significant progress towards achieving the SDGs, and that we cannot necessarily rely upon large corporations to invest in remote parts of the Sahel in the same way as development agencies. Ms. Haq noted, however, that some aid budgets are shrinking due to fiscal tightening amid the pandemic. Nonetheless, she arrived at the

same conclusion as Mr. Rioux that multilateralism and partnerships must be embraced to leverage collective capacity in light of individual constraints.

The issue of reaching remote populations is not limited to large corporations. Ms. Haq remarked that large multilateral institutions, governments, and NGOs all struggle to connect with rural populations, who often live off the grid and beyond the reach of national infrastructure. Ms. Haq stressed that this group, sometimes called the "ultra-poor," must become part of the development, humanitarian, and conflict prevention conversation. One way to do this is through cash transfer programs available in cell phones and other initiatives that access private sector capabilities to bring development to rural areas.

Just as there are geographic limitations to private sector intervention, so too are there political constraints. Asked whether the private sector should also provide material support to armed forces fighting a just war (i.e. Ukrainian military forces), Mr. Ulukaya argued that the private sector should not find any incentives to develop or transport arms, noting the perverse incentives this could lead to in the context of the military-industrial complex.

Taken together, the long-term need for development, the limitations faced by all three pillars of the Golden Triangle to reach rural populations, and the ethical questions surrounding private sector intervention in conflict all inhibit the Golden Triangle's effectiveness.





## Business and Social Good

While certain constraints and conditions bound the potential of businesses to advance the public good, the business leaders on the panel highlighted substantial ways that their businesses have contributed to positive social outcomes. First, in 2016 Mr. Ulukaya founded the Tent Coalition for Refugees, a nonprofit that brought together 220 businesses into a network that assists in the integration and support of refugees into new communities by training and hiring them. Noting that refugee resettlement in cities or camps is rarely straightforward or short term, Mr. Ulukaya emphasized the importance of bringing these displaced populations into the economy of their new countries and localities. In doing so, businesses and communities benefit from the rich and diverse talents of these populations, while providing them with a stable livelihood. Furthermore, the hundreds of thousands of

refugees who now have a job from one of the companies in the Tent Coalition also take advantage of the services provided by the public sector and by NGOs, reflecting the ways in which each of the pillars of the Golden Triangle work together to support displaced populations.

In addition to assisting displaced populations in finding a source of sustainable income, the private sector also plays a pivotal role in their mobility away from conflict zones and towards safer communities. In this regard, Mr. Devlin highlighted Uber's varied contributions to helping Ukrainians following Russia's February 2022 invasion. First, at the outbreak of the war, Uber decided to continue operations despite the risks for the following three reasons: i) drivers provide an essential service for residents in Ukrainian needing to travel within the country, ii) drivers rely upon the income at a time when the economy has been thrown

retailers of Coca-Cola (as well as its competitors), increasing the number of global retailers for the company by 10 percent. The key, emphasized Mr. Kent, is to find the algebra that creates symbiotic relationships between each of these stakeholders. These examples of three large corporations –Chobani, Uber, and Coca-Cola– implementing programs that substantially reduce human suffering amid conflict and mitigate conflict drivers show the benevolent potential of the private sector and the Golden Triangle in action.

### **Institutionalizing the Golden Triangle**

In order for these private sector interventions advancing the public good to have lasting and cohesive impact, they must become institutionalized. The institutionalization of the Golden Triangle faces a number of obstacles. For instance, one of the primary mechanisms for addressing global security concerns is through UN peacekeeping missions, but as Ms. Haq noted, the mandates for these missions can be unwieldy and overstretched. This in part derives from the procedures for creating peacekeeping mandates, in which each United Nations Security Council (UNSC) country brings their specific national interests to bear through additions to the mandate, creating what is known as a “Christmas tree mandate.” Either because it is not as strong of a priority for UNSC members or because the mandate is too broad, the peacebuilding aspects of mandates tend to be unaddressed in their implementation.

Moreover, while peacekeeping missions are funded by mandatory contributions, UN peacebuilding is funded through voluntary contributions, leading to chronic underfunding for peacebuilding initiatives. As a result, even if the Golden Triangle comes to fruition within the auspices of a UN peacekeeping mission, it often lacks peacebuilding capability.

Another nexus where business, society, and government institutionalization is needed is humanitarian access and aid. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), founded in 1972 and which connected and supported 700,000 mostly Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar in recent years, provides a strong example of the institutionalization of the Golden Triangle. Ms. Haq is a BRAC Board member and noted that, given BRAC staff’s ability to speak Rohingya (*Ruáingga*) and rapidly deploy to localities with heavy refugee flows, they could be much more adaptive than UN agencies. Therefore, BRAC worked closely with the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which could provide funding and resources that were funneled through BRAC to refugees while ensuring that resource access for these refugees would not be overly hampered by bureaucratic delays within the UN. By institutionalizing this partnership early on, UNHCR has been able to maximize its impact during a time when the Bangladesh government accepted nearly one million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar. BRAC’s cooperation with UNHCR should provide guidance to the type of

into turmoil and reliable sources of income are scarce, and iii) Uber leadership could provide an example to other companies that it is possible to continue operations in Ukraine. In fact, Uber even expanded its operations from nine cities to sixteen cities in Ukraine. It does this while operating at a loss, as it feeds its revenue back to the drivers and riders in the country.

Second, Uber provides free rides to displaced populations, including internally displaced Ukrainians and those fleeing the country. Since the war began, approximately 7 million Ukrainians have become internally displaced, and an additional 13 million are unable to leave their homes due to siege and violence. Additionally, nearly 6 million Ukrainians have become refugees in Europe, the vast majority of whom are women, children, and elderly Ukrainians who are exempted from Ukraine's martial law. In the weeks following Russia's invasion, Uber provided free rides for anyone in Western Ukraine travelling to the border. This has since changed to a 'no questions asked' shuttle service that Uber provides for anyone to and from the Polish border. In addition to providing the means for refugees to leave Ukraine, Uber provides free rides for UNHCR personnel in Ukraine as well as for supplies that support IDPs. This assistance has extended to the World Food Programme (WFP), which has five distribution centers across Ukraine and relies upon Uber to transport this assistance from these distribution centers

to the populations in need. Uber also provides free rides to city governments for public employees to move their staff, working with public officials at the city government level to facilitate this access. Finally, Uber has contributed significant donations to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the WFP. Uber's involvement as a member of the Tent Coalition, as well as its contributions and partnerships with these NGOs and multilateral agencies, reflect the Golden Triangle in action.

Chronic unemployment and poverty can often be causes of economic instability and conflict, and Mr. Kent sought to mitigate these conflict drivers through a Coca-Cola initiative to train 5 million women entrepreneurs between 2010 and 2020. This program, called 5by20 and marking the largest program of its kind ever enacted by a commercial organization, involved Coca-Cola personnel identifying local NGOs in the countries where they worked and working with and through them to train women entrepreneurs in distribution, logistics, advertising, and basic accounting. 5by20 surpassed its goal, providing training to 6 million women in 100 countries.

While this initiative for the social good has intrinsic merit, Mr. Kent emphasized that it could only be sustainable –not to mention justifiable to Coca-Cola's shareholders– if it was a win-win for all stakeholders. This was achieved through the "very simple algebra" that, of the 5 million women entrepreneurs, 2.5 million became new

cooperation represented by the Golden Triangle, in which synergistic relations leverage the strengths of all three pillars while bypassing their biggest limitations.

### **Enshrining the Golden Triangle in Policymaking**

In addition to scanning the landscape of existing achievements and possibilities surrounding the Golden Triangle's interventions to prevent and resolve conflict while advancing sustainable development, panelists identified specific public policies to realize this end. First, Ms. Haq identified procurement as a key locus for the Golden Triangle, noting that all three sets of actors are involved in the procurement of goods and services and rely on each other for this procurement. Adding to Mr. Rioux's emphasis on engaging local actors, Ms. Haq advocated for government, business, and civil society actors to enact a policy of procuring goods and services directly from the local community and markets where they serve and do business.

Relatedly, Mr. Kent emphasized the need to use the Golden Triangle at the mayoral and city level, noting that this level provides greater opportunity for more agile cooperation and partnership-based programming.

Second, all panelists agreed that the Golden Triangle should take the form of public private partnerships (PPPs) that leverage the diversified capabilities of government, civil society, and the private sector. Mr. Ulukaya mentioned that PPPs are the key to addressing the most intractable issues facing the world today, from climate change to conflict.

Finally, panelists commented on the importance of business intervening before conflict breaks out, noting that business interventions often appear as humanitarian support in the midst of a crisis. Mr. Devlin advocated for global businesses to identify "policy entrepreneurs" around the world that would be political allies in this effort. These relationships would also facilitate the rapid deployment of aid in times of crisis.

### **Conclusion**

The Golden Triangle, like all instruments for advancing meaningful and sustainable change to address entrenched social problems, is imperfect. It must overcome an incentive structure within the private sector that places a primacy on economic gain, the labyrinthine bureaucracies of the public sector, and the under-resourced and overstretched mandates of civil society organizations. But it also holds enormous potential to break through these barriers by harnessing non-zero-sum partnerships that leverage each pillar's strengths while working around their constraints. Large companies such as Uber, Coca-Cola, and Chobani have already shown the magnitude of impact that can be unlocked when company leaders invest in public goods, and NGOs such as BRAC reflect the possibilities of NGO agility and expertise being leveraged by large institutions with robust resources. The Golden Triangle holds tremendous potential, waiting to be harnessed.

# Panel 3: Revisiting the Peacemaker's Toolkit

**Jean-Marie Guéhenno (M) | Karin Landgren | Comfort Ero  
Shivshankar Menon | Funmi Olonisakin | Thomas Biersteker**

The “peacemaker’s toolkit” is a useful but imperfect metaphor. There is no ‘Swiss army knife’ tool that peacemakers can wield as a magic wand to resolve intractable conflict. However, mediators can sharpen their approaches to peacemaking by reflecting on how to engage the actors shaping the conflict landscape and the available levers of power and pressure that could move these actors towards a just and sustainable agreement. This morning panel, moderated by Kent Program Director and former Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peacekeeping Jean-Marie Guéhenno, brought the following five panelists together for a discussion on the peacemakers’ toolkit:

- Karen Landgren, Executive Director of the Security Council Report
- Comfort Ero, President and CEO of the International Crisis Group
- Shivshankar Menon, former National Security Advisor and Foreign Secretary of India
- Funmi Olonisakin, Founding Director of the African Leadership Centre
- Thomas Biersteker, Professor Honoraire at The Graduate Institute in Geneva.

The discussion included a critique of the current UN security architecture and an examination of the challenges presented by contemporary geopolitical rifts, in addition to more practical thematic discussions on reconsidering the mediator’s approach, refining the mediator’s toolkit, and revisiting the mediator’s process.

## **Paralysis within the UN Security Architecture**

Much of the morning panel’s discussion focused on the challenges facing the UN Security Council (UNSC) and how peacemakers should respond. As the premier global body created to address challenges to peace and security, the UNSC plays a central role in shaping the peacemaking landscape within which the peacemaker deploys their toolkit. At its best, the UNSC works in partnership with countries where conflict takes place to address the drivers of conflict and create conditions and capabilities for a successful peace process. Two recent examples of this type of cooperation to advance peace, as described by Ms. Landgren, show that

the UNSC does have the potential to fulfill its mandate amidst the barriers it faces. First, the UNSC members worked closely with the Colombian government, which approached the UNSC “with open arms,” to assist in the design and implementation of the peace process with the FARC armed group, which led to a peace agreement that ended a half-century insurgency. Second, the creation of the special political mission UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) in June 2020 via UNSC Resolution 2524 held the similar advantage of the UNSC working closely with a cooperative Sudanese transitional leadership that clearly stated their needs

and were active partners throughout UNITAMS design and launch. While the implementation of the Colombian peace process has faced numerous barriers and the 2021 military coup in Sudan upended its partnership with UNITMAS, these two examples show the benefit that the UNSC can bring to peacemaking even amidst the significant challenges it faces.

The rest of the discussion on the UN architecture examined the challenges facing the UNSC and UN General Assembly (UNGA), which have created paralysis and infighting within the UN. Ms. Landgren argued that current member states have shown hostility to the UN charter principles – most notably in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine – and that “the gloves have come off,” with this hostility becoming open and transparent. This gap between the UNSC’s role to prevent invasions or territorial conquests and its inability to prevent or halt the war in Ukraine raises serious questions about its viability in relation to its purpose. As Mr. Biersteker noted, it has also reflected an unexpected shift in which China and Russia, the so-called “sovereignist” P2 countries, have switched positions with the United States, France, and the United Kingdom, the so-called “interventionist” P3. In this role reversal, Russia has used a falsified narrative to justify intervention under the Right to Protect (R2P) doctrine alongside an acquiescent China, while the US, France, and the UK have supported Ukraine’s right to sovereignty and territorial integrity.

At the same time, Ms. Landgren asked aloud if *any* international structure or mechanism could have prevented Russia’s invasion, and recalled that the UN Charter’s Article 52 does allow for collective armed response in this scenario:

*“Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security...”*

In this light, the war in Ukraine may not be the right barometer of the UNSC’s effectiveness, according to Ms. Landgren, but rather fits better as an example of the exceptional situation alluded to in Article 52. While this may provide a small comfort that international norms will endure, it should not overshadow the danger that Russia, having already violated international norms, could continue to escalate its aggression and further erode international law. Ms. Olonisakin made the ominous but historically accurate reflection that, in wars of aggression, once crimes of humanity are committed, they become more common and often more severe.

Putting aside UNSC inaction to prevent or mitigate the war in Ukraine, there are a number of troubling trends within the body that have been exacerbated by the war. First, several states, including UNSC members, continue to actively intervene in

civil wars around the world via mercenaries, armament sales, cyberattacks, and conventional military intervention. Libya, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Syria are only the most notable of a long list of such interventions, which sometimes pit UNSC members and their allies on opposite sides of the conflict and involve members violating UNSC resolutions that they themselves put in place. Second and relatedly, these interventions erode peacemakers' ability to build "collective coherence behind a political strategy," which is one of the seven priorities of the Alliance for Peacemaking Plus (A4P+), the 2021–2023 A4P implementation strategy. Third, Ms. Landgren noted that gridlock in the UNSC

has led to mission mandates rolling over instead of having habitual extensions, in part because permanent members sometimes simply refuse to engage in debates on UNSC resolutions.

This paralysis has also carried over into the creation of sanctions regimes, according to Mr. Biersteker. Between 1990 and 2017, the UNSC created an average of one new sanctions regime per year, but there have been *zero* sanctions regimes created since 2017. Additionally, UNSC members block appointment of new panel members for the panel of experts that advise the sanctions committees. For instance, since 2021 Russia has placed a on new panel members for a number of African sanctions regimes on the basis



that the panels are too dominated by Western experts. This gridlock in the security realm can also be seen in the humanitarian space in Syria, with the UNSC failing in early attempts to reauthorize aid to pass through the last Syrian humanitarian border crossing at Bab al-Hawa. Although the UNSC finally passed Resolution 2585 in mid-July, the resolution only extends humanitarian aid access to this crossing for six months, and therefore simply delays a resolution to the issue.

These compounding issues raise a larger question of whether the UNSC is an appropriate vehicle to address issues of peace and security in the world today. Mr. Menon suggests that it is not, as it no longer reflects the reality of the balance of power in the world and relies upon dysfunctional interstate relations among revisionist powers. Ms. Olonisakin echoed this sentiment, asking which segments of the world's population the UNSC represents, and who in the world is "standing up" for the UN at a time when the rules and norms established by its Charter continue to be egregiously violated? These are not simple questions, and the issues they represent did not begin with the war in Ukraine. Rather, they reflect a time of significant geopolitical transition that will continue to shape and constrain peacemaking.

### **Geopolitical Transition**

The global world order is in a time of transition. This period, described by Mr.

