



In & Around the UN

An Update from the Quaker United Nations Office

October 2016

The United Nations welcomes a new Secretary General

The 2017 process of appointing the new UN Secretary General is unprecedented. It was marked by openness, transparency and public debates. As it states in the UN Charter, the Secretary General is appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. After the 6th straw poll, António Guterres is clearly the favorite to replace the incumbent Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. This appointment comes after tireless efforts to elect the first woman to the highest office in the institution.

The new Secretary General comes at a time of crucial time in the world. From the successful adoption of landmark resolutions, that concluded peacebuilding review in April, to the never ending conflict in Syria and the global migration crisis, Guterres has challenging work ahead of him.

Guterres is the former Prime Minister of Portugal and former High Commissioner of Refugees, a position he feels prepared him for the Secretary General's position. His tenure was marked by a decrease in staff at the Geneva headquarters and more deployment to hotspots in an aim to increase the organization's capacity to respond to international crises. He worked to get the world's richest coun-



The incoming UN Secretary General, António Guterres

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tries to address the growing controversies surrounding individuals fleeing conflict and disaster all around the world, and was quoted as saying “the choice we have is how well we manage their arrival and how humanely.”

Guterres has argued on several occasions that there is a lack of capacity in the international community to prevent and solve conflict. The question now is how the incoming Secretary General will harmonize that lack of capacity with his ambitious agenda. ❖

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Integrating human rights and sustaining peace

QUNO's New York and Geneva offices have been working together to bridge the gap between human rights and peacebuilding. There continues to be a lack of understanding of how closely human rights – both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights – are tied to peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict. The UN takes a very siloed approach in its work, not helped by the human rights offices being based in Geneva while the peace and security work takes place in New York.

The QUNO offices are working together to raise issues of human rights within the UN New York's peacebuilding mechanisms. One way they are doing this was in the lead up to a May General Assembly debate on the UN's peace and security work. The debate led by the President of the General Assembly, organized civil society consultations to gather feedback from around the world. QUNO was one of the organizations who supported this initiative. QUNO Geneva held a consultation on 'Linking Human Rights and Peace and Security' and QUNO New York is working to ensure member states hear civil society's opinions.

In June, the Swiss Appeal also emphasized the importance of "Human Rights at the Heart of Conflict Prevention". The Appeal, endorsed by 67 States, saw that "the Human



The talk series: Big Ideas on Complexity Science and Sustainable Peace

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Rights Council can and should play a more prominent role in conflict prevention." It is true that the geographic divide between Geneva and New York reflects and reinforces the UN divide between peace and security and human rights. Quaker United Nations Offices in Geneva and New York have stepped up their efforts, bolstered by the unprecedented level of international support for a more integrated approach between human rights and sustaining peace, with a clear focus on prevention. The QUNOs hope through this work to contribute to better communication and greater interaction between the Peacebuilding Architecture, UN peace and security institutions, and the UN Human Rights institutions in Geneva around peace and human rights issues. ❖

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Letter from the Director

Dear Friends:

As I noted in our last newsletter, once every ten years a window opens to the possibility of significant changes at the UN, with the appointment of a new Secretary General. In early October, the Security Council united in recommending António Guterres for the position, a choice that the General Assembly will shortly confirm. With this appointment, the jockeying between member states to influence the priorities and structure of the UN for the next decade enters a new and more direct phase.

Guterres has experience as a former head of state, and has deep knowledge of the UN system. His appointment has been greeted with enthusiasm, although there is disappointment that Security Council negotiations did not result in the appointment of a woman to the post.

Strong UN leadership will be re-

quired more than ever. Despite several recent multi-lateral successes (including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development), there has been a worsening deterioration in big-power relationships that does not bode well for united and collaborative approaches to the significant challenges that face humanity. For example, this week saw the fifth veto of a Security Council resolution on Syria, and the rhetoric is reaching lows reminiscent of the cold war. The inability to find consensus on issues of peace and security is hobbling international efforts to respond effectively to worsening conflict, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, at the same time as fear and growing economic inequalities are feeding xenophobic responses to the refugee crisis.

Nevertheless, in QUNO's focus areas, very significant progress has

been made at the UN in redefining the normative framing for peace-building and the prevention of violent conflict, setting a new and more robust underpinning for more effective UN action over the longer term. As we move into the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, the challenge for member states and the UN system is to take the new high-level commitments to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and for sustaining peace, and make them real: to affirm and mainstream their principles, implement them at home and around the world, and fully fund the actions they require.

Thank you for your support.



Andrew Tomlinson

An update from our Geneva office

Busy September in QUNO Geneva began with the arrival of our three new Program Assistants: Cassandra Moll (Peace & Disarmament and Human Impacts of Climate Change), Catherine Baker (Human Rights & Refugees), and Nora Meier (Food & Sustainability). Their contributions have already been greatly appreciated during this active period for our programs.

The 31st session of the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Intergovernmental



QUNO's Catherine Baker (right) gives an oral statement at the 33rd session of the UN Human Rights Council. © QUNO Geneva

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“Sustaining Peace”: A new era for UN peacebuilding

The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture commented that “peacebuilding is left as an afterthought: under-prioritized, under-resourced and undertaken only after the guns fall silent.” In order to address the “gaping hole” in the UN’s institutional machinery for building peace and the fragmentation of the UN’s organizational approach, the Report proposed a new framing, “sustaining peace”, as a principle to inform all the UN’s activities, before, during and after conflict.

This new approach was emphatically affirmed by member states in April 2016, with simultaneous resolutions in the General Assembly and the Security Council, which formally enshrined the definition of sustaining peace as encompassing



The UN embarks on a New Vision for Sustaining Peace

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activities “aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict; addressing root causes; assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities; ensuring national reconciliation; and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development.”

