The Future of Multilateralism

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Introduction

There will be extensive, and potentially divisive, debates about the need to reform the multilateral system over the next eighteen months. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres plans to convene world leaders for a "Summit of the Future", set for 22-23 September 2024, to talk about how to reconstruct international institutions to face current and future challenges. The range of possible reforms on the table is daunting. For many representatives from the "Global South", the top priorities must be boosting international investment in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, coupled with alterations to the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to make them more responsive to the needs of poor and middle-income countries. The Secretary-General has urged member states to take a far-sighted view, and set up mechanisms to protect the interests of future (as yet unborn) generations in economic and environmental policy-making.

Following Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine, many members of the UN also feel that it is essential to address flaws in the current multilateral peace and security architecture. As part of the preparations for the Summit of the Future, a High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism appointed by Guterres released a report on 18 April 2023. This included proposals for both overhauling existing multilateral security institutions and developing new arrangements to deal with looming issues such as the rise of new weapons technologies. UN officials are also currently working on a *New Agenda for Peace* collating further ideas in this area. The Secretary-General will release their findings in June 2023. But there are significant procedural and political obstacles to making fundamental changes to multilateral mechanisms – most obviously the UN Security Council – especially in a period of intense major power tensions. The Secretary-General and member states may need to settle upon a more limited package of reforms to respond to threats to international to peace and security. Diplomats talking about UN reform like to declare that "it is no time for half-measures", but at times aiming for half measures is smart diplomacy.

Security challenges

Proposals for peace and security reforms at the UN need to take four main security challenges into account. The first is the decisive deterioration of major power relations, which has both revived the specter of large-scale conflict in Europe and Asia, and threatened to reduce opportunities for multilateral cooperation through mechanisms such as the Security Council. The second is the recent surge in intrastate wars and regionalized conflicts – most notably in Africa and the Middle East – which have severely tested UN peacemaking and peacekeeping capabilities. The third is the proliferation of new warfighting technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) which are not yet regulated by robust multilateral agreements and institutions. Finally, the UN faces the problem that many of its post-Cold War normative agendas – such as that on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) – face pushback from powers, including China and Russia, that want to return a less progressive form of multilateralism.

The steep decline in major power relations has not paralyzed the UN system. While the Security Council has held dozens of furious debates over Ukraine – and Russia has used its veto to black any criticisms of its aggression in that forum – the Council has continued to pass resolutions on other files such as Afghanistan and Haiti.[1] The permanent members of the Council appear to have decided the body provides a useful channel for residual compromises over areas of mutual interest. Russia has also been willing to engage the UN Secretary-General on humanitarian issues and the Black Sea Gain Initiative. The General Assembly has also stepped up to compensate for the lack of Security Council action over Ukraine, passing a series of – largely symbolic – resolution condemning Russia. Nonetheless, geopolitical tensions have meant that the UN has played a marginal role in dealing with some major crises as the civil war in Ethiopia in recent years. Many UN members suspect that the Council will grow less active if these tensions keep mounting.

In parallel, UN members – and officials including the Secretary-General – are skeptical that the UN's existing crisis management toolbox is fit to handle crises beyond Ukraine. In the last year alone, blue helmet peacekeeping forces have struggled to contain a rise in jihadist violence in Mali and a new round of insurgency in the Democratic Republic of Congo.[2] Governments in Africa – still the main locus of UN peace operations – are increasingly turning to alternative security providers, such as regional coalitions and the Wagner Group, to quash insurgencies. African representatives argue that the UN should support African-led peace enforcement missions, rather than continue to invest in blue helmets operations. Diplomats and officials in New York note that while UN relief agencies continue to play a major role in mitigating the effects of conflict through humanitarian aid, the organization is increasingly a marginal player in conflict resolution.

If the UN struggles to deal with today's wars, Secretary-General Guterres has also urged its members to think about future conflicts. In "Our Common

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[1] Richard Gowan, "Cautious Optimism at Turtle bay," *Horizons*, Issue No. 22, Winter 2023, https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2023--issue-no22/cautious-optimism-at-turtle-bay.