Menon as "a world between orders," requires that peacemakers and diplomats change the way they view the world. First, although the world has shifted to an economically multipolar world, the United States remains the sole global superpower with the capability to project power wherever and whenever it wants around the globe. Second, the world appears politically confused, with countries unable to effectively use multilateral diplomacy to achieve collective ends. Mr. Menon referenced the 2009 London G20 Summit to address the global financial crisis as the last instance when the world came together effectively to address a global crisis. Since then, multilateral diplomacy has failed to address COVID-19, the public debt crisis, climate change, and migration crises, instead either stagnating when urgent action is needed, or widening existing political rifts.

This political confusion has not only manifested in multilateralism's inability to address the most pressing collective problems facing the world, but also in the global south's increasing reversion towards nonalignment. Mr. Menon noted that most global south countries abstained from the Western-led sanctions regime against Russia following its invasion, suggesting that this signals their desire to remain neutral. Ms. Olonisakin went even further, suggesting that many people in the global south are silently on Russia's side. Consequently, Mr. Menon predicts that multilateralism will increasingly take the form of issue-based coalitions working





together around shared national interests, noting that a different set of partners are needed to address issues such as the debt crisis and maritime security. This will also mean an elevated role for regional actors, referencing for example the prominence of Bangladesh in addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Finally, this political confusion is marked by an objection to the ‘rules-based order’ from a silent majority that sees it as exclusionary and elitist. Mr. Menon remarked that this order often appears as a narrative that “you should stay where you are,” and should be formulated to incorporate the inevitable changes in demographics and geopolitics facing our world. Ms. Olonisakin echoed

rthis point, noting that “the majority of the world is no longer reached by the tentacles of the multilateral system.” This disconnect within the multilateral system, then, requires an articulation of “what we want at the end of this process,” something Mr. Menon claims is absent in current politics and accentuates our moment of political confusion.

### **Reconsidering the Mediator’s Approach: Identifying the Actors**

If our political confusion is brought about by the wrong set of actors using inappropriate platforms to implement misguided political strategies, the questions then turn to who are the *right*

actors, what are the *right* platforms, and which are the *right* strategies. Ms. Ero addressed these questions by focusing on decentralized peacemaking as a response to the spread of armed groups, especially in the Middle East and on the African continent. While acknowledging that the state has to be part of any solution, even while it is often also a part of the problem, Ms. Ero concurred with Mr. Menon that future peacemaking must shift towards local-based mediation approaches and place a primacy on community relations and localized responses to conflict. This is particularly needed at a time when armed groups, many espousing radical jihadist ideologies, prey upon local grievances to create proto-states that deliver basic services and generate a veneer of legitimacy for the armed group. These jihadist threats reside in Syria, Iraq, the Sahel, and Yemen, among other places. Echoing Mr. Menon's call for shifting our geopolitical lens, Ms. Ero called on peacemakers to include these groups in peace processes, contending that "we cannot shift these actors out of the terrain." For instance, Ms. Ero argued that "the Taliban are the only game in town" in Afghanistan, and that "we cannot sidestep the Houthis" in the Yemen peace process. The multitude of actors also means a changing center of gravity in peace processes, with these groups holding as much of a stake in the peace process as the other actors involved, including governments and their international backers. This must also reflect

demographic changes, for example by including more youth in countries – many in Sub-Saharan Africa – that have disproportionately youthful populations. Finally, Ms. Landgren called for the elevation of grassroots peacemaking efforts, and support for the leaders making change on the ground. This is all the more needed given the lack of strategic direction and principled leadership at the helm of the United Nations, in her view.

Another corollary of this 'frame shift' is an elevated role for regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU). While regional actors can be spoilers as well as peacemakers, regional organizations are indispensable to peacemaking and should play a more prominent role in peace processes. Unfortunately, ECOWAS has become, in Ms. Olonisakin's view, a shadow of its former self, and has not bothered to defend the norms governing regional politics that it itself had established.

At the same time, this regional focus can become problematic if approached dogmatically. Ms. Ero responded to the frequent advocacy for "African solutions to African problems" with historical counterpoints and practical questions, asking rhetorically whether the Malian government contracting with the Russian mercenary Wagner Group is a preferable alternative to France's Operation Barkhane; whether Chad's former president Idriss Déby's military support for rebel forces in the Central African

Republic advanced peace in that country; and whether the coup d'états in Chad, Mali, Guinea, and Sudan show confidence in “African solutions.” Taken together, the panelists point to the need for inclusivity in bringing conflict actors to the table, while also finding balance between local and regional leadership in peacemaking on the one hand, and international pressure and intervention on the other, to bring about sustainable peace.

### **Refining the Mediator’s Toolkit: Better Use of Sanctions**

The efficacy of sanctions became a recurring theme of the panel, including a focus on how peacemakers and diplomats can most effectively use this tool to advance their interests and sustainable peace. As mentioned earlier, the creation of sanctions regimes and the ease of their implementation have been hampered by UNSC gridlock. This gridlock is further problematized by disputes and delays related to the expert panels that advise sanctions committees, with delays on panel reports notably more common when the violations articulated in these reports are by Russia and China. Currently, there are fourteen active sanctions regimes authorized by the UNSC, but there appears to be little movement within these regimes and their efficacy is in doubt. However, the “efficacy” of sanctions regimes can be difficult to identify and quantify. Mr. Biersteker pointed to evidence that, although only 10 percent of sanctions episodes can be correlated to

direct behavior change, their effectiveness in constraining behavior rises to approximately 25 percent, and by their very nature every episode of sanctions sends a normative signal about international norms that holds value. His focus on “episodes” is noteworthy as well, as it refines the focus of sanctions analysis to the effect of a sanctions regime at a given time on a specified set of targets. This is an important consideration given that the purpose and targets of sanctions episodes can shift over the course of a sanctions regime, as is evident for example in the Somalia sanctions regime, which has targeted different actors for different ends over its history.

Taking into account this broader framework regarding the impact of sanctions, Mr. Biersteker argues that sanctions are “overused and underutilized.” In other words, while he agrees with the popular sentiment that sanctions are too often a default policy response lacking strategic depth, he argues that sanctions can be incorporated more strategically into peacemaking. For instance, the incentives provided by delisting actors from a sanctions regime can be more robustly integrated into a mediation approach to bring parties to the table and bring about concessions, noting that the promise of delisting induced former mujahideen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to end his attacks against the Afghan state and to join the Afghanistan government.

Mr. Menon, however, disputed this causal link, arguing that Mr. Hekmatyar joined the Afghanistan government under pressure from Pakistani officials, and that the main impact from sanctions is to isolate opponents and prevent productive dialogue. Mr. Menon went further, arguing that sanctions not only failed to prevent Mr. Putin from invading Ukraine, but also have weaponized global financial instruments such as SWIFT, which will have harmful impacts in the long run. Rather, Mr. Menon argued that diplomatic tools should focus on addressing the core interests of each country instead of widening the gulf between countries. In response, Mr. Biersteker noted that institutions like the Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe must take steps

that may isolate actors, but which serve the higher purpose of solidifying institutional norms and values. Furthermore, Mr. Biersteker pointed to examples where the strategic use of sanctions had positive impacts. This debate exhibited the complexity of sanctions use as a diplomatic tool, and its controversial impacts in advancing peace.

**Revisiting the Mediator’s Process:  
Talking with Your Adversaries**

All panelists emphasized that effective mediation and diplomacy necessitates difficult conversations between adversaries. Ms. Olonisakin and Mr. Menon both emphasized that you make peace with your enemies, not your friends, and that the war in Ukraine, the humanitarian



crisis in Afghanistan, and the jihadist threat posed by armed groups in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Sahel regions cannot be addressed without good faith dialogue. Nor are endless peacekeeping missions a viable alternative. Mr. Guéhenno argued that peacekeepers cannot be the “police force for the world,” and that while they could act to prevent an escalation of violence, just like dikes of sand holding back water, the efficacy of this approach relies on having “a lot of sand” and is tenuous in the best of circumstances.

To maximize the efficacy of peacemaking,

these difficult discussions must begin *before* the outbreak of violence. To that end, Ms. Ero emphasized the importance of early warning mechanisms, noting that the conflict in Ukraine and the time for effective diplomacy occurred well before Russia’s invasion in 2022 and even before Russia’s occupation of Crimea in 2014. Moreover, Ms. Ero noted that the issue is not necessarily the absence of early warning capability, but the failure of key actors to act in response to early warning signals, leading to reactionary policies instead of proactive interventions.

### Conclusion

This extensive discussion on the challenges and opportunities of contemporary peacemaking drew out important lessons for today’s peacemakers. First, peacemakers must navigate a constrained and contentious collective security architecture, working within the real possibilities presented by the UNSC while recognizing its severe limitations. Second, peacemakers must cope with the institutional inertia presented by the tectonic shifts shaping contemporary politics, namely that this is a world between orders that has failed to align its multilateral institutions to global power dynamics. Third, there must be a balance between elevating local and regional mediation efforts, the one hand, with the need for international intervention in the wake of regional turbulence and bad-faith actors. Fourth, mediators should take an evidence-based approach to sanctions, understanding that they are multifaceted and controversial tools that should be implemented as dynamic, not static, instruments. Fifth, diplomacy must return to its roots in embracing difficult dialogue among adversaries, which will be necessarily arduous and time-consuming. Taken together, these five lessons can act to sharpen peacemakers’ awareness and strengthen the mediator’s toolkit.

# Panel 4: Negotiating Peace

**Arthur Boutellis (M) | Teresa Whitfield | Ian Martin  
El-Ghassim Wane | Grigory Nemyria**

The trajectory of contemporary conflict is uncertain and unsettling. In general terms, conflicts in the 1980s terminated in military victory, while conflicts in the 1990s ended in peace settlements that accompanied a rapid increase in peacekeeping missions. However, since the mid-2000s conflict trends point to longer and deadlier conflicts marked by internationalized civil wars, divisive geopolitics, threats from non-state armed groups with an increase in jihadist-inspired terrorism, and, recently, a return to interstate war. Just as armed conflict has transformed, so too have the mechanisms, frameworks, and tools of peacemaking adapted to new realities. This panel, moderated by Arthur Boutellis, Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute (IPI) and Adjunct Professor at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), brings together four distinguished experts and practitioners to discuss the challenges of ending contemporary armed conflict. These panelists include:

- Ian Martin, former Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)
- Teresa Whitfield, Director of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) Policy and Mediation Division (PMD)
- El-Ghassim Wane, SRSG and Head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)
- Grigory Nemyria, Deputy Chairman of the Batkivschyna Party and First Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Ukraine

This panel summary begins with an overview of peacemaking efforts in three conflicts: Libya, Mali, and Ukraine. These case studies provide practical insights into contemporary peacemaking and its challenges, which are elaborated in the final two sections on peacemaking in a changed world and the constellation of mediation actors.

## **Peacemaking in Libya: Geopolitics & Intervention**

Mr. Martin provided a candid review of the shortcomings and lessons learned from the international community's 2011 intervention in Libya. Mr. Martin emphasized that the specific reasons for the intervention's failure to bring peace to Libya are categorically different from the failures of international interventions in

Afghanistan and Iraq, and that the distinctions are important in order to avoid overgeneralized critiques of interventionism. Relatedly, it is misguided to reject the Right to Protect (R2P) doctrine due to the failed Libyan intervention, as many governments have done. Such a broad rejection ignores the proven benefits of R2P

as seen in the success of the 1999 Australian-led UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT, for which Mr. Martin served as SRSG) in preventing atrocities, and brushes aside one of the historical drivers for R2P, the 800,000 victims of the Rwandan genocide.

Rather, Mr. Martin's central question, as posed by the title of his recent book *All Necessary Measures?*, is whether NATO exceeded the UN Security Council (UNSC)'s March 2011 Resolution 1973 authorizing the Libyan intervention and mandating member states "to take all necessary measures" to protect civilian populations and enforce a no fly zone. While Mr. Martin found the UNSC Resolution 1973 justifiable on humanitarian grounds, he argued that France and Britain's military

aid to rebel forces, which led to the eventual overthrow and murder of Muammar Qaddafi, left no room for the UN to play a political role thereafter. Even more, by stretching the "all necessary measures" interpretation to a *de facto* policy of regime change, the UK and France alienated Russia and China, who would never have agreed to a mandate authorizing such a broad intervention. Mr. Martin also raised a counterfactual scenario wherein the African Union could have intervened more assertively to influence Mr. Qaddafi at the outset of the 2011 protests, which could in turn have complemented a more coherent and cohesive approach from UN member states during the crisis period. This type of approach may have provided an



opportunity for a peaceful transition of power or reform process while strengthening, as opposed to eroding, trust among member states.

Although hypotheticals such as this are by nature difficult to analyze, Mr. Martin provides an important lesson through it. Namely, that the states composing regional organizations and the United Nations must coordinate peacemaking efforts to leverage the relative strengths of each body, and work transparently and in good faith with one another. An equally important lesson is that when member states stretch a UN mandate to fit their political goals, as France and the UK did in using UNSCR 1973 to force regime change, it has severe impacts on international norms and deepens divisions within the UNSC. Member states should be cautious, therefore, to balance immediate political ends that could be advanced through broad interpretations of UNSC resolutions with the long-term impacts these decisions might have on UNSC functionality and international norms.

In Libya, this erosion of trust has led UN member states, including P5 members, to circumvent or even hinder UNSMIL's mandate, which they themselves voted for and fund. These divisions within the UNSC have hampered the independence of the secretary-general to select a SRSG to UNSMIL, and for that envoy to lead the mission free from interference from member states. The disagreements have also prevented the UNSC from updating the UNSMIL mandate, leading to three-

month rollovers that reflect the stagnation of the mission as a whole. The intractability of peacemaking in Libya presents a sobering lesson that distrust and competing interests among the actors in a position to support peacemaking can be fatal to peacemaking efforts, no matter how skilled and innovative the peacemaker.

### Peacemaking in Mali: Regional Coordination

Moving the geographic focus southwest across the Sahara Desert from Libya to Mali, Mr. Wane discussed the difficulty of bringing peace to the country in the face of its many interrelated challenges. The UNSC created the initial MINUSMA mandate in April 2013 via Resolution 2100 in the wake of France's January 2013 Operation Serval offensive in order to carry out security-related tasks and stabilize the country during a period of political transition. The UNSC transformed this mandate in 2014 with UNSC Resolution 2164 into a much broader mandate encompassing a wide array of civilian and military tasks. With over 17,600 civilian and military personnel, MINUSMA is one of the largest and most complex UN peace operations in the world. Its multifaceted mandate has been further complicated by the recent withdrawal of French forces from the country and the Malian government's cooperation with nearly 1,000 Russian mercenaries from the Wagner Group. This shifting landscape of intervention in





El-Ghassim Wane



Grigory Nemyria

Mali takes place amidst a compounding political crisis in the country's north, large zones of insecurity throughout the central and northern regions, and poor governance throughout the country. In response to these overlapping challenges, Mr. Wane emphasized the importance of cooperation between MINUSMA, the African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in coordinating peace efforts and public messaging. Fortunately, Mr. Wane noted that all three entities work closely together on the ground and closely coordinate their support for Mali's political transition.

At its best, this cooperation leverages the respective strengths of each entity. For example, Mr. Wane noted that the AU is in

general more invested in early warning activities and has shown a greater willingness to take offensive operations – as seen in the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS, formerly AMISOM)– compared to the UN. However, the UN has greater resources to carry out long-term stabilization missions such as MINUSMA. The UN and AU should therefore coordinate peace and security operations in such a way as to take advantage of the AU's heightened agility for political maneuvering while leveraging the UN's resources and potential to use political pressure to bring parties to an agreement. In some instances this symbiotic coordination between the UN and AU occurs sequentially, as for example when the African Union received permission

from Khartoum for a security mission in Darfur that later blended with the UN as the African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

While UNAMID in Darfur and ATMIS in Somalia present examples of peace operations changing hands between the UN and AU, the success of this cooperation is dubious in both cases. As a whole, Mr. Wane argued that, instead of advocating for or against “African solutions to African problems,” peacemakers should focus on finding “responses that are suitable to the challenges facing African countries” in a case-by-case basis. This necessarily means wading in the weeds of long-term governance issues and the social contract between citizens and their governments in every country plagued by conflict. In Mali, only a coordinated effort can harness enough resources and adaptive capacity to take on the governance and security issues facing the country.