The sustaining peace concept breaks new ground for the UN

and, together with the peaceful, just and inclusive societies mandate within the 2030 Agenda, marks a sea-change in the normative underpinnings of the work of the international community in accompanying societies impacted by conflict and fragility, and in supporting universal efforts to promote peace and justice.

Nevertheless, implementation of the new framework will require significant shifts in coordination between UN departments and agencies at headquarters and in the field, and in resource allocation by donors. QUNO has been deeply engaged in this process so far, and we look forward to working with UN decision-makers to assist in turning these aspirations into reality. ❖

Funding for peace — Peacebuilding Fund’s pledging conference

On September 21st, during the 71st Opening of the General Assembly, the high-level peacebuilding fund pledging conference entitled “Invest in Sustaining Peace” took place, calling for the international community to pledge more funding for the organization’s Peacebuilding Fund.

Established in 2006 at the request of the UN General Assembly and Security Council, the Peacebuilding Fund focuses its work on post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives, currently supporting more than 120 projects in 25 countries. Since its creation to the end of 2015, the Fund has allocated \$623 million to 33 countries to

help prevent relapse into conflict and to sustain peace.

“Without the Peacebuilding Fund, we will be forced to stand by as we witness the preventable loss of countless lives and the extinguishing of hope for millions more,” Ban Ki-moon told the participants. He also emphasized that even though
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The high-level peacebuilding fund pledging conference entitled “Invest in Sustaining Peace”, co-organized by the Permanent Missions of Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sweden and the United Kingdom. © UN Photo/JC McIlwaine

Embracing the new global framework for peace



Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon ringing the Peace Bell at UN headquarters for the annual ceremony for the International Day of Peace on September 21st
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The 70th anniversary year of the United Nations saw bold new agreements from member states to “foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence” and to “bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace.”

Spurred by multiple global challenges, a new emphasis on peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict has also been evident in UN deliberations in a wide variety of other contexts, including humanitar-

ian action, forced displacement and preventing violent extremism.

Together, these actions comprise a fresh and universal normative framework, one that seeks peace, justice and inclusion in all countries and at all levels, and a reinvigorated UN mandate for peace as a core principle across the UN system.

Accordingly, QUNO worked with its partners on a [shared statement](#) to UN member state representatives, timed to coincide with the arrival of delegations for the opening sessions

of the UN General Assembly and the International Day of Peace. The statement calls on governments to mainstream peace policy, implement peace at home, foster peace around the world, support peace funding and protect and support civil society inclusion. The statement, signed by 45 peacebuilding organizations from around the world, was circulated widely and became part of the normative backdrop to the week of high-level UN discussions. ❖

Pledging conference

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the agreements and reviews of the past year, from the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change, to the reviews of peace operations

and the World Humanitarian Summit, show that the UN must change its approach and its ways of working and that funding needs should be more sustainable.

At the pledging conference, which had a target of raising \$300

million, only 26 member states pledged a total of \$151 Million to the UN Peacebuilding Fund, to cover the years 2017-2019.

QUNO hopes to constructively engage with member states and build support for this agenda. ❖

Staff comings and goings



Past and Current PAs left to right: Hannah Larn, Hafsa Maalim, Anna Mijnlief and Debbie Leter. © QUNO

QUNO welcomed two new Program Assistants in August.

Anna Mijnlief joins us after recently completing her master's degree in International Development, where her research looked at emerging forms of conflict and cooperation as a consequence of changing patterns of land ownership in a Maasai community in Southern Kenya. Having long attended Quaker meetings, Anna looks forward to gaining deeper insights into how Quakers operate at the UN. Anna will be working on the Peacebuilding program and on the Agenda 2030

work at QUNO.

Hafsa Maalim recently graduated with a Law Degree and is continuing to study for her LLM in alternative dispute resolution while at QUNO. She is interested in advocating for women's rights, and has worked in several capacities on these issues in Mauritius and Kenya. As a Muslim, she is excited to work within a Quaker organization and explore shared beliefs. She will be working on the Prevention program at QUNO, as well as on the Peace, Security and Human Rights work.

Hannah Larn, our outgoing program assistant who worked on peacebuilding while at QUNO, has returned to England where she is working for Quaker Peace and Social Witness in Liverpool. Debbie Leter, our other outgoing PA, who focused on prevention, has returned to Paris, where she aims to use her media and storytelling background to explore issues of peace.

Additionally, we have said farewell to our Fellow, Linda Kitenge, who has returned to England after a year of researching and growing QUNO's relationship with the African Union. Linda's work was pivotal in expanding QUNO's prevention program.

And finally, it is with great sadness that we say farewell and good luck to Camilla Campisi, UN Representative at QUNO for the past six years. Camilla and her growing family have relocated, and Camilla is now working on refugee issues with the government of New York. Camilla's work with QUNO over the years has been tremendous and she is already sorely missed. ❖

Geneva office update (Continued from page 3)

Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore opened in Geneva. As a follow-up to the panel discussion of Indigenous Peoples on a draft text to ensure the effective protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural

expressions, QUNO submitted a statement emphasizing the importance of small-scale farmers as active managers and developers of the majority of this food diversity worldwide.

QUNO's climate change, peace and human rights programs attended a day-long discussion on the Rights of the Child and the Environment, advocating greater integration of human rights and

rights-based approaches in climate action. Our human rights program also gave an oral statement at the 33rd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and called for the Council to consider the situation of children of parents sentenced to death or executed, ahead of the upcoming resolution on moratorium on the use of the death penalty. ❖