[2] Nelleke van de Walle, "East Africa's DR Congo Force: A Case for Caution," Brussels, International Crisis Group, 25 August 202,2 https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/great-lakes/democratic-republic-congo/east-africas-dr-congo-force-case-caution; Jean-Hervé Jezequel, Ibrahim Maiga and Franklin Nossiter, "MINUSMA at a Crossroads," International Crisis Group, 1 December 2022, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/mali/minusma-crossroads.

Agenda", a 2021 report on multilateralism that announced the Summit of the Future and *New Agenda for Peace*, Guterres spent more time discussing the risks associated with new technologies and inter-state competition in outer space than more traditional UN topics like peacekeeping.[3] The Secretary-General's advisers have insisted that the *New Agenda* should look ahead at options for arms control and disarmament in an era of technological change. But it is not clear that those powers with the greatest potential to utilize AI, LAWS and other new tools of warfare are willing to engage in serious diplomacy about how to regulate or avoid their use, especially in a period when their military expenditures are growing and existing arms control agreements have frayed. Further complicating UN efforts to think about the future of conflict, China and Russia have argued that the body should not focus on the security implications of climate change, even though roughly two-thirds of the institution's members have signaled it should be a priority.[4]

In addressing these challenges, Guterres will also have to stake out a view on whether normative frameworks – such as those around human rights and WPS – should still have a guiding role in multilateral security cooperation. These agendas have become increasingly entangled in major power politics in the Security Council, with China and Russia pushing to curtail references to them in the Security Council in particular.[5] This has not stopped many countries committing to advance these principles inside and outside the UN system (the WPS agenda has for example fed into ideas of a "feminist foreign policy"). But there is a chance that, as policy-makers search for consensus on how to address new rifts and threats at the UN, they will cede ground on established norms.

While the challenges surrounding the *New Agenda for Peace* are complex – and too multi-faceted for any one institution to resolve – diplomats are also chewing over a long-standing goal: Security Council reform. Many UN members argued that Russia's aggression against Ukraine underlined the need to overhaul the Council. U.S. President Joe Biden created some excitement by endorsing an expansion of the Council (and promising to "refrain" from using the veto as far as possible) at the 2022 high-level session of the General Assembly.[6] China has indicated that it is skeptical about the reform drive – which Beijing fears might lead to regional rival

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[3] *Our Common Agenda – Report of the Secretary-General*, New York, United Nations, 2021, https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf.

[4] "How UN Member States Divided Over Climate Security," Brussels, International Crisis Group, 22 December 2021, https://www.crisisgroup.org/how-un-member-states-divided-over-climate-security

[5] *Golden Threads and Persisting Challenges: The Security Council Women, Peace and Security Presidencies Initiative*, New York, Security Council Report, 30 December 2022 https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/wps_goldenthreads_2022.pdf

[6] Richard Gowan, "Biden Can Actually Score Some Quick Wins on Security Council Reform," *World Politics Review*, 4 October 2022, https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/unsc-reform-us-russia-united-nations/

Japan winning a permanent Council seat – but Russia says its favors giving India and South Africa permanent positions.[7]

Many UN-based diplomats have, however, already concluded that Council reform (which requires an amendment of the UN Charter that would have to be ratified by two-thirds of the organization's membership, including all the current permanent Council members) is infeasible, and developing countries see more to be gained from a push for IFI reform at the Summit of the Future.

Nonetheless, there is a feeling that the Summit should endorse at least some institutional reforms relating to peace and security, if only because sticking with the status quo would look somewhat silly under current circumstances. The most widely-discussed option is to enhance the role of the Peacebuilding Commission – an advisory body that works collaboratively with countries to address their security needs – either by giving it greater statutory powers to inform Security Council debates, or by mandating it to work systematically with the IFI's on addressing the economics of conflict in fragile states.[8] Other institutional reform ideas include encouraging the Human Rights Council to play a greater role in prevention (for which it already has a mandate) and/or pushing for the General Assembly to play a greater role in addressing crises.[9] The General Assembly took a small but important step in this direction in 2022, by calling on Security Council members that use their veto to offer an explanation of their actions to the Assembly.[10] This could be a basis for the Assembly to be more proactive in recommending actions – such as mediation and sanctions – when the Security Council is deadlocked. While the idea of Charter-based Security Council reform may remain unattainable, there is some space to develop other UN forums as an alternative.