### **Peacemaking in Practice: Ukraine**

The ongoing war in Ukraine, sparked by Russia’s February 2022 invasion but with origins dating back at least to Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea and occupation of the Eastern Donbas region, is likely the conflict most resistant to peacemaking efforts in the world today. Mr. Nemyria bluntly presented the only three available scenarios he saw to terminate the war:

- i) Russian victory over Ukraine.
- ii) Ukrainian victory by pushing

Russian forces back to their pre-February 2022 lines.

iii) Stalemate characterized by Russia holding territory it conquered after February 2022, but unable to press further into Ukraine. Both sides negotiate periodic ceasefires along these new lines.

Mr. Nemyria dismissed the first option given that Russia failed at its only real chance to conquer Ukraine, and in the process galvanized a united resistance to its invasion across Ukraine. Whichever way the war ends, it is unlikely to reach its conclusion in the near term. To reach a ‘mutually hurting stalemate’ that might signify a ripe time for diplomacy, both Russian and Ukrainian leadership would have to change their current belief that time is on their side. Mr. Nemyria examined the possibility of Ukraine accepting a “permanently neutral” status or the “Finland option” wherein Ukraine would join the European Union but would not join NATO. However, Mr. Nemyria believes this option only held viability prior to Russia’s invasion.

Even if circumstances changed such that a mediated outcome appeared possible, it is unclear who would lead the process. In considering different options, Mr. Nemyria pointed to France’s successful shuttle diplomacy under EU auspices to end hostilities between Russia and Georgia following Russia’s 2008 invasion, as well as the intermediary role played by the Organization for Security and Cooperation

in Europe (OSCE) in the negotiation and (unsuccessful) implementation of the 2014 Minsk Agreements between Russia and Ukraine. In contrast to these examples of European nations mediating agreements to end hostilities following Russian aggression, Mr. Nemyria was discouraged that no European nation or international organization has seriously attempted to mediate “the war raging in the center of Europe,” and that there have only been unpromising efforts by Israel and Turkey to bring the parties together.

Given the improbability of a near-term settlement to end the war and the absence of a significant peacemaking actor, Mr. Nemyria emphasized the need to focus on

mitigating the humanitarian cost of the war, both inside and outside of Ukraine. The UN’s small intermediary role in prisoner exchanges, in addition to locally rooted agreements mediated by NGOs trusted on both sides, provide a starting point. On a much larger scale, Mr. Nemyria noted the significant need for humanitarian resources to address the displacement of 14 million Ukrainians since the start of the war, including 6.5 million refugees and 7.5 million internally displaced persons. He advocated for a process of humanitarian mediation to unfreeze the nearly 25 million tons of grain stuck in Ukraine due to Russia’s blockade of the Black Sea, which has



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already led to an increase in food prices and could have dire impacts for countries like Lebanon, Egypt, and Ethiopia, which rely heavily on Ukrainian grain supply. With Russia and Ukraine appearing prepared to grind the war forward indefinitely and no viable actor stepping forward to mediate a peace process, these isolated openings for humanitarian mediation should be the current focus.

### **Making Peace in a Changed World**

The nature of peacemaking has had to adapt to the changing conflict dynamics of the past several decades, as seen in the three case studies above. Ms. Whitfield noted that contemporary peacemaking no longer fits the mold described in Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 *Agenda for Peace* report, which outlined a linear peacemaking arc that included preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding. Rather, contemporary conflict is shaped by regionalized and internationalized interventions, illicit economic flows that blur the lines between criminal and political interests, and the atomization of conflict actors. While mediation must adapt to these dynamics, Ms. Whitfield argued that mediation cannot force parties to an agreement. The efforts to professionalize mediation have benefited the field and contributed to knowledge about mediating ceasefires, constitutional reform, inclusive peacemaking, and other topics, but these contributions have

limited efficacy when confronted with conflict actors not interested in good-faith efforts to find an agreement. The struggle for current peacemakers, then, is not to disregard the guidance for effective mediation published by the UN a decade ago, which emphasized consent of the parties, impartiality, inclusivity, coherence, and other themes, but rather to adapt this guidance to a changed conflict landscape. Ms. Whitfield emphasized that we should not fault mediators or their 'toolbox' when we observe a proliferation of conflict, but rather accept that certain conflicts are highlight intractable and not yet ripe for mediation. Mr. Martin echoed this belief, noting that the deterioration of the political environment, not the efficacy of the mediator's toolbox, is the main cause of stalled peacemaking efforts around the world.

A particularly thorny problem in contemporary peacemaking is how to handle the tension between negotiating a peace that ends violence, on the one hand, and ensuring justice and accountability for crimes committed during the conflict, on the other. Ms. Whitfield noted that in order to ensure an inclusive process that brings the main conflict actors to the table, the mediator will have to engage in dialogue with people responsible for horrible acts. And yet, if one neglects to include those actors in the peace process, no meaningful and lasting agreement will be reached.

A related issue involves tension in the typology of criminal acts in a time of

armed conflict. That is, what is the process for distinguishing between a “war crime,” a “crime,” and an “act of war,” and what is the related process of pursuing justice and accountability for each? For decades, the UN has held an institutional policy that it will not endorse a peace agreement providing amnesty for war crimes or crimes against humanity. As Ms. Whitfield pointed out, however, having a policy prohibiting amnesty in these instances does not guarantee accountability and justice. Taken together, responses to contemporary conflict dynamics should involve more adaptation within the conflict resolution field, but critics should also acknowledge that certain conflict dynamics may not yield to any peacemaking intervention and require a transformation of the underlying political realities in order to move towards a peaceful resolution.

### Who Makes Peace?

The final issue of contemporary peacemaking discussed in the panel involves selecting an appropriate and willing mediator. Ms. Whitfield listed several categories of peacemakers, including the United Nations via SRSs, regional organizations, UN member states, and NGOs such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD). Having a wide array of mediation actors with different capabilities can be useful when they complement one another and can leverage each other’s expertise, access, privacy, and other strengths symbiotically. This works best when there is a

designated lead mediator, seen by all parties as an “honest broker,” with additional mediation actors supporting a coordinated effort. In contrast, issues arise when conflict actors can ‘forum shop’ among different mediators, in which case they can play mediators off of one another and manipulate peace efforts. Ms. Whitfield observed that the number of cases when multiple mediation actors work together in a coherent way are, unfortunately, fewer than the cases of several mediation actors competing and muddying the process.

In 2015, the High-level Independence Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) released its Politics, Partnership, and People report, which recommended numerous reforms to streamline and improve UN peace operations. Mr. Martin highlighted certain reforms that have been implemented and generated real positive change, citing for example the creation of regional divisions that can coordinate among multiple peace operations in the same region, ensuring a consistent approach to each. However, he regretted that a central recommendation of the report –to view each peace operation along a spectrum of interventions and begin to break down the boundaries that separated peacekeeping missions from special political missions– has not been enacted. This is particularly aggravating given that every peace operation since the release of the HIPPO report has been a special political mission, yet the conversation on peace operations

continues to be framed as ‘the future of peacekeeping.’ As the UN often takes the helm of a coordinated mediation effort that includes supporting actors like those Ms. Whitfield described, it is imperative

that it takes a more fluid approach to peacemaking focused on leveraging a variety of capacities in a strategic way that meets the specific dynamics of a given conflict.

### Conclusion

Almost all current conflict trends point to a future of peacemaking that will be more complex and require more adaptation to blurred lines and fluid thinking. Indeed, conflict that is more atomized, internationalized, and shaped by the impacts of climate change, geopolitical rifts, and globalization will be resistant to bounded peace agreements that bring finality and closure to the issues driving conflict. In response, the case studies on Libya, Mali, and Ukraine examined by the panelists show a consensus recommendation for increased coordination between international, regional, national, and sub-national peacemakers to bring about a lasting and inclusive agreement. This coordination should be guided by a specified lead entity with delineated support roles for the others, and should focus on leveraging the respective strengths of each stakeholder. This effort must also navigate a highly constricted UNSC composed of nations either directly or indirectly shaping the conflicts that the UN is mandated to bring to a peaceful resolution, as well as balance the need for justice and accountability within the process and agreement. No easy task, but one which is crucial at a time of profound change.



# Panel 5: Conflict in Changing Urban Environments

**Robert Muggah (M) | Enrique Peñalosa | Stephanie Ziebell  
Michael Nutter | Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr | Sameh Wahba**

This morning panel brought together former and current mayors, urban development experts, and conflict specialists to discuss the causes, consequences, and solutions to insecurity in urban settings. Despite its geographic scope, the discussion gravitated towards common drivers and solutions to insecurity in cities around the world. It also highlighted the tremendous potential for public officials, civil society organizations, and private sector companies to learn from approaches taken by their counterparts in other cities, and the benefit of platforms that allow for these exchanges.

The panel, moderated by SecDev Group Co-Founder and Igarapé Institute Co-Founder Robert Muggah, brought together the following five contributors from around the world:

- Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone  
*Due to a developing issue in Freetown at the time of the panel that required her attention, Ms. Aki-Sawyerr could only participate in the first part of the discussion.*
- Enrique Peñalosa, former Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia
- Stephanie Ziebell, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Haiti
- Michael Nutter, Former Mayor of Philadelphia and Professor of Professional Practice at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA)
- Sameh Wahba, Global Director of the World Bank Urban Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land Global Practice

Taking advantage of the common themes developed in the discussion, this overview is structured around the common drivers and responses to insecurity in each of the urban environments discussed by panelists.

## Scourge of Urban Violence

The problem of contemporary urban violence is severe and multi-causal. Alarming, almost every panelist remarked that violence had spiked in their city. Mr. Nutter relayed that Philadelphia was one of twelve cities across the United States that broke its own record for homicide rates in 2021, and Philadelphia is on pace to surpass that record in 2022. Mr. Nutter acknowledged that the COVID-

19 Pandemic contributed to this increasing homicide rate by forcing people to stay in their homes, which increased anxiety in the general public and reduced urban social cohesion. However, he pointed out that the trends of increasing violence were already present in the pre-pandemic years. Taking a holistic perspective, Mr. Nutter viewed the increase in violence as a result of the

following five factors, all of which took place in the same thirteen-month period: i) the COVID-19 Pandemic, ii) a severe fiscal crisis at the local and state levels, iii) massive national and worldwide racial reckoning, iv) the contested November 2020 election, and v) the January 6th, 2021 insurrection. Mr. Muggah added that the 40 million firearm purchases in the country over the past two years could be a sixth significant factor.

The relationship between these factors is complex, with each eliciting different and even contradicting responses at different points. For instance, following the murder of George Floyd by now-former Minneapolis Police Department officer Derek Chauvin in 2021, the Minneapolis City Council pledged to dismantle its police force and a nationwide movement advocated for police defunding. However, since then violent crime increased, Minneapolis voters rejected a proposal to defund police in their city, and San Francisco voters recalled their progressive District Attorney Chesa Boudin for appearing too soft on crime. As a sign of the inertia for progressive policing policies not only halting but swinging in the opposite direction, Mr. Nutter noted that the Philadelphia City Council increased funding for policing in Philadelphia, and New York City residents elected as their next mayor Eric Adams, who spent 22 years with the New York Police Department (NYPD) (though he has so far been unable to curb the increasing rates of violent crime).

Ms. Ziebell observed disturbingly similar trends in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. Home to approximately one quarter of Haiti's inhabitants, Port-au-Prince has seen a severe uptick in recent violence, including a doubling of homicides and kidnappings over the past five years that has led to the worst rates in Haiti's history. Sadly, Ms. Ziebell believes Haiti missed a window of opportunity between 2013 and 2014 when public and private efforts to increase security, such as a police bicycle brigade that symbolized a people-centric policing approach, appeared to turn back the previous spike in violence. The reversal of these gains over the past five years is particularly striking in Port-au-Prince, in which the majority of Haiti's 160 gangs reside and where much of the violence is concentrated. These gangs, functioning like paramilitary groups, have severed connections between the capital city and the country's north, east, and south. This gang takeover has effectively put the capital city under siege, made movement around the country extremely difficult, and halted the functioning of the government's customs agency and the revenue it would otherwise collect for Haiti's government. Compounding this situation has been the humanitarian crisis resulting from the August 13, 2021 earthquake that left over 2,000 dead and 650,000 in need of assistance, as well as the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse under highly dubious circumstances. Similar to Philadelphia, these interrelated drivers represent a



confluence of structural, political, social, and economic factors, exacerbated by significant environmental disaster.

Ms. Aki-Sawyerr remarked on how similar these themes appeared to those present in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown. Demographically, both Haiti and Sierra Leone have young populations – 55% of Haitians are under the age of 25 and 65% of Freetown's population is under the age of 35 – and have seen a nationwide demographic shift from rural to urban areas due in part to lackluster decentralization initiatives that have failed to institute reliable service provision outside of metropolitan areas. In addition, Ms. Aki-Sawyerr noted that Freetown has seen an increase in violence over the past four years, with a particularly troubling spike in gender and sexual-based violence (GSBV). The drivers of this violence, as with Philadelphia and Port-au-Prince, have economic, political, social, and historical causes. The price of fuel has increased as the economy has deteriorated, correlating with an increase in house robberies and drug use. There is a general feeling of unease and decline of social cohesion, sparked by political narratives of division. Indeed, Ms. Aki-Sawyerr reflected that when she was young, she would not hesitate to walk in the city, in the woods, or on the beach at night, but that these excursions would no longer feel safe today.

Each of these case studies reflects the importance of historical oppression and violence in explaining urban insecurity

today. First, a recent *New York Times* series titled "The Ransom Project" spotlighted the intentional underdevelopment of Haiti's economy due to the crippling reparations forced upon it by France in exchange for its freedom from colonial rule. This history holds significant explanatory power in understanding Haiti's underdevelopment and political crises. Second, Mr. Nutter noted parallels with historical racial oppression in the US, which colors the political dynamics of the January 6 insurrection, the Black Lives Matter movement, and progress towards reparations. Indeed, the legacy of slavery and white supremacy in the United States can be clearly traced to the political and social crises contributing to urban insecurity. Third, Ms. Aki-Sawyerr recognized that Sierra Leone's civil war between 1991 and 2001 and its aftermath have shaped drivers of insecurity today. For example, although post-war Sierra Leone was relatively peaceful, she noted that a generation of young Sierra Leoneans suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to their experiences in the war, and that this PTSD can be triggered during political crisis and result in a proclivity towards violence. Ishmael Beah's 2007 memoir, A Long Way Gone, shows the insidiousness of this issue among former child soldiers in Sierra Leone. While each of these three case studies represents a distinct political and social history, each one shows how past social strife, division, and inequity can



drive urban violence today.

Mr. Peñalosa, on the other hand, provided a counterpoint to these narratives of increasing urban violence in describing the ‘success story’ of Bogotá. In the 1990s, Bogotá had been ravaged by crime. Mr. Muggah reflected on the insecurity he felt in the city in 1997, when cars would speed through lights to get through dangerous neighborhoods as quickly as possible, and there was only one park in the entire city where residents felt safe. During Mr. Peñalosa’s tenure as mayor, violence decreased from 17 murders per 100,000 inhabitants to 12, and residents ‘took back the city’ through regained access to public spaces.

