

Fourth DDR SYMPOSIUM 2024

DDR's Role in Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace

3-7 June 2024

Varembé Conference Centre (CCV), Geneva, Switzerland

Concept Note

The DDR Symposium, since its inception in 2021, has provided an opportunity for the DDR community to meet in person for meaningful exchanges and purposeful networking with a view to harnessing capacities of DDR to address peace and security challenges. This year's DDR Symposium will take place in Geneva against the background of [A New Agenda for Peace](#) policy brief and the upcoming [Summit of the Future](#).

Introduction

The proposal for the **Summit of the Future** originated in the UN Secretary General's [Our Common Agenda](#) report. The report is the Secretary General's vision of how to better respond to current and future challenges.

Ahead of the summit, the UN Secretary-General has recommended twelve areas for Member States to consider. Among them is a recommendation to agree on A New Agenda for Peace (NAfP) as well as discuss practical steps to account for future generations; put in place a stronger international response playbook for complex global shocks; discuss inclusion of young people in global decision making, adapt UN 2.0 basic practices on data, innovation, strategic foresight, so the UN can be better positioned to face the challenges of tomorrow.

The UN Secretary-General presented to Member States on 20 July 2023 his NAfP Policy Brief outlining his vision for multilateral efforts for peace and security. The brief provides a set of recommendations to be considered ahead of the 2024 Summit of the Future. It is framed around the core principles of trust, solidarity, and universality that are foundations of the UN Charter and of a stable world. It presents twelve concrete sets of proposals for action, in five priority areas. Underpinning much of the agenda is a call for a paradigm shift in preventing conflict and violence and sustaining peace, iterating that conflict prevention is universal, that all member states must support it and that national ownership is central to these efforts.

What does the NAfP mean for DDR practitioners? How can the DDR community contribute to 1. Addressing underlying drivers of insecurity and violence? 2. Reducing the human cost of weapons and war? 3. Transforming gendered power dynamics? 4. Addressing inter-linkages of humanitarian, peace and security, and development? And most importantly, to fulfill this call in emerging new contexts, what is the DDR community's commitment to young people and future generations? These are some of the questions that will be discussed in the upcoming DDR Symposium.

A NAfP comes at a time of great uncertainty about the UN's role in the world's growing number of conflicts, and at a time of transition within peace operations settings. The NA4P places significant emphasis on regional actors to lead conflict prevention and peace enforcement efforts. This context requires devising new, innovative, partnership oriented, operational ways to support DDR commissions and other national counterparts, including through regional organizations.

A NAfP provides an opportunity to re-think how DDR can play a role in shifting the broader peace paradigm and can translate this UN-wide commitment to actions on the ground. This reflection has already started through the [Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards \(IDDRS\)](#). The IDDRS encompasses UN peace operations as well as non-mission settings. The Guidance is now applicable to the whole UN country team's DDR efforts and includes considerations for specific needs groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities, formerly associated with armed forces and groups.

Event Concept and Overarching Objectives

The objectives of the 2024 DDR Symposium are:

1. To create a common understanding around the NAfP and its relation to DDR among DDR practitioners and partners and to agree ahead of the Summit on a 'DDR pact for the future'.
2. To share operational insights on DDR implementation, including the IDDRS, and its specific aspects across different countries and regions.
3. To identify new collaborative ways national DDR commissions, national counterparts, regional institutions, and UN missions, can work together, including in UN transitions and non-mission settings, to achieve DDR results and to help sustain peace.

This year's Symposium will be organized around three main segments that will also provide the space for experience sharing across countries and regions:

1. **NAfP and Global Trends**: Participants will create a common understanding of the global security landscape presented in the NA4P and the recommendations made by the UN Secretary-General and build consensus on how their DDR work can support this vision. Experts will be invited to brief on these topics.
2. **Conflict Prevention & Sustaining Peace and Accountability for the Future**: Participants will discuss innovative ways to achieve the NAfP recommendations with a focus on preventing violence and violent conflict and the recurrence of conflict, emphasizing the significant roles played by national counterparts and local communities in this respect. Participants will also discuss the role of DDR in reducing the human cost of weapons, and the impact this can have on future generations.
3. **Promoting Coherent DDR Approaches in a New Era**: Participants will share progress and challenges of implementing the IDDRS, NAfP and other frameworks, in emerging new contexts, such as transition settings and non-mission settings. Participants will discuss practical ways to mutually cooperate and support each other – UN and regional DDR actors & national DDR commissions and partner entities. The UN participants will have the space to discuss ways of working with the expanded role of UNCTs, with RCOs and regional institutions; the national DDR commission

participants will have the opportunity to focus on how they can advance exchange and technical support.

In this year's Symposium, the DDR community will commit to its own 'Pact for the Future' and share this commitment with key Member States and UN partners for their reflection, ahead of the Summit of the Future.

Format of the Event

The fourth 2024 DDR Symposium is a joint initiative between the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It will take place in Geneva from 03 to 07 June 2024, creating the space for some 60 participants drawn from the DDR community to come together, learn from each other and provide mutual support. The Symposium will include a high-level opening, a side event, and time for dedicated intra-agency/community meetings, networking, and side meetings on specific country initiatives. The Symposium aims to engage DDR practitioners and operational UN entities to reflect and discuss pressing practical and operational issues related to the DDR field and its implementation. As a result, the Symposium will advance the NAFp ahead of the Summit of the Future by ensuring that the rich experiences of the DDR community contribute to UN efforts and those of member states to help sustain peace.

Contact Information

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