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[7] Press Trust of India, "Russia Backs India, Brazil for Permanent Membership in the U.N. Security Council," *The Hindu*, 25 September 2022 https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/russia-backs-india-brazil-for-permanent-membership-in-un-security-council/article65933617.ece

[8] Some observers would like to see the Commission upgraded to a fully-fledged "Peacebuilding Council". See for example Richard Ponzio, "Upgrading the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission into an Empowered Council," Washington DC, The Stimson Center, 29 November 2019, https://www.stimson.org/2019/upgrading-the-united-nations-peacebuilding-commission-into-an-empowered-council/

[9] On the Human Rights Council, see Marc Limon and Mariana Montoya, *The Prevention Council: The Business Case for Placing Human Rights at the Heart of the UN's Prevention Agenda*, Geneva, Universal Rights Group, February 2020, https://www.universal-rights.org/urg-policy-reports/the-prevention-council-the-business-case-for-placing-human-rights-at-the-heart-of-the-uns-prevention-agenda/

[10] Ben Donaldson, "Liechtenstein's 'Veto Initiative' Wins Wide Approval at the UN. Will it Deter the Big Powers?" *PassBlue*, 26 April 2022, https://www.passblue.com/2022/04/26/liechtensteins-veto-initiative-wins-wide-approval-at-the-un-will-it-deter-the-major-powers/

Policy implications and the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism

How can the Summit of the Future respond to the mix of security challenges and institutional conundrums facing the UN? The Secretary-General's 2021 report *Our Common Agenda*, which set the whole Summit process in train, had little specific to say about peace and security. By contrast, *A Breakthrough for People and Planet*, the new report from the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (or "HLAB") has a significant amount to say on both current and future security challenges, among a wide range of other issues.[11] The *New Agenda for Peace*, which will be finalized by June, is likely to go into more details around these themes, although UN officials highlight that it is meant to be a "doctrinal" document, setting up further inter-governmental discussions, rather than an analysis of the nitty-gritty details of specific reforms.

The HLAB report: Idealism plus pragmatism

The HLAB report's response to the challenges facing the UN appears designed to work on two levels. At one level, it outlines an ambitious array of potential major multilateral reforms and initiatives that speak to some of the underlying problems with international cooperation today. But in parallel, effectively acknowledging that these big ideas may not be realizable for the foreseeable future, it also set out more limited and pragmatic ideas to mitigate global problems.

The report includes six substantive chapters, with the first four covering topics including climate change and data governance.[12] The fifth chapter focuses on "peace and prevention", while the sixth on "anticipatory action" covers emerging challenges such as the security implications of new technologies and climate change.[13] The most ambitious elements of the peace chapter include:

• *An agreement of a "new definition of collective security" at the Summit of the Future*, by which leaders would recognize that factors such as climate change and socioeconomic inequalities represent challenges to peace and security alongside more traditional threats;

• *Security Council reform* to make the body more equitable, legitimate and able to respond to new threats (although the HLAB does not back specific proposals for changing the composition of the Council);

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[11] High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB), *A Breakthrough for People and Planet: Effective and Inclusive Global Governance for Today and the Future*, New York, United Nations University, 2023. Hereafter: "HLAB, *A Breakthrough*". https://highleveladvisoryboard.org/breakthrough/pdf/56892_UNU_HLAB_report_Final_LOWRES.pdf

[12] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, pp46-53.

[13] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, pp54-60.

- *A summit involving the UN and regional organizations* to define their respective responsibilities for managing security problems, humanitarian issues and related tasks;

- *A push to "accelerate denuclearization"* including institutional reforms to the Conference of Disarmament (CD) in Geneva to allow it to make decisions by qualified majority voting, breaking the deadlock of its current consensus-based model.