Mr. Peñalosa noted that, while these trends and the policies undergirding them represent significant achievement, the city faces a number of security challenges,

some of which he attributed to the influx of roughly 500,000 Venezuelan migrants to Bogotá in the wake of Venezuela’s economic and political crisis. As with every other case study, he spotlighted historical drivers of violence, including the Spanish conquest of Colombia and the country’s struggle with narcotic production and trafficking. Historically, he noted that Europeans colonizing North America had a desire to “work with their hands,” referencing Bernard Bailyn’s 1988 book *Voyagers to the West*. In contrast, Mr. Peñalosa quipped, “no Spaniard ever arrived in Colombia or any other Latin American country looking to work with their hands.” This reflection highlights the finding that different types of exploitation experienced in different places leave roots that can be traced to current dynamics of insecurity and unrest.

These four cities –Philadelphia, Port-au-Prince, Freetown, and Bogotá– cross many of the divides that stratify our world. These are cities in developing and developed countries with a range of free and unfree economic markets and political apparatuses. The populations in these cities inhabit varied identities and experience different cultures. The historical forces shaping the (under)development of these localities require nuanced understanding. Despite all of this, there are common drivers of insecurity that can be identified and addressed, and comparable lessons that can be adapted from city to city.

### **Armed Conflict in Urban Settings**

While much of the discussion centered on violence driven by urban crime, Mr. Wahba noted that armed conflict brings an additional form of violence to cities around the world. For instance, the battle over Iraq’s Mosul (October 2016 to July 2017) and Ukraine’s Mariupol (February to May, 2022) involved long-term bombardment and urban warfare that brought significant death, destruction, and displacement to those residing in those cities.

These direct impacts are compounded by the indirect effects that follow from large inflows of displaced people settling in



new cities. Goma, a city in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) North Kivu Province straddling the border with Rwanda, had a population of approximately 80,000 15 years ago, but now houses approximately 1.2 million inhabitants, most of whom fled conflict in eastern DRC. Mr. Wahba added that cities in Jordan and Lebanon doubled within a year due to refugee flows from Syria, which led to tension between refugees and host communities, as well as heightened vulnerabilities for refugees and their host communities. A similar phenomenon is occurring in Polish cities that have had to accommodate an influx of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees in a matter of months.

As all periods of violent conflict eventually end, Mr. Wahba posed the additional question of how to rebuild cities devastated by conflict. Ideally, this reconstruction not only rebuilds, but 'builds back better' by incorporating climate adaptation and mitigation measures and considering the transformed demographics and needs of the post-conflict population residing in the city. There are no easy answers to these questions, and they often occur alongside and in relation to the problems of criminal violence. They must therefore be addressed holistically with these complexities in mind.

### **Safe Cities: Policies and Solutions**

With the notable exception of Bogotá above, the contemporary landscape of insecurity in urban settings is daunting.

While half of the discussion focused on the drivers of this violence, the other half addressed evidence-based policy solutions to improve security and increase equity in cities. Mr. Peñalosa referenced the influential (and highly controversial) Broken Windows Theory developed by George Kelling and James Wilson in 1982, which claims that downtrodden, unclean, and disregarded spaces (i.e. with a prevalence of buildings that have broken windows) induce crime, because they are publicly neglected and crime goes unchecked. This creates a feedback loop, wherein the insecurity of downtrodden spaces makes them even more neglected, increasing crime further. Within this policy framework, Mr. Peñalosa implemented policies and programs that developed and cleaned these spaces. During his tenure, his administration constructed 1,700 parks and 170 synthetic sports fields with bright lighting. Simultaneously, his administration built public libraries, sports centers, and high-performing schools in low-income areas of Bogotá.

Mr. Peñalosa emphasized the twofold impact of these policies and programs. On the one hand, they allowed Bogotá's residents to physically 'take back' their city from criminal gangs and gain access to new parks, youth programming, and generally feel safer in their city. Citizens seeing improvement also increasingly viewed the government as legitimate, which in turn made them more likely to obey laws and feel responsible for their neighborhoods. Second, it symbolized the

right for every individual in Bogotá to live in dignity, regardless of their socioeconomic status, and thereby increased equity in the city. This symbolism was concretized in specific ways, for instance in a law charging citizens for parking on sidewalks, a program that converted a polo field at a wealthy country club into a public park, and a network of bicycle lanes that sent the implicit message that “a citizen with a \$30 bicycle is as important as one with a \$30,000 car.” As a result of these policies and their direct impacts, Bogotá became an inspirational story for creating safe cities.

Mr. Nutter noted the applicability of these policies to Philadelphia as well. Under his tenure as mayor he created a citywide bike

program (accessible without credit card use) and initiated efforts to clean up downtrodden areas, noting evidence tying programs that ‘greened’ vacant lots with increased public safety. He also distinguished between equity and equality, noting that historic oppression in the United States is embodied in the drivers of contemporary urban violence and must be addressed proactively.

At the same time, Mr. Nutter and Mr. Peñalosa noted the importance of reliable and effective law enforcement. In order to have legitimacy, the police force must be competent and uncorrupt. Given that urban crime is often highly organized and networked, it must also include effective intelligence gathering and strategically use existing legal architecture. For



instance, Mr. Nutter noted that his administration worked with the US Department of Justice to leverage federal laws such as the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) to take large numbers of people off the street at the same time. Finding the right balance of law enforcement investment and social service-based policies is difficult, as Mr. Nutter noted that police officers are too often asked to address societal problems that require mental health professionals.

Ms. Ziebell acknowledged the value of these policies, while questioning how aid agencies and multilateral organizations can intervene to bring about similar transformation in Haiti. The context is different, she noted, given the limitations of interventionism in a country whose history is shaped by devastation wrought from foreign interventions. At times, interventions in Haiti appear limited to the 'low-hanging fruit' that can be tackled by aid programs given these constraints. For instance, aid and development agencies may focus their programs in rural areas where aid access is more straightforward. Unfortunately, the positive changes brought about by these programs are often unsustainable in light of the persistent institutional and political crises facing the country.

Another option for international intervention, although perhaps with limited applicability to the contemporary Haitian context, is to access international financial instruments created to address the challenges facing urban settings in the

21st century. One option, as described by Mr. Wahba, is the World Bank's Catastrophe Referred Drawdown Option (Cat DDO). Cat DDO is a dual line of credit that is essentially a development policy loan providing financing for reform projects that increase risk reduction and risk preparedness. This financing addresses the need for cities to proactively adapt to the most severe climate change impacts, which are present today and will only worsen in the coming decades. Cat DDO funding provides the ability for developing countries, and in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to access financing and implement projects that will climate-proof critical infrastructure and allow for rapid response following damaging climactic events.

### **The Mayor's Toolbox**

Each of the panelists emphasized that these policies must not be divorced from an overarching vision. Mr. Nutter added that they not only require a plan, but also a commitment to stick with the plan when it is criticized. Relatedly, the benefits brought about through these policies do not rid them of controversy and conflict, and public officials must be prepared to fight back. Mr. Peñalosa noted that his policies met with significant backlash, particularly from higher income households, and many of them did not move forward due to this pushback. Mr. Nutter agreed, noting "If you try to please everybody, you will please no one. If you want to be loved and admired, you should work in a pet shop." As a strategy to gain

trust amidst the inevitable controversy such policies will face, Mr. Wahba advocated beginning with small-scale interventions that can be implemented rapidly and display benefits to ordinary citizens. Such programs can instill trust and buy-in for larger projects, while building sufficient credibility to get all the necessary stakeholders around the table to discuss more substantive and long-term policies of urban reform.

Mr. Muggah added to this last point, noting that strategies with measurable co-benefits build the momentum needed for lasting change, which can only occur when

a leader enacts policies within a larger vision. Mr. Nutter echoed not only the need for a broader vision, but also the awareness to act within an understanding of one's historical context, recognizing that any given municipal leader is 'carrying a torch' that began at a specific historical, spatial, and temporal moment, and will be passed on at a later moment. With this in mind, Mr. Nutter recalled former Pennsylvania Governor Bob Casey's question: "What did you do when you had the power?" as guidance that balances humility and empowerment in trying times.

### Conclusion

Urban violence is not a permanent condition. Mr. Muggah reflected that, in each of the examples reviewed during the panel discussion, violence ebbs and troughs over time and is impacted by endogenous and exogenous factors. The implication is that government policy and external intervention can impact these oscillations, but only if they are enacted with an awareness of the particular social, political, economic, and historical context of the urban environment. The promise of these policies is not set in stone, but if governments can steadily minimize risk factors and maximize protective factors, they can make real gains in saving lives and making society safer.



# Panel 6: The Political Economy of State-Building

**Sarah Cliffe (M) | Fatima Mohammed  
Yuan Wang | Luis Alberto Moreno**

In today's globalized world, state-building and development cannot be extricated from international markets and geopolitics. At the same time, market forces and geopolitical tensions are not decisive factors shaping the political economy of state-building, and can be impacted by the conscious creation of international norms and institutions that guide best practices and articulate shared principles. This panel examined these impacts and the dynamics therein. Sarah Cliffe, Director of New York University's Center on International Cooperation, moderated the panel alongside three panelists from around the world:

- Fatima Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union (AU) to the United Nations (UN)
- Luis Alberto Moreno, Former President of the Inter-American Development Bank
- Yuan Wang, Fellow at the Columbia-Harvard China and The World Program

The discussion began with an exploration of state-building within a globalized context, and the efforts made by regional organizations and multilateral institutions to advance economic development. It then turned to a debate on the impacts and types of corruption, which magnified several of the dynamics examined in the first half of the discussion.

## **Building the State: Inside-Out or Outside-In?**

Approaches to state-building carry an implicit tension. On the one hand, standard approaches emphasize "local" ownership, state sovereignty, and national agency when considering the direction of state development. At the same time, state-building is fundamentally shaped by foreign direct investment, development aid from foreign governments, financial assistance from regional and multilateral banks, the United Nations, and intervention from regional organizations and neighboring states. Panelists unpacked this tension, giving it depth through reference to specific case studies,

policy frameworks, and best practices.

### **Ground-Up: Local Solutions for Local Problems**

Panelists all spoke about the need to adapt state-building to specific national contexts, and to keep in mind that development does not happen overnight. For post-conflict economic transitions, Ms. Cliffe recalled that, on average and in broad terms, it takes 35 to 40 years for an extremely fragile country like Haiti to achieve the level of stable development seen in a country like Ghana. Even when accounting for national variability, this timeline is far askew from 'three-year





development plans’ often proposed by foreign-based NGOs, development agencies, and other interveners. This is only one of the reasons why, according to Ms. Cliffe, “models imposed from the outside don’t work.” Rather, countries that have reached a stage of stable development have done so through their own models of political governance, service delivery, and social contract formation between citizen and government.

Of course, there are caveats when describing state-building in such broad terms. Mr. Moreno remarked on the similarities between the state-building issues Latin America faced a few decades ago and the issues that public officials in Africa face today. Ms. Wang qualified, however, that the fifty-four countries in Africa reflect significant heterogeneity in state institutions, country geographies,

and population demographics that belie a ‘one-sized-fits-all’ approach to foreign intervention.

Panelists then reviewed three case studies with different state-building trajectories: Haiti, Colombia, and China. Mr. Moreno compared Haiti’s current issues of weak and corrupt institutions, climate change-exacerbated natural disasters, and crime to the complexity of permeable challenges facing many countries on the African continent today. At the same time, Haiti’s tumultuous history, which includes decades of ransom payments to France that stymied development, engendered unique political, social, and economic problems that require specific interventions. These interventions have thus far brought mixed results. Mr. Moreno observed that development assistance in Haiti, which increased precipitously following the 2010 earthquake that killed

nearly 220,000 people, had benefits such as a spike in the number of primary school enrollment rates. However, donor fatigue and other crises around the world have shifted global attention away from Haiti.

Relatedly, Mr. Moreno remarked that the problems of state-building in Colombia have limited applicability to other national contexts and require locally rooted responses. In particular, half a century of the FARC insurgency led to a state where rural areas formerly controlled by the FARC barely had any government investment. The peace agreement, sullied somewhat due to the failed referendum on its passage, has only minimally addressed the issues facing rural areas outside of state control, which remain disputed territory among armed groups. Mr. Moreno argued that these discussions and negotiations about bringing Colombia's government institutions and public services to rural areas must be based on local realities and desires, with regional banks such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and foreign donors taking a back seat. Ms. Cliffe agreed, adding that countries like Colombia that have strong centers and weak peripheries must adapt their approach to state-building as a result.

Ms. Wang briefly described China's modern state-building efforts, which differ significantly from those outlined above.

China began its development through infrastructure investment. This allowed several of their domestic state-owned enterprises to become *Fortune* Global 500

companies. Today, Chinese state-owned companies and private companies invest significantly in overseas markets, particularly those on the African continent, through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched in 2013 by President Xi Jinping. These three case studies highlight the formative impact of a country's history in shaping its state-building process, while also showing the intrinsic role of international interventions in these trajectories.

### **Outside-In: Foreign Investment and Symbiotic State-Building**

An important component of China's state-building approach is investment in other countries' state-building projects. One prominent example of the BRI is the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), which broke ground in 2014 and is Kenya's largest infrastructure project since its independence in 1963. Ms. Wang argued that many positive developments can be traced to infrastructure projects associated with the BRI in Africa, including an estimated 1.5 percent GDP growth for Kenya associated with the SGR. These kinds of partnerships provide a window into two-sided state-building, wherein China's development is linked to the BRI alongside the development of the host country benefiting from the infrastructure. These types of projects are not without problems, however. Ms. Wang relayed that the SRG crosses two national parks within Kenya, which could harm a tourism industry that brought nearly \$8 billion and 1.6 million jobs to the country in 2021,

constituting 8 percent of total GDP that year. Unlike Western donors and regional banks, China attached few conditions to this investment. Politically, China’s only condition for aid and investment is that the host country adhere to the one-China principle, which dictates that the country cannot have official ties with both China and Taiwan. Ms. Wang commented that this contrasts with the multitude of conditions often connected to Western aid and multilateral organizations, including requirements for governance and transparency. Ms. Wang suggested that African countries often prefer to partner with China because of this, citing the Sino-Angolan relationship as a prominent example. It is worth noting, however, that this relationship has encountered recent tension.

With regard to human rights, Ms. Wang noted that China has increasingly tied its

foreign investments to human rights commitments, even if the words “human rights” are not explicit in this effort. However, this commitment, loosely traceable to 2011 legislation, can be difficult to enforce. For instance, while state-owned enterprises must liaise with China’s embassies in the countries within which they operate, and therefore are bound by monitoring and oversight of these laws, private companies rarely have the same oversight. This has changed in the past few years, Ms. Wang noted, as China explicitly recognizes the applicability of international standards to its foreign interventions and aims to align its presence abroad with the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This review of state-building trajectories and the dynamics of foreign intervention, with a specific focus on China, show the need to tailor state-



building policies and outside interventions to the historical context and socio-political dynamics of the host country.

### Regional Institutions at Work

In addition to the multilateral agencies composing the United Nations Secretariat and the Bretton Woods institutions, regional organizations play a pivotal role in building state institutions, cultivating international norms, leveraging pressure to ensure compliance with these norms, and assisting during times of economic and political crisis. Given the plethora of regional organizations around the globe, panelists examined two organizations in depth – the African Union (AU) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) – and provided insights that could be more broadly applied.

#### African Union

Ms. Mohammed, the current Permanent Observer of the AU to the UN, provided a brief review of the AU's history, noting that this background is vital to understanding its evolution and current mission. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the AU founded in Addis Ababa in 1963, was fueled by the pan-African movement, led by figures such as Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois, as well as the Negritude movement and anti-colonial struggles. At the time, its primary impetus was in advocating for independence across the African continent, combatting colonialism and exploitation, and facilitating the creation

of regional blocs. Although the OAU also made progress towards socio-economic issues and development, Ms. Mohammed emphasized that its primary focus remained the overthrow of colonialism and apartheid regimes, as well as the peaceful settlement of boundary disputes between member states.