These ideas represent the idealistic strand of the HLAB's thinking, with an emphasis on recommitting to the principle of collective security at a time when many states appear to be heading in the opposite direction. Many of the ideas also risk running into diplomatic deadlocks given the rules of UN reform. But the report deliberately introduces some more pragmatic alternatives. It endorses, for example, the idea of bolstering the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission "to address a broader range of risks . . . with greater investigative and decision-making powers" to off-set dysfunction in the Security Council.[14] Implicitly acknowledging the difficulties inherent in CD reform in Geneva, it also floats the idea of a "Global Commission on Military Nuclear Risks", made of military and civilian experts to review the "most likely pathways to nuclear use".[15]

These ideas highlight the need to build up parallel multilateral frameworks and working-groups to compensate for those that are dysfunctional, declining or impossible to reform. In a similar vein, the HLAB points to the deterioration of post-Cold War security transparency mechanisms – such as the Open Skies Treaty – and proposes a new "multi-stakeholder security transparency platform" that would provide a "node" for arms control experts, civil society, regional organizations and other actors to look at new ways of sharing data on security issues and developing confidence-building measures.[16] Some UN members – especially those with most at stake in potential institutional reforms – may argue that ideas such as these simply distract from essential fundamental shifts to the global security architecture. But they may also give a sense of what is actually feasible in the current diplomatic environment, and help buttress existing mechanisms.

Turning to "anticipatory action" and non-traditional security threats, the HLAB urges UN members to factor climate security into the work of inter-governmental forums and UN peace operations; prepare for future pandemic; set deadlines for agreeing on international architectures to manage the evolution of AI and LAWS; and agree on a global strategy to tackle transnational organized crime. Again, this is a mix of aspirational and pragmatic policy advice. The report identifies some areas – such as

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[14] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, p49.

[15] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, p53.

[16] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, p51.

mainstreaming climate security concerns into UN mandates, boosting cooperation on identifying and managing bio-risks, and defending the principle that human decision-makers should retain ultimate control over LAWS – where existing multilateral frameworks have already made some progress.[17] In such cases, the Summit of the Future may be an opportunity for leaders to put their political weight behind technical processes. But it is still unlikely that major powers – racing to dominate in new technological domains – will agree to binding limits on their activities. Many of the HLAB's recommendations in this area pivot, as a result, on improving information-sharing and scientific cooperation in these fields, and working towards "common standards and approaches" to the development and risks of new technologies.[18]

Policy recommendations and the *New Agenda for Peace*

In addition to tabling significant proposals in its own right, the HLAB report helps set the stage for the *New Agenda for Peace*, which the Secretary-General is meant to present to UN members in June. By taking on topics like the need for Security Council and CD reform, the HLAB has reduced the need for Guterres and his team to concentrate on such sensitive structural issues in the *New Agenda* (although it is likely to echo the HLAB's points on issues such as strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission). Conversely, the HLAB – almost certainly by design – has little to say about some of the other issues facing the UN that the *New Agenda* can prioritize. Notably:

- While endorsing the importance of *"prevention and peacebuilding"* in general, the HLAB report has little to say in detail about how the UN and other actors can go about preventing imminent conflicts better, whether these involve the major powers or non-state actors;

- The report does not address *peace enforcement* in areas such as the Sahel, or go into detail about how the UN can work with partners like the AU on stabilization missions in such areas, although it nods to this in its call for a summit with regional organizations.

- Like *Our Common Agenda* before it, the report does not address the future of UN *peacekeeping and political missions*.

The *New Agenda for Peace* will likely revisit some of the topic already covered in the HLAB, such as the need to invest in new arms control efforts. But it will also need to fill in the gaps left by the HLAB report, many of which speak directly to the most urgent threats to the UN system today.

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[17] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, pp57-59.

[18] HLAB, *A Breakthrough*, p59.

The perennial problem of prevention

In consultations around the *New Agenda for Peace*, many UN member states have underlined the need to focus on conflict prevention. Yet prevention is a famously slippery term, and can be applied to everything from short-term crisis diplomacy to long-term governance reforms. One UN official quips that almost any multilateral activity can be cast as preventive, devaluing the value of the phrase. In recent years, there has also been a growing acknowledgment (at least at the rhetorical level) among UN members that prevention is a universal challenge for all states and societies – as the chaos around the last U.S. presidential election amply illustrated – not just "fragile" countries.