Given the primacy of sovereignty in the colonial struggle, the OAU initially valued neutrality and non-interference in state affairs, though this proved to be an impediment to establishing democratic governance norms that dissuaded coup attempts and authoritarian tendencies. As a result of its impotence in the face of these challenges, the OAU dissolved in 2002 and was replaced by the AU, which had a more robust mandate to foster socio-economic development, elevate Africa's role in international affairs, and shift from a policy of "non-interference" to one of "non-indifference." Notably, Ms. Mohammed highlighted the AU's capacity to provide a platform for countries to develop Agenda 2063, which articulated aspirations the continent aims to realize by 2063, on behalf of "the people of Africa and her Diaspora." The AU also provided an important forum for countries to discuss, shape, and ultimately coalesce around the SDGs.

The AU continued the work of the OAU to strengthen regional organizations, and today works in partnership with organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the South African Development

Council (SADC), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to support national governments in economic development, governance, conflict resolution, resource management, and other issues. In addition to regional partnerships, the AU has global partnerships, for instance through the AU-EU-UN Tripartite Taskforce on Libya, which seeks to address the issues surrounding refugee flows in the country. Ms. Mohammed referenced an additional tool overseen by the AU to advance its continental norms of good governance, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which is a peer-review tool for heads of state to systematically examine governance across the continent. It is used to promote political stability, accelerate socioeconomic development, and create transparency and trust among heads of state.

While the AU's respect for national sovereignty allows it to work effectively with heads of state, this principle also comes with limitations. For instance, Ms. Mohammed acknowledged that the APRM is an entirely voluntary instrument and only holds value if all countries work with it in good faith. This requirement that state leaders are fully committed to the AU's principles and aspire to democratic and transparent governance stands in stark contrast to the recent "epidemic of coups," so named by Secretary General Antonio Guterres. Since 2021, there have been military coups in Chad, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, and Burkina Faso, with a recent

failed coup attempt in Guinea-Bissau.

This epidemic, concentrated in West Africa and the Sahel, reflects the limits within the AU and its member states to enforce the Lomé Declaration, according to Ms. Mohammed. Indeed, AU member states referred to the Declaration in a recent statement that condemned the "increase in the number of Member States which manipulate democratic processes," as well as the "unconstitutional changes of government on the Continent." Ms. Mohammed recognized that insecurity in the Sahel Region is used by coup leaders to justify their actions, and that a long-term solution to the uptick in coups must also address the root causes of this insecurity. In the meantime, the AU must grapple with the rifts that have appeared between African governments and heads of state as a result of these coups and the norms that they violate. In addition to spotlighting the Lomé Declaration, Ms. Mohammed emphasized the importance of AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance adopted in 2007, which has been signed and/or ratified by nearly every country on the continent.

The AU, like all liberal multilateral institutions navigating the messy and complex dynamics of the 21st century, has an imperfect record that reflects significant shortcomings as well as areas for improvement. However, it is worth considering a world without it, where there is no common forum for all African

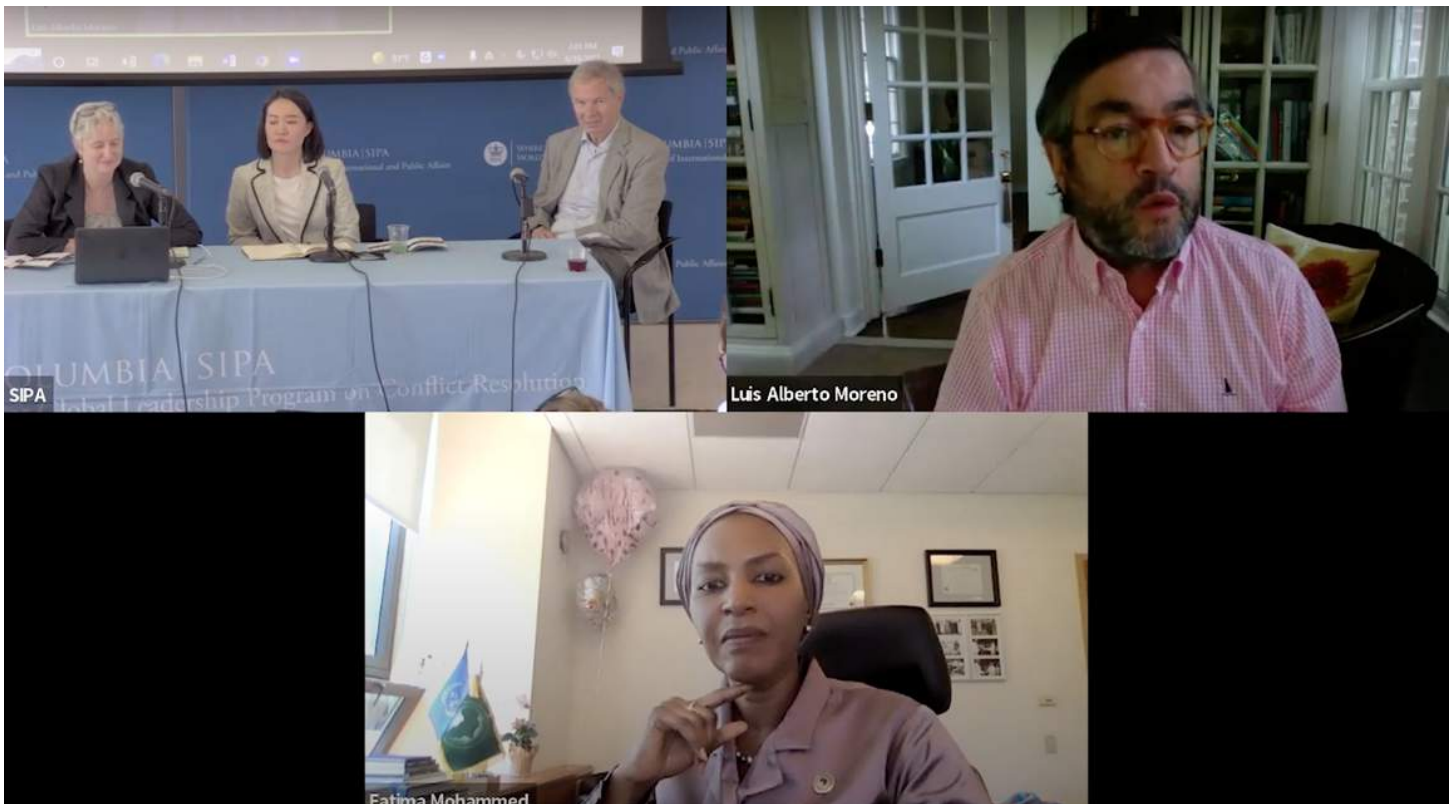
nations to resolve border disputes, establish collective principles and norms, exchange expertise, and build trust and a sense of continental solidarity. Such a world is undoubtedly worse.

**Inter-American Development Bank**

The IADB faces similar challenges that shine a light on the tension between sovereignty and foreign intervention. Mr. Moreno was formerly president of the IADB, which now employs 2,000 personnel, represents 48 member countries across the Western Hemisphere, and approved \$23.4 billion of financing and mobilizations in 2021. One benefit of a multilateral institution such as the IADB, according to Mr. Moreno, is that it can monitor and regulate financial flows according to agreed-upon rules and regulations.

Continuing on the earlier thread regarding

China’s investment in Africa, Mr. Moreno noted that China became an IADB shareholder, and that the IADB created a co-financing line with the People’s Bank of China (PBoC) that included environmental, social, and governance (ESG) safeguards. This example of partnership, Mr. Moreno argued, shows the possibility to forge partnership for mutual benefit that promotes state-building and development without sacrificing ESG conditions. However, Mr. Moreno acknowledged that China has mostly invested in Latin America through direct government-to-government investment, which involves an entirely different bidding process with distinct and varied financing packages. For example, Mr. Moreno referenced the planned metro system in Bogotá, which has a mixed financial model composed of investment



from the European Investment Bank, the World Bank, and the IADB, but which was won in the bidding process by a Chinese company. In addition to direct investment, China promotes Latin American development through the China Development Bank (CDB), which contributes the bulk of its Latin American funding to Venezuela. The impact of the IADB and foreign investment from countries like China showcase the complexity of state-building and political economy.

### Corruption: Ambiguous Forms and Impacts

The most contentious issue of the panel revolved around the impacts of corruption, and whether these impacts can lead to positive outcomes. Ms. Wang, referencing Yuen Yuen Ang's 2020 book *China's Gilded Age: The Paradox of Economic Boom and Vast Corruption*, argued that there are two types of corruption: i) corruption for access and ii) corruption for private gain and state capture. Corruption for access, Ms. Wang contended, allowed for rapid development in China and Japan by creating bridges between the private sector and public sector. These illicit bridges allowed citizens to benefit themselves while incentivizing growth. In contrast, corruption for private gain and state capture slows growth, erodes trust, and should be combatted through government policy and law enforcement. Furthermore, Ms. Wang questioned contemporary notions of corruption and the actors vilified for it. The illicit

financial flows (IFFs) that allow companies to hide massive quantities of assets offshore, for example, can be traced back to the designs of consulting companies such as KPMG and McKinsey. A concerted effort to combat corruption, then, should confront these corporations too and the loopholes that they exploit for their clients.

This argument proved controversial among the other panelists. Ms. Mohammed agreed on the need to reduce IFFs, which includes capital flight of \$89 billion in Africa and costs African countries \$50 billion per year, and to distinguish different types of corruption. Ms. Mohammed noted that extortion, while minor in comparison to 'standard corruption,' is in aggregate a significant force in Africa, with government officials extorting civilians at police checkpoints, transit centers, and in everyday interactions. However, and in contrast to Ms. Wang, Ms. Mohammed made this distinction not in order to dismiss one type as actually benevolent, but rather to note the need for different policies to mitigate different types of corruption.

Ms. Cliffe argued that the evidence on the damaging impacts of corruption is robust and shows a clear correlation between corruption and lower rates of long-term growth, as well as between corruption and conflict. Ms. Cliffe referenced the "corruption, collusion, and nepotism" (*Korupsi, Kollusi, Nepotisme*, or KKN) rallying cry in Indonesia that galvanized the public and led to regime change in the

1990s, and almost elevated a populist candidate to presidency in Colombia's recent election. These examples show that, in general, the public views corruption as a force working against their interests, rigging a system that mostly benefits the elite and reinforces inequality.

Mr. Moreno provided yet another view on this debate, focusing on the importance of transparency to quell the negative impacts of corruption. In his view, lobbying in the United States could be considered corruption. However, even if that is the case, it is made less pernicious by the capacity of any citizen with access to the internet to track monetary contributions to US politicians. Without this transparency, Mr. Moreno claimed, it is easy for a population to come to the belief not only that rampant inequality exists in their society, but also that the system is rigged against them through 'deep state' machinations. This belief in turn erodes social cohesion and democratic norms. At the same time, such cynicism can also take

root when transparency reveals to the general public that there is indeed entrenched corruption and elitism among public officials. Putting transparency aside, Mr. Moreno remarked that informal and corrupt economic activities also mean that those who make a formal wage are contributing more than their weight to government revenue, which also breeds the kind of dissent referred to by Ms. Cliffe.

Importantly, corruption can occur from within and from outside the state. While the example of US corporations influencing policy through financial donations represents the former, Mr. Moreno noted the Odebrecht scandal as an example of the latter. Odebrecht's corruption occurred as part of a public-private partnership (PPP), suggesting that government-to-government deals are not necessarily more prone to corruption than PPPs. This debate illuminated a number of key questions that should be further pursued in understanding corruption's varied impacts.

## Conclusion

This afternoon panel unpacked many issues that are sensitive and frequently invoked in contemporary political and economic discourse. Words and phrases such as "local ownership," "foreign interference," "corruption," and "state-building" are loaded terms often used to cast aspersions on political opponents or rally the public behind one's policies. Through this discussion, panelists provided space for these terms to take on more substantive and nuanced interpretations. Indeed, the realities of globalization have shifted the conversation away from *whether* and *if* states will engage with one another, and towards *how* this engagement can be shaped and approached for mutual benefit in a complex world.



# Panel 7: Regional Dynamics of Conflict and Prevention

**Jean-Marie Guéhenno (M) | Haile Menkerios | Marty Natalegawa  
Andriy Shevchenko | Juan Gabriel Valdés**

In this morning session, panelists joined virtually from four continents –Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa– to reflect upon conflict dynamics in their region and the significance of these dynamics on global politics. The discussion shed light on the global reach of the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of regional organizations, and the indirect impact of the war in Ukraine on the rise of food and oil prices, which created a shared sense of struggle among panelists. At the same time, the conversation implicitly emphasized the limits of generalized analysis, as the problems facing each region are tied to regional histories, geographies, demographics, and cultures. Jean-Marie-Guéhenno, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping and current Director of the Kent Global Leadership Program on Conflict Resolution, moderated the discussion. He was joined by the following four panelists:

- Haile Menkerios, former Head of the UN Office to the African Union
- Marty Natalegawa, Former Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Andriy Shevchenko, Ukrainian Politician, Diplomat, Journalist, and Civil Activist
- Juan Gabriel Valdés, Chile Ambassador to the United States, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs

This overview examines the panelists’ remarks region by region. It begins with Europe and Ukraine, as all panelists touched on the impact of that war for their region.

## **Ukraine: The End of the Liberal Order?**

Since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on February 24, the war has displaced approximately 14 million Ukrainians, of which over 6 million are now refugees. Mr. Shevchenko’s remarks centered primarily on three themes: i) the global reach of the war in Ukraine, ii) the inability of international institutions and organizations to respond effectively to prevent or contain it, and iii) the driving force of public opinion in contemporary politics. First, he began with a review of

the day’s headlines to illustrate the war’s global reach, including the leaders of France, Italy, and Germany traveling together to Kyiv, a meeting of defense officials from NATO countries to discuss military aid for Ukraine, and the impact of food shortages due in part to the war. This list serves as a grim reminder that regional security crises create ripple impacts across our interconnected world, leading Mr. Shevchenko to ask, “What should we even call regional today?” Mr.

Shevchenko further argued that the Russian security threat goes beyond Ukraine, and suggested that Russia could attack the Baltic countries, Sweden, or Finland. Beyond threats to its immediate neighbors, he referenced Russian cyberattacks against US targets and Russia's 2018 targeted chemical attack against double agents in Salisbury, UK, as further examples of Russian security threats beyond Ukraine.

Second, Mr. Shevchenko issued an unequivocal rebuke of the international system and its mechanisms for preventing, resolving, and containing international conflict. Commenting on the list of impacts mentioned above, Mr. Shevchenko said, "This is the price we are all paying for the meltdown of the international order, and the weakness of global diplomacy." To emphasize the degree to which the Ukrainian public shared his discontent, he shared a few pieces of bitter humor circulating among Ukrainians. These included a Ukrainian brewery releasing a new UN beer that was



"unfortunately non-alcoholic" (a jab at the impotence of multilateralism), and the popular new slang phrases "to Scholtz something" and "to Macron somebody," which mean "to promise something you cannot deliver" and "to call somebody without a clear reason," respectively.

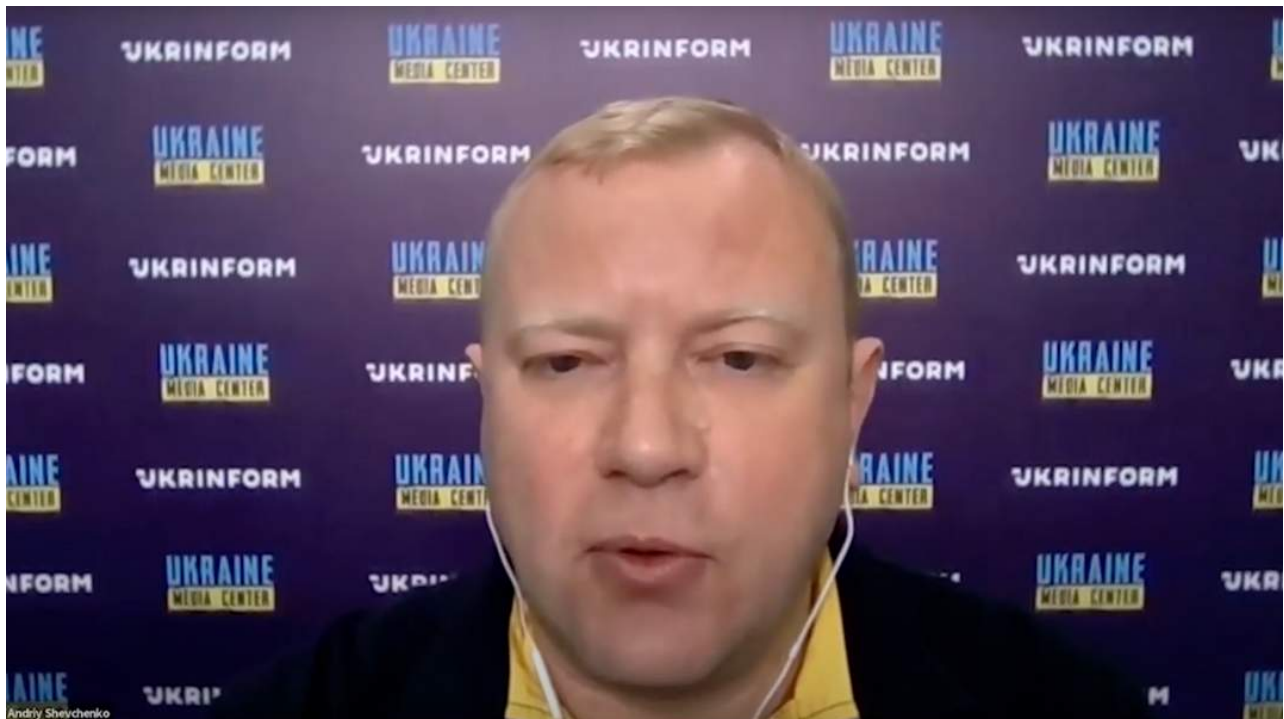
His point in sharing these popular critiques was to communicate the distaste that the general public held for diplomacy and multilateralist institutions, which in his view lack legitimacy among significant portions of the Ukrainian public. For instance, Ukrainians view the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with disdain due to the perception that the organization has limited its activities to aid distribution in Ukraine. This was frustrating for Ukrainians who thought the ICRC was neglecting their most important contribution, namely *to facilitate access* to humanitarian aid and humanitarian corridors (the ICRC disputes this claim of neglect). Additionally, Mr. Shevchenko relayed that Ukrainians felt indignant at the fact that Ukraine had willingly given up its arsenal of nuclear weapons through the 1994 Budapest Memorandum under international guarantees that its territorial integrity would be respected. The infringement of this agreement, compounded with the inability of the UN to prevent or contain Russian aggression, contributed to Ukrainians openly questioning the relevance and viability of a United Nations in which Russia retained veto power. Mr. Shevchenko added that he did not dismiss international solidarity

with Ukraine, noting, “We are not alone, but we do feel lonely.”

Finally, Mr. Shevchenko contemplated the influence of public opinion in international politics. He shared that he placed his hope for the future on this influence, because it would force politicians and diplomats to respond to public calls for action. Referencing a choreographed picture of the French, German, and Italian heads of state in a train together en route to Kyiv, Mr. Shevchenko argued that none of these leaders wanted to make this trip, but were forced to by public support for Ukraine.



Mr. Natalegawa agreed that diplomacy now takes place in the “full glare of the public view,” and argued that while this has benefits, it also makes it more difficult for leaders to have candid conversations in controlled environments where real divergences could be expressed and compromises reached. Rather, it incentivizes “confrontational postures,” which in turn “handicaps efforts” to reach agreements through the type of discreet diplomacy where ideas can be quietly tested and worked through. Furthermore, he argued that it has at times changed the nature of diplomacy from “statecraft” to “stagecraft,” in which politicians and diplomats focus on the optimal photo opportunity rather than the unglamorous work of backchannel dialogue. Mr. Natelgawa regretted this shift away from good-faith mediation, and remarked that “in diplomacy, emotion is not policy.” While acknowledging drawbacks to



“TikTok policy,” Mr. Shevchenko argued that this is the reality of contemporary politics and we must adjust to more ideologically-driven policymaking.

Each of these three points –the scale of spillover effects from the war in Ukraine, the impotency of international efforts to resolve or mitigate the crisis, and the heightened influence of public opinion on policymakers– applies not only to the war in Ukraine, but also to global dynamics of conflict resolution. Indeed, they suggest that efforts to ‘contain conflict’ are misguided in an interconnected 21st century, and should be replaced by an approach that works within the complex network of dynamics exhibited in conflicts like the war in Ukraine.

### Latin America: Turbulence and Transition

While there is no ‘epicenter’ of conflict in Latin America like there is in Europe, Mr. Valdés noted several common challenges and regional divisions shaping conflict in the region. Grappling with the impacts of COVID-19 remains the top item on the agenda of governments across the region, which, alongside the war in Ukraine, has driven the rise in food and fuel prices and reversed ten years of economic growth. These inflationary pressures add to a compounding list of socio-political problems across Latin America, foremost of which are inequality, injustice, and political polarization that includes antidemocratic forces vying for political power. In addition, over six million Venezuelans have emigrated due to the

nation’s domestic crisis, with most emigrants traveling to Colombia, Argentina, and Chile. This has created strain on public service provision and tension with host populations. On top of all these factors, current and projected impacts of climate change on Latin America are quite dire.

In light of these layered challenges, Mr. Valdés viewed the Ninth Summit of The Americas (SOTA) as an opportunity for countries in North America, Central America, and South America to forge an agreement to address these trans-continental issues, comparable to the 2022 Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF). Although representatives from 31 countries attended the Summit, an additional 20 countries, including Mexico, boycotted the Summit due to the United States’ exclusion of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Mr. Valdés condemned this exclusion, noting that it prevented important dialogue from taking place between heads of state who rarely get the chance to meet. For instance, Chile’s president commented that the absence of these leaders prevented the possibility of difficult dialogue that could have made progress on the same human rights issues for which these countries were excluded. Despite these misgivings, Ms. Valdés argued that the Summit was successful in providing space for dialogue for those who attended, which is promising for future summits.

In general, Mr. Valdés reflected on the

divisions cutting across Latin America, with heads of state frequently refusing to meet with one another. Indeed, the Summit provided an opportunity for just the second in-person meeting between the presidents of South America's two largest countries, Brazil and Argentina. This regional isolation in turn opens space for leaders to enact rogue policies, such as President Bolsonaro's deforestation policies in the Amazon, which threaten the entire region's efforts to combat climate change.

While these dynamics show genuine division across the continent, Mr. Valdés also highlighted areas of unity. For example, with the exception of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, Latin American countries have been relatively unified in their condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. He also highlighted a new wave of progressive politics, as seen in Chile's recent election of President Gabriel Boric,

that respect human rights and seek to curb inequality and corruption. Mr. Valdés noted that reforms must be made with respect to human rights, but that these trends present new opportunities for regional dialogue around shared concerns. Taken together, Mr. Valdés' remarks show that the possibility for dialogue and progressive coalitions exists to address political rifts and transnational issues in the region, but this window of opportunity faces a specter of daunting and compounding challenges.

### **Asia: The Promise and Limits of Collective Action**

Mr. Natalegawa echoed Mr. Valdés remarks in noting that COVID-19 and its consequences are the biggest concerns of Southeast Asian governments, and that challenges of economic recovery have been worsened by the impacts of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Even more than in Latin America, Southeast Asia faces severe



threats from climate change, including rising sea levels, heat waves, droughts, and extreme rainstorms, which, according to Mr. Natalegawa, merits the adoption of a human security framework in regional security discussions.

The region not only shares collective challenges, but also grapples with issues that metastasize from domestic into regional and international problems that require collective action. Mr. Natalegawa even created a neologism, “intermestic,” to label this convergence of international and domestic issues. Foremost among these is the recent violence in Myanmar, encompassing a possible genocide of the Rohingya population perpetrated by state forces in 2016 and 2017, and a military coup in 2021, which catalyzed an ongoing civil war in the country. As a result of this violence and turmoil, there are now over 1.1 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in Myanmar and 600,000 “stateless”

Rohingya. At the height of the military’s persecution of the Rohingya, more than 900,000 Rohingya had fled to the Cox’s Bazar region of Bangladesh, though hundreds of thousands have since returned. Mr. Natalegawa remarked that this refugee crisis transformed internal political problems into regional ones, and that member states composing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had to decide together how to respond to both the refugee crisis and Myanmar’s violation of the democratic principles ascribed to by all ASEAN nations. This proved especially challenging given the organization’s historic commitment to noninterference. ASEAN’s response to Myanmar has therefore become a “litmus test” for ASEAN’s own relevance and effectiveness. Fortunately, Mr. Natalegawa said that the international community had given ASEAN political space to work on this issue, and



though the progress made so far by ASEAN has been “underwhelming,” there is still time for the organization to mediate a successful resolution.

Aside from Myanmar, Mr. Natalegawa noted that the region has a number of more traditional territorial disputes, such as in the South China Sea. To address this, ASEAN created a dialogue track with China, which has since developed an ASEAN-China Code of Conduct (COC) to manage territorial disputes in the South China Sea. However, Mr. Natalegawa acknowledged that this track often appears disconnected from developments on the ground, where one party works to change the facts in the South China Sea itself.

Overall, Mr. Natalegawa deemed an overt outbreak of state-to-state aggression unlikely in Southeast Asia, given that all countries have an interest in preventing miscalculation. However, this optimism is qualified by the imperative to develop clear signaling and risk reduction mechanisms to prevent miscalculations. The multitude of great power rivalries shaping the geopolitical dynamics of the region –US and China, India and Pakistan, Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula, Japan and the Republic of Korea, Japan and China– create oscillating push and pull dynamics in the region that have an unsteady equilibrium.

### **Africa: Coups and the Struggle for Cohesion**

Crossing the Indian Ocean from Southeast Asia to Africa, Mr. Menkerios commented

on the destabilizing impact that recent coups have had on regional norms and organizational cohesion. He began by observing how demographic growth will shape the continent. Today, 70 percent of Africa's population is under the age of 30 years old, and the continent's total population will double in half a century. While this trend is not necessarily a conflict driver or mitigator, it is formative for the future of the continent and must be accounted for in all discussions about the future of conflict on the continent.

Mr. Menkerios relayed his strong concern about the spate of coups in Sahel countries, which since 2021 have occurred in Chad, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, and Burkina Faso. Many countries in the AU are working on ways to leverage the institution and its norms to prevent these episodes of unconstitutional and coercive changes of power, but have so far been unable to do so. Despite an uneven record of success, Mr. Menkerios emphasized that the AU's switch from a principle of *noninterference* to *non-indifference* represents a “very progressive position,” though he noted that it has not been consistently applied, referencing Chad as an example.

Relatedly, and adding to the challenge, Africans living in the Sahel are one of the most vulnerable populations in the world to the negative impacts of climate change, namely through an increased rate of erratic rainfall patterns that will bring extreme droughts and flooding. Outside the AU, sub-regional organizations such as



he Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the South African Development Committee (SADC) have effectively wielded influence to resolve regional disputes, though this success has been unable to prevent the unconstitutional takeover of power in recent years.

As with the rest of the world, African countries are currently adjusting to an increase in the price of food and oil due to the war in Ukraine. Mr. Menkerios emphasized that these increases have been outsized in Africa, which imports one third of its grain from Ukraine. Additionally, African nations heavily rely on aid from Western countries, which has been reduced due to economic shocks caused by COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. The response to these shocks, and the political positions taken by heads of state regarding the war, have been "checkered." Mr. Menkerios further noted that several African countries abstained

from voting for the General Assembly's March 3 resolution entitled "Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine," though very few countries appear to actively support Russia. The numerous abstentions can be attributed to a desire not to be caught in the middle a global 'East-against-West' rift, which heads of state view as reminiscent of the Cold War years. At the same time, Mr. Menkerios noted that most African intellectuals have condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and emphasize the need to defend international institutions like the UN and international norms such as territorial integrity.

Pragmatically, Mr. Menkerios relayed that African countries are adapting to the economic hits by increasing their production of oil revenue – particularly in North African countries, South Africa, and Tanzania– and raising investments in agriculture. Through a concentration of economic resources and policy

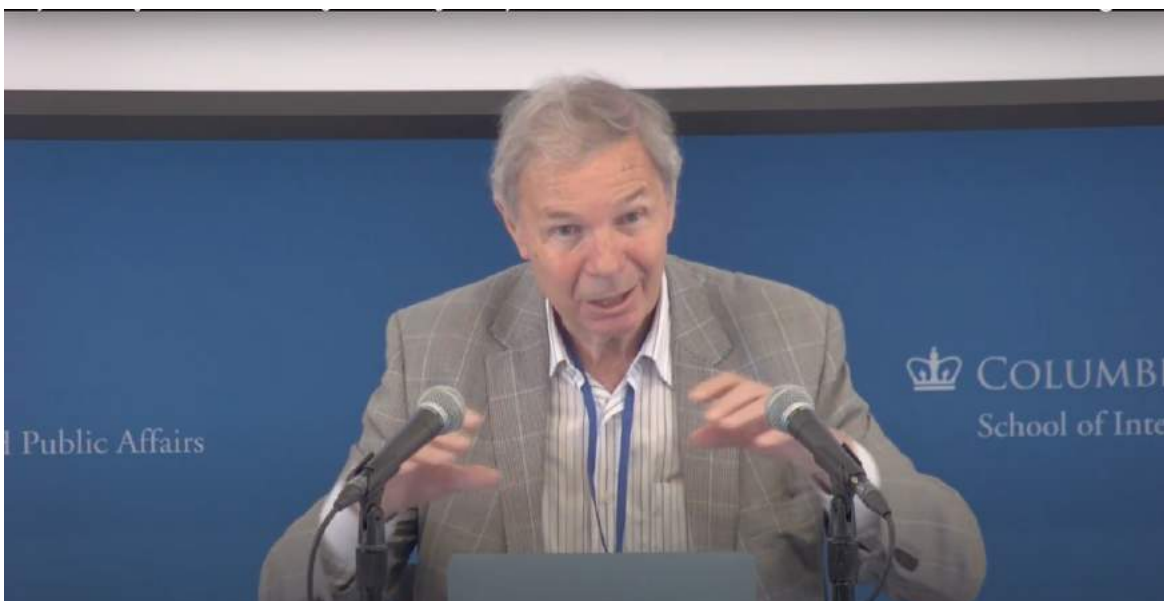


instruments in these two sectors, officials aim not only to dampen domestic price increases of food and fuel, but also to increase exports of agricultural products and oil to boost domestic revenue and capitalize on untapped natural resources. This focus on boosting trade while maintaining nonalignment on the war in Ukraine has led to increased interest for an inter-African trade agreement, though Mr. Menkerios said such an agreement is

still likely a long-term ambition. In general, this focus on broad cross-continental trends and regional particularities highlights the importance of nuance when considering African conflict dynamics. Relatedly, the potential impact of organizations such as the AU, ECOWAS, and SADC must be understood in light of broad demographic trends and economic opportunities.

### Conclusion

This morning panel showed the importance of a regional framing when discussing conflict dynamics. It spotlighted the fact that we live in a globalized, networked world, where factors such as a renewed interstate war in Europe and climate change have severe but varied impacts. Like nodes in a complex system, each region impacts –and is impacted by – every other region, but the interactions and contexts within each regional sphere must be understood on their own terms as well. The discussion of each geography referenced the influence of regional entities such as NATO, the EU, ASEAN, SOTA, the AU, ECOWAS, and SADC, showing the range of actors and institutions that must be accounted for when considering peace processes in any region. It also highlighted specific contemporary events such as the war in Ukraine, the COVID-19 Pandemic, authoritarian violence in Myanmar, the sequence of coups across the Sahel, and the fight against inequity in South America. The panel serves as a critical reminder that, although we live in an interconnected world, we must be able to paint with both a broad brush and a thin one.