The *New Agenda* will need to reflect this trend in discussions. One way to do so would be to suggest that all UN members agree to share information on their internal conflict risks and prevention challenges through a format similar to the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, where states discuss their internal human rights situations. This would however require states to agree to an unusual degree of international scrutiny of their internal tensions and security policies. While the Secretary-General may float an idea of this type, the *New Agenda* will also need to table some more specific ideas and commitments on prevention. Options include:

- *A personal commitment by the Secretary-General to invest more in his good offices*: Having won widespread diplomacy for his humanitarian diplomacy around the Ukraine war, Guterres can secure goodwill to put an equal level of effort into handling conflicts in other regions.[19]

- *A focus on addressing the economic causes of instability*: One area where the HLAB does offer a good prompt for the *New Agenda* is by emphasizing that economic pressures and inequality can drive conflict. The last year has seen a global wave of protests associated with rising food and fuel costs.[20] The *New Agenda* can flag the need for the UN to work better with the IFIs to identify and mitigate the economic drivers of political instability.

- *An emphasis on supporting local, national and regional conflict prevention mechanisms*: Guterres and other UN officials acknowledge that actor beyond the UN are often best placed to recognize and avert looming conflicts. The *New Agenda* can outline how UN entities can best offer resources and political support to these actors, down to the grassroots level.

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[19] Prior to 2022, the Secretary-General had a reputation for avoiding investing political capital in crisis management. Richard Gowan, "Explaining the UN Secretary-General's Cautious Crisis Management," Brussels: International Crisis Group, 5 May 2021. https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/explaining-un-secretary-generals-cautious-crisis-diplomacy

[20] Naomi Hossain and Jeffrey Hallcock, *Food, Energy and Cost of Living Protests, 2022, New York: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*, 2022. https://ny.fes.de/article/food-energy-cost-of-living-protests-2022

Rethinking peace enforcement and peacekeeping

One potential reform that might help address some current crises on the UN docket – and connects to the importance of regional actors – would be to take heed of the specific concerns of African states about worsening security in regions such as the Sahel. One way to do so would be to establish a new process for the Security Council to offer systematic funding (using "assessed contributions" similar to those that pay for UN missions) to pay for more robust African-led stabilization operations as an alternative to blue helmet missions. The African Union (AU) has advocated for this idea for some time and the Security Council has indicated interest in in the past, but it has not been possible to establish the necessary mechanisms to make UN-AU funding possible.[21] There may be a window to advance this debate, not only because of acute security threats in parts of Africa, but also because the U.S., EU, China and Russia are competing for African states' goodwill. Agreeing a framework for UN-AU funding is a personal priority for Secretary-General Guterres, who has promised a "new generation of peace enforcement missions" in Africa, and diplomats expect this proposal to a be a prominent feature of the *New Agenda*.[22]

Nonetheless, it is important that the *New Agenda* should not treat peace enforcement (under whatever institutional banner) as the answer to all instability. Experience in cases from Afghanistan to the Sahel has shown that military stabilization operations must be accompanied by efforts to build up governance and service provision – and potentially open dialogues with insurgent forces – if they are to have any chance of success. The Secretary-General should balance any call for new peace enforcement tools with an emphasis on the need for political solutions to conflict.[23]

If the *New Agenda* is to emphasize the utility of regional peace enforcement, it will also need to offer ideas about the role of blue helmet operations and other UN missions. It is worth noting that while large-scale UN missions may have struggled in places like Mali, the organization can still offer expertise on the tools necessary for military and non-military crisis management, ranging from logistics to the rule of law and mediation. As I have previously argued with Louise Riis Andersen, the UN may deploy few large new missions in the foreseeable future (although it will need to keep blue helmets in places like the Golan Heights and Central African Republic) but it can still

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[21] *The Price of Peace: Securing UN Financing for AU Peace Operations*, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 31 January 2021, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/286-price-peace-securing-un-financing-au-peace-operations