# Panel 8: Mitigating the Global Impact of Conflict

**Marc Jacquand (M) | Alexandre Marc | Michael Schaeffer |**

This closing panel took a step back from an assessment of conflict dynamics and impacts, and instead turned to the broader relationship between conflict, development, and humanitarian aid. With a particular focus on Libya, the panelists evaluated the opportunities and constraints of the two Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Marc Jacquand, Director of Strategy and Policy at the UN Department of Safety and Security and Adjunct Associate Professor at Columbia University SIPA, moderated this deep dive into international finance with two experts from the field:

- Alexandre Marc, a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at Brookings Institution and former Chief Specialist for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence at the World Bank
- Michael Schaeffer, Former World Bank Country Representative in Libya

In looking at the World Bank and the IMF from the inside out, the panel delved deeply into the specifics of each institution and their roles in fostering equitable peace and development at a time of immense geopolitical transformation. This summary begins with a review of this transformation and its implications for the Bretton Woods institutions. It then analyzes the challenges of integrating development, security, and humanitarian aid. This is followed by an examination of the Libyan case study, and concludes with an overview of external factors that must be accounted for when designing and implementing development projects.

## **Changed Approach for a Changed World**

Mr. Marc began the conversation by asking the audience to reconceptualize their approach to conflict resolution in the wake of the war in Ukraine. Mr. Marc, lead author of the 2018 joint UN and World Bank Pathways for Peace report, questioned the validity of that publication's recommendations in today's conflict landscape. The report found that interstate conflict and great-power conflict hardly ever occur in the 21st century, and have been replaced by conflict between and within

non-industrialized countries with internal governance issues. The war in Ukraine, in contrast, represents a full-scale war between two industrial nations who export a large share of the world's oil and wheat. As a result, the war's ripple impacts are global and severe, impacting trade, multilateral institutions, and the development sector. Paradoxically, Mr. Schaeffer argued that the outsized impact of the war in Ukraine means we cannot allow it to consume our focus, as conflicts around the world, including in Ethiopia,

Libya, Yemen, and Mali, continue –with some even worsening– while the war in Ukraine rages on.

The war also necessitates an analysis of the ‘winners and losers’ around the world. Mr. Marc noted that every war disproportionately benefits some countries and harms others, citing as an example Latin American growth during World War II due to a period of increased exports. This analysis of winners and losers should then inform and temper our inclination to berate leaders from countries who experience beneficial impacts from the war. Relatedly, the entrenchment of ‘East’ and ‘West’ camps in turn pressures countries to take sides. While many African countries appear to have chosen nonalignment, Mr. Marc argued that Mali and the Central African Republic may move even closer to Russia in deference to Russia’s willingness to flex its military

muscles. He also voiced his concern that the war will create a world of countries that are either ‘for or against’ the World Bank, which will hinder its efforts around the globe.

Even without considering the war in Ukraine, the focus on development and conflict solely in the Global South is outdated. Mr. Schaeffer observed that the IMF’s largest borrower is Greece following the country’s financial crisis, and that having to refocus its lending towards European countries had profound impacts on the functionality of the institution. International intervention and policy advocacy must be based in a grounded understanding of current events, and only through an unbiased assessment of the war in Ukraine’s varied impacts around the world and of financial crises outside of the Global South can such an assessment be made.



## Connecting Conflict and Development in Theory and Practice

Both panelists commented on the need to integrate development and humanitarian programs with conflict dynamics, and the progress that has been made in this area within the World Bank and IMF. Mr. Marc rejected the common appeal to find the “nexus” between the humanitarian, development, and conflict agendas. Rather, each of these three areas should be viewed as a “dimension” of each of the other areas, meaning that a more appropriate frame would be to view them as components or spheres of a common problem. Mr. Marc suggested that the real nexus is between the *actors* working in development, diplomacy, and security, who rarely speak to one another but must become partners in order to tackle these multi-pronged issues.

Hurdles to this integration remain, however. Some of the most flexible and useful tools at the World Bank, according to Mr. Schaeffer, are in International Development Association (IDA) programs. These programs can provide low-interest loans for projects that bolster economic growth and reduce inequities in low-income countries. However, Mr. Marc noted that countries like Libya, which are torn apart by violence and inequities but are technically “middle-income” due to their high GDP per capita (~\$8,000/person, well above the \$2,000/person threshold delineating low-income countries), cannot access IDA funds. These funds also could not be used to support migrants coming

from low-income countries, because IDA funds must be used to benefit citizens of the recipient country.

Increasingly, the World Bank and IMF have become aware of these limitations and committed resources to shifting course. The World Bank’s 2019 Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (2020–2025) and the IMF’s recent Strategy for Fragile and Conflict-Affected States recommend steps to align development, diplomacy, and conflict resolution actors towards a unified purpose, according to Mr. Marc. He added that these efforts mark a significant shift in the two organizations, noting that the World Bank used to avoid operating in areas with ongoing conflict, but now has projects specifically tailored to these countries and the conflict dynamics within them. The IMF’s new initiatives also result from introspection, Mr. Jacquand said, as seen in the IMF’s 2018 evaluation of its own activities in fragile states, which noted several areas for improvement.

A final component of this unified approach is a focus, as often as possible, on ‘local solutions to local problems.’ This lack of focus on localization is a common critique of development and peacebuilding, but Mr. Marc added that the real question is whether the World Bank “has the tools to make these local solutions work at the local level,” arguing that the design and implementation of these tools should be a priority. Mr. Schaeffer agreed, noting that these tools must allow for an alignment between top-down and bottom-up



approaches to development. He added that the IMF in particular needs to shift away from working solely with the host country's ministry of finance or central bank, and towards institutions that work with sub-national leaders. These trends towards a unified approach among development, diplomacy, and conflict resolution actors, as well as an inclination towards bottom-up aid, are promising, though this harmony itself will be insufficient if host country dynamics are not conducive to the approach.

### **Libya: A Tale of Two Countries**

Mr. Schaeffer drew on his experience on the ground in Libya to relay the challenges of institutional and financial stability in the country, as well as how these challenges impact the World Bank's programs. Currently Libya is a *de facto* divided country between the western half, ruled by the UN- and Turkey-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) and

its militia allies in Benghazi and Derna, and the eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA) coalition led by General Khalifa Haftar and supported by Russia, the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and France. As World Bank representative, one of Mr. Schaeffer's responsibilities was to bring the two sides together to create unified monetary and financial policies and institutions. Describing his role as that of a "marriage counselor" for these divergent groups, he lamented on his lack of success and the difficulties that resulted from working in a country that had two central banks and two sets of monetary and fiscal policies. As an example, Mr. Schaeffer was part of three attempts, all unsuccessful, to create a chart of accounts for the whole country. As the chart of accounts provides significant transparency, his reflection on this lack of success led him to ask whether some countries may function better in the

absence of full transparency. And yet, in a sign that the tides in Libya may be changing, a reunification process began this year and could positively transform the country's monetary and fiscal circumstances in the years to come.

The panelists also discussed whether Libya is a "winner" of the war in Ukraine, given that oil prices have increased and Libya could theoretically, according to Mr. Schaeffer, increase its oil revenue. However, the geopolitical divisions represented in the war in Ukraine have appeared in the Libyan conflict, with pro-Haftar forces linked to the Russian Wagner Group seizing oil fields and shutting down supply. Given the tightening of geopolitical divisions brought about by the war in Ukraine, and the manifestation of those divisions in Libya, the war in Ukraine may worsen the conflict without providing any relief through increased oil revenue. Mr. Schaeffer noted that divisions have deepened in Libya recently, and that the return of two fiscal and monetary policies felt like *déjà vu* from 2013. Moreover, Libyans have been hit hard by rising wheat prices, and a United Nations whose main security body is paralyzed by global power rivalry, which will certainly not help its ability to be a peacemaker in Libya.

One of the frustrating components of these mediation efforts was that the institution Mr. Schaeffer represented, the World Bank, did not have the appropriate tools to address Libya's conflict dynamics. It also failed in general to consider

complexities in Libya beyond high-level political dialogue, including grievances in the country's south. Alongside the World Bank, Mr. Schaeffer criticized the IMF for not grasping the uniqueness of the Libyan political economy and the need to adapt its engagement strategy as a result. Even more problematic, according to Mr. Schaeffer, the World Bank's Libya program appeared to be a "Europe First" program, because its driving force was to contain the flow of migrants traveling through Libya and crossing the Mediterranean to Europe from Libya's coast. Both of these concerns raise serious questions about the World Bank's motives and approach in Libya.

### **Nothing Out of Context**

Putting aside the uneven path of reform within these Bretton Woods institutions, even the most unimpeachable programs and a high-degree of coordination cannot overcome certain exogenous factors. This section focuses on three such factors: the importance of host country unity and reception to development programs, the broad impacts of the war in Ukraine, and the consequences of China's involvement as an independent development actor. First, Mr. Marc argued that issues labeled "problems of fragility" are often deeply political, and that no approach by any multilateral institution will be successful if it does not address the underlying political tensions. This is why, according to Mr. Marc, the World Bank program in Jordan, a country highly receptive to aid, is much more advanced than the one in

Lebanon, which is more resistant to aid. Mr. Schaeffer agreed with this point, adding that Bretton Woods experts and private consultants often provide “soft advice” that aligns with what public officials, especially in authoritarian governments, want to hear without providing substantive and specific recommendations.

This lesson can also be viewed in reverse. Mr. Marc recalled the World Bank’s work in Albania as a success story in which the Albanian government, following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, shifted to a more open and accommodating economic system in order to entice the European Union (EU) to admit it into the bloc. This motivation to join the EU acted as a galvanizing force for different parts of the country to come together in support of a common vision that supported World Bank programs designed to build government capacity and macroeconomic policy. These programs made tremendous impact in boosting development over the past few decades.

Just as development and human rights programs must be in harmony with the recipient country’s political vision, so too must the broader geopolitical context be ripe for these programs. For instance, Mr. Marc noted a causal chain in which Russia’s invasion sparked a decline in oil supply and a rise in oil prices, which led the United States to negotiate an oil supply deal with Venezuela, which in turn lowered its pressure on Venezuelan human rights abuses. This causal chain

shows how, indirectly, the war in Ukraine has weakened human rights campaigns as far away as Venezuela.

Unrelated to the war in Ukraine, China has become an increasingly active actor in the international development space, which has significant impacts for Western-led development programming. Specifically, Mr. Marc highlighted that China has funneled a large portion of its development aid through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), created in 2016 in part as a response to Western countries excluding China from leadership positions in the Bretton Woods institutions despite its significant contributions to IDA funds. One manifestation of this exclusion is the established norm that the president of the World Bank is always a US citizen selected by the US president, while the head of the IMF is always a European. Mr. Marc noted that, after establishing the AIIB, China did not feel inclined to play by the same rules as the Bretton Woods institutions, and that while on the surface these institutions do not openly compete, on the ground they can cause serious problems for each other. As an example, Mr. Marc relayed that the Zambian government received large amounts of development aid from China, and as a result had little engagement with the IMF or World Bank. When China disengaged from the country, the Zambian government established a relationship with the IMF, which found the country in disarray.

These different development strategies

have muddied the narrative of a coherent international development approach. In aggregate, these three contextual dynamics –host country political unity and vision, the ripple impacts of the war in Ukraine, and China’s increased presence

and independence in the development space– shape the development landscape and must be accounted for even when approaches to development follow the best practices outlined in earlier sections of this summary.

### Conclusion

This conversation between two development practitioners, each with several years of experience working within the World Bank, was both sobering and vitalizing. On the one hand, it showed the multitude of challenges faced by development institutions working within countries experiencing conflict, and both the institutional need for reform and the external constraints that need to be addressed and overcome. On the other hand, concerted efforts are underway to take on this daunting task, and historical examples such as the development approach taken in Albania can provide guideposts along the way. These efforts seek to understand the nuances of endogenous and exogenous factors that contribute to development outcomes in order to innovate interventions that will bring about optimal equitable growth. Finally, the conversation implicitly emphasized the importance of individual and organization leadership in these efforts. None of this is easy, but only a deep dive into the specific problems and a search for pragmatic solutions can lead the way.





# A Conversation with Peacemakers

**Jean-Marie Guéhenno (M) | Prince Zeid Raad Al Hussein | Dambisa Moyo**

The Kent Global Leadership Program's 2022 Summer Training Program concluded on Friday, June 17 at the International Peace Institute with a conversation on realistic steps to address the most destructive drivers of violence and division in our world today. The conversation, facilitated by Kent Program Director Jean-Marie Guéhenno, brought together two global leaders coming from different professional, geographic, and ideological backgrounds:

- Prince Zeid Raad Al Hussein, President and CEO of the International Peace Institute
- Dambisa Moyo, Author and Co-Principal of Versaca Investments

The difference in these two leaders' backgrounds manifested in their conflicting views throughout the discussion. Mr. Al Hussein, a former Jordanian diplomat and United Nation's High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR), espoused views grounded in human rights and humanitarian principles, and informed by a deep understanding of the urgent humanitarian and human rights needs faced by many around the world. Ms. Moyo, a Zambian economist, author, and board member for some of the world's largest companies, approaches the same issues from a private sector background that highlights the importance of targeted investments and public-private partnerships to address the world's most intractable problems. With a specific focus on mitigating the risk of climate change, the discussion brought these two perspectives into dialogue, opposition, and occasional agreement on the most important issues facing our world.

## What's Wrong and Who Can Fix It?

Ms. Moyo and Mr. Al Hussein agreed on some of the key challenges facing our world, but each held divergent views about the actors who should carry the torch in addressing them. Ms. Moyo provided a "distressing list" of these problems: forcible displacement of over 100 million people worldwide – approximately half of whom are internally displaced— destabilizing social unrest, threats of deglobalization due in part to the rivalry between the US and China, and inflationary pressures throughout the world. Ms. Moyo argued that this "confluence of problems" necessitates a

return to pragmatism and a science-based approach, as opposed to what she views as an overemphasis on ideology and political rhetoric.

Turning then to who should be driving this response, Mr. Guéhenno set the stage with the observation that the so-called "international community" looks less and less like a community, with a paralyzed Security Council, reversion to interstate war, and an inability for states to find meaningful collective responses to global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and global inequality. Mr. Al Hussein added to this list the crisis of

international institutions, noting that multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and G20 hardly function, and relaying that in his meetings with senior government officials while acting as UN’s HCHR, he often had the impression that they did not prioritize or value human rights for their country’s most marginalized populations. Furthermore, in his view the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) created to guide governments’ development policies are rarely centerpieces of these conversations.

In contrast to governments, however, Mr. Al Hussein felt inspired by the “tremendous leadership” that he observed among grassroots activists. In his trips while HCHR, he often met with youth who had no relationship with the UN but were nonetheless making a lot of positive

impact on the ground. Mr. Al Hussein commended this non-institutional approach, noting that the UN has a dispiriting habit of “youth-washing,” in which youth are tokenized participants of UN-sponsored panels and committees in order to present a veneer of youth representation, even though the contributions of these youth are rarely integrated into substantive plans.

This is in part due to the complexity of multilateral negotiations, which require skilled negotiators and facilitators, as well as knowledge of the negotiation process, in order to advance productively. As a personal example, Mr. Al Hussein remarked that his own development of diplomatic and facilitative skills drew from diplomats such as Canada’s Philippe Kirsch, who Mr. Al Hussein referred to as “a magician” in crafting consensus and





transferring that into a written agreement. He argued that, no matter how bright and inspirational youth activists are, there is no substitute for years of diplomatic finesse that can be used to build coalitions over time.

Ms. Moyo disagreed with Mr. Al Hussein's elevation of youth's role as changemakers, noting that while young people have important contributions to the public discourse, they often do not have "the nuance, experience, and broad historical understanding" to assess and address these issues appropriately, which can be dangerous when their views sway public opinion. Rather than allowing "emotion to drive the agenda," Ms. Moyo argued that we needed to both "ramp up our intellectual horsepower," as well as invite all stakeholders, especially business

leaders, to come together around evidence-based solutions. As an example, Ms. Moyo cited the private sector's ability to rapidly develop effective vaccines against the COVID-19 virus, significantly mitigating the harm of a global public health crisis. She contrasted this contribution by companies to the selfishness of governments implementing policies that prioritized their own citizens above everyone else, in contravention to their previous pledges. Ms. Moyo advocated for the creation of a "community of the willing" that includes senior public officials, CEOs, and technical experts who can forge meaningful long-term solutions to collective social problems. One of the barriers to this, Ms. Moyo recognized, is an 'us-versus'-them' geopolitical environment, in which China's

evolution into the largest trading partner, lender, and foreign investor for emerging markets puts it in competition with the US for influence. This opening debate forecast differences between Mr. Al Hussein and Ms. Moyo that became even more apparent in the discussion on climate change, and which represent pronounced differences in the broader public debate.

## Climate Change

### The Problem

Much of the discussion between Mr. Al Hussein and Ms. Moyo centered on climate change impacts, the actors driving and addressing these impacts, and the best path forward to address climate-related issues. Mr. al Hussein provided a broad overview of the current state and projections of anthropogenic climate change, based on the International Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) 2021 and 2022 AR6 reports from Working Groups I, II, and III. Compared to pre-industrial levels in the 1800s, global mean surface temperature (GMST) has increased by an estimated 1.07°C, and that warming will increase to approximately 2.4°C by mid-century at current emission trends.

At this level, many countries will experience extreme heat during one third of the year, with wet bulb temperatures – heat combined with high humidity– as high as 32°C. Indeed, even at current levels the Indian city of Chennai, population 4.6 million, hit a wet-bulb temperature of 31°C on May 1, 2022, and the district of Ernakulam in the Indian state of Kerala recorded a wet-bulb

temperature of 34.6°C. These temperatures are lethal without counteracting cooling systems, potentially leading to a scenario that Mr. Al Hussein likened to the opening scene of Stanley Kim Robinson's 2021 book, *The Ministry of the Future*, where millions of Indian residents die in a heat wave.

Additionally, global warming means that severe storms will occur with significantly greater frequency, meaning that a severe rainstorm currently categorized as a 'hundred-year storm' will happen every eight years in many parts of the world. Given the formative impact of the monsoon season on India's climate, these dual impacts of extreme heat and severe storms make India a potential disaster zone for future climate impacts. Indeed, in Mr. Al Hussein's estimation, when warming increases to 1.7-1.8°C, "everything begins to break down," which will lead to the collapse of global food systems and governments around the world.

Ms. Moyo, while not disputing Mr. Al Hussein or the IPCC, argued that a broader frame must be incorporated into the conversation that accounts for the economic realities of emerging markets. She recounted that 90 percent of the world's population under 30 years old are in emerging markets, and that solutions to the climate crisis must take into account the need for growth in these markets. Given that the world's population currently consumes nearly 100 million barrels of oil per day and energy prices have spiked as a result of the war in

Ukraine, Ms. Moyo believed that a climate agenda that requires additional cuts in oil supply is not viable right now. Total emissions, she noted, are the equivalent of over 50 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year (nearly 60 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e if land-use change is included), and if we are serious about addressing this problem, we must focus on an energy-based solution that accounts for this output and does not disadvantage people in emerging markets. While the fear of millions of people dying is real, Ms. Moyo argued that mass death is an unfortunate reality with a long history in Africa, and that the international community's lack of concern at other instances when millions of Africans were dying leads her to be skeptical about their concern now. These differences in framing the problem became significant disagreements when discussing its solution.

### The Solution

Mr. Al Hussein began with a review of the types of global leadership that could steer the world to reduce emissions and keep warming under a reasonable threshold. He expressed his disillusionment with the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) structure, which has for decades failed to substantively reduce emissions at the scale needed. Although the 2015 COP 21 provided political space to forge the Paris Agreement and the framework of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), recent evaluations of these NDCs found that, even if they were met, they would not limit warming to under 2°C. Given this failure, Mr. Al Hussein suggested that the small island developing states (SIDS) may boycott future COPs, which could lead to a crisis of legitimacy and dissolution for the body.



Ms. Moyo agreed that multilateral action on climate has been disappointing, and referenced the Green Climate Fund as an unfulfilled pledge of \$100 billion that wealthy nations made to developing nations in 2009 at COP 15 in order to account for the disproportionately high contributions of wealthy countries to current emission levels and the need for equitable development in the global south. Given the enormous risk posed by climate change in the near and distant future, Mr. Al Hussein argued for a strong and urgent need to act, and his disappointment in COP as a body to do so. In contrast to the collective failure of governments to meaningfully address climate change to date, Mr. Al Hussein highlighted the tremendous power of the climate movement, and in particular the influence of Greta Thunberg in galvanizing youth to demand change. For example, primary school students in Glasgow, where COP 26 was held in 2021, went on strike from school during the conference. Mr. Al Hussein praised this activism but remarked that this pressure became dissipated at COP 26 by the time it reaches policy discussions. Specifically, he observed that the energy on the street, labeled the “green zone,” became more refined when one entered the designated area for civil society representatives, called the “blue zone.” This energy further dissolved when one went from the “blue zone” to the negotiating table, where much of the discussion tended to focus on process instead of substance.

Ms. Moyo was more skeptical about the role of climate activism. She argued that these movements too often bend towards unrealistic and ideologically-driven proposals, which distract from what should be the real focus: a short-term solution for the 1 billion people who do not have access to sustainable and reliable energy, and a long-term solution for energy supply that will fit the needs of the 11 billion people projected to live on this planet in 2100. Ms. Moyo advocated for a pragmatic solution that would incorporate solar, wind, geothermal, biofuels, nuclear, and other sources, adding that we must focus on a plan for this amalgamation of energy sources instead of “navel-gazing” at the problems. Turning back to the role of multilateralism, Mr. Al Hussein believed the lack of progress could also be attributed to an erosion of multilateral institutions and the lack of strong leadership at the UN. He provided two examples where former Secretary-General Kofi Annan effectively changed norms in the UN in order to reassert the independence and integrity of the institution. One of these examples included using an opportunity provided by former US Permanent Representative to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke in the 1990s to speak first at all Security Council meetings to which he was invited, establishing that the secretary-general’s contributions hold value that should be considered when member states vote. Second, he spoke from the General



Assembly's rostrum instead of the podium at the 2000 Millennium Summit, symbolizing the physical and institutional separation of the Secretariat from the other UN entities. This independence allowed the UN to maintain the integrity of its neutral role as a "referee" that upheld international norms and values for states to follow. This ideal has been eroded, in Mr. Al Hussein's estimation, by states refusing to follow these rules and a lack of leadership to bring the world together behind them. Mr. Guéhenno added to this assessment that a 'science-based' approach to these issues often comes up against the reality of certain corporate interests and national interests that benefit from the status quo and the erosion of norms.

Ms. Moyo, on the other hand, emphasized

the need to turn to the pillars of globalization, corporate investment, and market-based solutions to climate change. She rebuked the disparaging commentary in public discourse directed towards businesses and corporations, which gained storm after the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protests, and ignores the merits of innovation, research, and development brought about by market-based competition. Ms. Moyo advocated for a central role for corporations in addressing every societal issue, from inequality to climate change, but qualified that corporations and their boards should become more focused and efficient. She praised the Business Roundtable's Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation, signed in 2019 by nearly 200 CEOs of America's largest companies,

which articulated a commitment to serving “all” stakeholders. This statement, which pledged companies to serve broader interests than just those of their shareholders, reflects the broader role that corporations can play. While Ms. Moyo admitted that corporations can and should do more to fulfill their commitments and positively address societal issues, she found no benefit to anti-corporate rhetoric that aims to ‘run corporations out of town,’ as happened when no corporations were invited to COP 26.

Mr. Al Hussein did not share this view of corporations as primarily a force for good in addressing climate change. He noted that corporations such as ExxonMobil have conducted their own research for half a century into the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions on climate change, but had kept the findings from this research secret and spread misinformation instead in order to continue increasing profits. Given that market incentives have led to our current level of greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Al Hussein believed it was “delusional” to believe that markets alone would lead the way to a solution. Even the supposedly laudable commitments by financial institutions like Goldman Sachs to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investment packages have been scrutinized as greenwashing by the US government. While recognizing that some companies are making genuine and substantive contributions to combatting climate change, and that corporations should be part of the policy conversation,

Mr. Al Hussein observed that thus far private sector’s contributions have been negligible in the places most vulnerable to climate risk, and that this will not change until companies “see a possibility for profit in the investment.”

Ms. Moyo, unsurprisingly, disagreed with this assessment. She noted that, far from an empty promise, global ESG assets may soon exceed \$53 trillion, composing over one third of total assets under management. Her personal experience also stood against the notion that corporations are doing nothing to mitigate climate risk or support climate adaptation, though she agreed that more could still be done. Moreover, she argued that blaming companies implicitly deflects blame from governments, who also need to be pressured to do more to institute regulation and transparency regarding carbon pricing. While these differences were not ‘resolved,’ they did illustrate important aspects of the climate change discourse while taking into account risk mitigation, adaptation, and equity.

## Bringing Principles to Practice with Human Rights

The last portion of the conversation dealt with strategies to secure global human rights and overcome the challenges standing in the way of this aspiration. Mr. Al Hussein began by recalling his approach to encounters with his Chinese counterparts when he was HCHR. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon had warned him that, when Secretary-General



Ban had raised human rights issues while in China, he was lambasted by his Chinese hosts, but when he did not raise these issues he was criticized by human rights groups. To address this quandary, Mr. Al Hussein focused on raising the human rights obligations that China had signed on to voluntarily, pointing out the gaps between these voluntary commitments and documented abuses. Although even this elicited protestations from Chinese officials, Mr. Al Hussein argued that the dialogue it provoked was a healthy one in which substantive issues could be meaningfully discussed with a focus on accountability. This can be uncomfortable, he observed, because Chinese officials would articulate “red lines” that China will not discuss, but “all the issues we needed to discuss were across these lines.”

Beyond China, Mr. Al Hussein noted that in most countries there is a part of the population willfully excluded from society and its public goods. Despite the 1965 International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the

infinitesimal genetic differences separating all humans, racism and societal fissures continue to separate and fracture communities at every level. In a broad sense, Mr. Al Hussein argued that tackling human rights abuses, inequality, and many of the other most intractable issues of our time boils down to addressing these forces of division. Ms. Moyo did not agree with this focus, arguing that it represented the type of flowery and idealistic rhetoric that brings us away from pragmatic dialogue that works within the constraints of *realpolitik*. Rather, each of us should focus on practicable areas to make real change, she argued, and on the monitoring mechanisms needed to track that change. These differing viewpoints highlight the difficulty of finding consensus to address some of the world’s most intractable issues, as well as the role that different actors –corporations, governments, multilateral institutions, civil society organizations– should play in those efforts.

## Conclusion

It would have been inappropriate for the Kent Program to end on a note of consensus and clear closure, given the topics discussed throughout the week and the nature of the problems facing our world. No such consensus and closure was found in this final dialogue, which instead highlighted important divergences in how collective issues such as climate change and human rights are approached and addressed. Rather than being discouraging, debates like this should be invigorating in that they force us to grapple with the divergent perspectives present in the private sector, public sector, civil society, and elsewhere in our polarized world. A constant theme throughout the week is that one must engage in difficult dialogue with people who disagree in order to make substantive progress on important issues, and this final conversation reflected that imperative.

# Case Study 1: Peace Summit in Geneva

The first case study simulated a peace summit to end a long civil war in the fictitious nation of Jarah, faced with complex sectarian and regional dimensions. Over three days, participants divided into seven groups: a lead regional mediator team, a United Nations special envoy team, three different political-military parties to the conflict, a civil society team with an emphasis on gender inclusivity, and a team of business actors associated with licit and illicit activity.

An initial briefing and conversation on the basic principles of mediation delivered by the UN's Mediation Support Unit (MSU) set the stage for the simulation through three areas of learning. First, it helped refine participants' understanding of key concepts such as dialogue, negotiation, mediation, arbitration. Second, the briefing reviewed different types of facilitation approaches including facilitative, formulative, and power-based approaches. Finally, it engaged participants in considerations of process design, notably who to include or exclude in a peace negotiation, and how to navigate implementing those decisions.

The exercise began with each team of participants identifying their own objectives, interests, strengths, and weaknesses; attempting to map other teams' objectives and interests; developing plans for alliances with other stakeholders and potential points of leverage; and creating a preliminary mediation or negotiation strategy for both pre-negotiations leading to a roadmap for the process and the actual peace summit. Individual negotiation instructions distributed to the different groups confronted them with dilemmas over who should be at the table, negotiation prerequisites and red lines, and approaches to structuring the process



As the actual negotiations began to uncover root causes of the conflict and made progress towards a peace agreement, developments on the ground emerged that threatened to derail the talks and forced each team to reassess their positions and approach. In plenary sessions at the Summit, designated spokespersons of each group had to deliver speeches, while in the corridors discussions between stakeholders continued and civil society activists staged a protest. Two professional mediators acted as facilitators and mentors throughout the exercise, occasionally fast-forwarding the talks to best simulate an actual peace process

Despite the short timeframe, participants managed to both enjoy themselves and produce a three-page “Jarrah general framework agreement,” which language they negotiated enthusiastically until the very last moment. But the most important takeaways occurred through reflective sessions afterwards as each team reflected on their experience, whether what they obtained was in line with their initial objectives and interests, and the most prominent learnings from the simulation. A panel of professional mediators and mediation scholars provided feedback to the groups and drew connections between the challenges faced by participants and the experts’ experiences in actual peace process.

The case study emphasized that diplomats today must have a strong grasp on the contemporary geopolitical and conflict landscape in order to grapple with the challenges of 21st century peace negotiations. Indeed, these dynamics may be significantly different from the multilateral negotiations they may be more attuned to.



# Case Study 2: Conflict Resolution and Urban Recovery

In the second case study, Kent program participants delved into the urban dimensions of conflict resolution and recovery. In groups, they were asked to design a recovery initiative for New Babylon, the fictitious capital city of Genovia, a country riven by strife and poverty.

Working on this initiative from the perspective of an ambassador posted in Genovia, the participants explored the complex interplay between process and substance, where tradeoffs between inclusivity, ownership, and transparency have to be identified and managed. The design of their urban recovery initiative led them to navigate various national actors, from a mayor's office eager to respond to the needs of the most disenfranchised to a national government that has a fraught relationship with the international community. Simultaneously, participants had to deal with a business community concerned about its interests, security actors with intricate links to armed gangs, and civil society groups who are active but fragmented in their demands. The case also led the participants to examine and connect the dots between various substantive dimensions, some beyond the traditional diplomat's remit, as New Babylon brought into sharp focus the significance of issues such as migration, urban-rural inequalities, geo-spatial planning, and land and property rights, both as drivers of conflict and as pathways to recovery.



At various stages of the case, the participants presented their ideas to their peers and to a panel of urban recovery experts, who offered insights from real life urban conflict experiences to challenge or expand the groups' recommended courses of action. They stressed in particular that diplomats engaging in urban recovery should pay close attention to the local-national and international dynamics, marked by the triptych of competition, coordination, and capacity.

Through these exchanges, participants were also exposed to many cross-sector interdependencies inherent in urban conflict, the opportunities and risks associated with area-based diplomacy and programming, and the impact of international aid on urban violence, and the criticality of strategic communications. Finally, the exercise stressed the utility of data and granular analysis for effective strategic planning, including a review of spatial inequalities, infrastructure functionality, modes of informal governance, and power dynamics.

The case study emphasized the value to be gained when diplomats take a keen interest in urban contexts as hubs for testing and replicating the Golden Triangle, where public and private partnerships can materialize in the name of peace and development, and as entry points for national, and even international, conflict resolution initiatives.