[22] "Humanity Must Act Urgently to Avert Total Global Catastrophe, Secretary-General Warns General Assembly, Outlining 2023 Priorities for United Nations," UN Press Release GA/12489, 6 February 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2023/ga12489.doc.htm

[23] Comfort Ero, "Speech to the UN Security Council on Counter-Terrorism in Africa," Brussels, International Crisis Group, 10 November 2022, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/speech-un-security-council-counter-terrorism-africa

act as a "hub" of conflict management expertise in tandem with other actors.[24] Rather than simply switch attention to regional operations, the *New Agenda* can flag innovative ideas for future initiatives. These could include deploying teams of experts on human rights or peace processes to back up regionally-led operations, or developing new peace monitoring techniques – like deploying drones and data-mining techniques – to help implement future peace agreements.

Counter-cyclical thinking on arms control

Turning to emerging technologies and future wars, the *New Agenda* can largely pick up on the HLAB's framing of the need to update existing arms and control and disarmament mechanisms. The Secretary-General is not in a political position to make powerful states negotiate new agreements on issues like AI and LAWS, although he has flagged the risks of these new technologies in the past. In the current political climate, states are liable to pursue more, not less, activity in these fields whatever the UN says. But it is still be useful for the UN to engage in what could be termed as "counter-cyclical" thinking on these issues, and offer spaces for states' representatives to at least start conversations on topics such as the convergence of AI and nuclear weapon systems. This could lead to better dialogues on the risks involved or, more optimistically, some non-binding agreements on "rules of the road" in weaponising new technologies. As in the Cold War, the UN General Assembly has the potential to offer one space for coalitions of states to start pushing new norms around arms control. More concretely, the Secretary-General could also pick up on the HLAB's idea of developing "multi-stakeholder security transparency platform", and also offer his good offices to assist states in regions such as the Middle East establish confidence-building mechanisms and dialogues to reduce regional proliferation risks.

Defending the UN's norms

A final goal for the *New Agenda for Peace* could be to offer a full-throated defense of the UN's advances on normative questions, most importantly the WPS agenda or the protection of children in armed conflict, since the Cold War. On the former, *Our Common Agenda* includes a point on ensuring that women and girls are at the center of the *New Agenda*, but diplomats worry that gender has not been addressed in depth in consultations around the report. There is therefore a risk that the NAP makes only tokenistic references to gender without supporting them with a foundation for effective implementation, doing more to weaken efforts to ensure women's rights in conflict than to strengthen them. Some diplomats fear that if the *New Agenda* does not raise this theme in a central and meaningful

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[24] Richard Gowan and Louise Riis Andersen, *What Next for UN Peace Operations?* Copenhagen, Danish Institute for International Studies, 12 June 2020, https://www.diis.dk/en/research/what-next-un-peace-operations

way, it will send a tacit signal that the opponents of such norms are winning. It would be fitting for the Secretary-General to lay out option for realizing previous commitments – such as taking effective steps towards women's participation in politics and peace processes – that have not been consistently implemented to date. While doing so might invite pushback from those, like Russia, that dislike these agenda it would also affirm that the UN does still have value as a forum for inclusive discussions of peace and security. That in itself would be a counterpoint to those who believe that power politics is set to overwhelm multilateralism – and its ability to address the needs and priorities of all people in conflict zones – entirely.

Conclusion

The *New Agenda for Peace*, like the HLAB report, is only a starting-point for inter-governmental discussions of what the Summit of the Future can and should say about international peace and security. The HLAB did a good job in laying out a "best case" set of multilateral reforms, but many of these are likely to fall by the wayside before 2024. The task for the *New Agenda for Peace* is to help flesh out and expand on the more pragmatic strand of thinking that is also present in the HLAB report. It is worth acknowledging that even a credible package of these more limited reforms could fall prey to major power tensions. But the permanent members of the Council are all conscious that the wider UN membership are dissatisfied with the existing multilateral system. That creates an opening to make limited but significant multilateral structures, respond to the security concerns of African states in particular, and try to prepare the UN to navigate a dangerous future a little better. Such half-measures will not transform the global security situation. They may make it easier for the UN to play a constructive part in reducing current and future dangers.

People make peace and security possible

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