

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 9 June 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the United Arab Emirates, in its capacity as president of the Security Council for the month of June 2023, intends to hold a ministerial-level briefing, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, on the theme “The values of human fraternity in promoting and sustaining peace”, on Wednesday, 14 June 2023 at 10 a.m. in the Security Council Chamber. The concept note is attached (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Lana Zaki **Nusseibeh**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 9 June 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council briefing on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: the values of human fraternity in promoting and sustaining peace”, 14 June 2023

Introduction

On 14 June 2023, during its presidency of the Security Council, the United Arab Emirates will hold a high-level signature briefing on the theme “The values of human fraternity in promoting and sustaining peace”, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”. The event will explore the impact of intolerance, hate speech and incitement to hatred, racism and other manifestations of extremism in exacerbating threats across the peace continuum, as well as the role that the values of human fraternity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence can play in promoting and sustaining peace.

Background

Over the past two decades, the international community has developed a comprehensive prevention architecture to assist Member States in addressing threats to international peace and security. However, existing measures have not succeeded in addressing intolerance and extremism as drivers of conflict. The world is facing the highest number of violent conflicts since the Second World War, with 2 billion people living in places affected by conflict. Intolerance, hate speech and extremism are major threat multipliers that may drive the outbreak, escalation and recurrence of conflict.

Intolerance can lead to the outbreak of conflict by creating divisions between people. Hate speech can be used to dehumanize entire groups of people, creating a climate of fear and mistrust that can cause violence, as exemplified by the Rwandan genocide in 1994. It can further escalate conflict by radicalizing individuals and groups, instigating cycles of retaliation and fuelling intercommunal violence. Extremists have exploited the Internet and social media to promote divisive propaganda, spreading disinformation, hate speech and conspiracy theories, resulting, in some countries, in violence against minorities. Intolerance, hate speech and other manifestations of extremism can also undermine peacebuilding in post-conflict situations by undermining trust, driving exclusion and inhibiting dialogue. Such a situation was demonstrated in the wake of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995), where the prevalence of intolerance impeded peacebuilding efforts. There is clearly an urgent need to address intolerance and extremism more effectively before violence and conflict arise in the first place.

Given that the international community today faces a more complex, diffuse and dynamic threat landscape, it is important for the United Nations to adapt its efforts to better support Member States in mitigating these threats, managing risk, building resilience and averting the outbreak of conflict. Prevention strategies must be recalibrated to reflect this pressing reality. Such strategies must include the perspectives of those most impacted, particularly women and youth. Addressing intolerance, hate speech and extremism requires exploring the impact of these phenomena throughout the peace continuum, encompassing conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and sustainable development. This effort entails policy discussions involving communities of practice that have hitherto mostly operated in silos.

Objectives

The event is intended to raise awareness of the pivotal role that the values of human fraternity can play in promoting and sustaining peace and preventing intolerance and extremism. It builds on the document entitled “Human fraternity for world peace and living together”, signed by Pope Francis, and Grand Imam Ahmed Al-Tayeb in February 2019, and on General Assembly resolution [75/200](#) (2020), in which the Assembly acknowledged that tolerance, pluralistic tradition, mutual respect and the diversity of religions and beliefs promote human fraternity.

The event also presents an opportunity for Member States to renew their commitments to preventing conflict and promoting and sustaining peace, including by fostering a more comprehensive understanding of how peacebuilding, sustainable development and societal resilience can contribute to peace and security. Recognition of the importance of prevention resonates with the vision outlined in the Secretary-General’s report entitled “Our Common Agenda” and is articulated in the 2016 twin resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, namely [70/262](#) and [2282 \(2016\)](#), respectively.

A critical step in supporting and strengthening the peace and security architecture of the United Nations will be to consider how the Security Council can better address the multiple challenges posed by intolerance and extremism. However, in seeking to address the broad spectrum of extremism and its potential impact on the peace continuum, the event will be aimed at expanding the discussion beyond a narrow association with terrorism and towards understanding the full breadth of the potential threats associated with intolerance, hate speech and extremism.

The threats posed by intolerance and extremism cannot be mitigated through a single method, actor or solution, but require the consideration of a range of solutions spanning several policy areas, including education, gender equality, social cohesion, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The event is aimed at strengthening the efforts of United Nations entities, Member States and actors from across society on the approaches and measures that can be deployed to address the drivers of intolerance and extremism. Such efforts include taking stock of the insights gained from the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech (2019), as well as the role of religious leaders, women and youth in strengthening resilience against intolerance and extremism.

Guiding questions

- How does intolerance, hate speech, racism and other manifestations of extremism influence and drive the outbreak, escalation and recurrence of conflict within the mandate of the Security Council?
- What gaps exist in the current United Nations peace operations and peacebuilding mechanisms to address conflict exacerbated by hate speech, intolerance, racism and other manifestations of extremism?
- How can the values of human fraternity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence contribute to strengthening societal resilience and to promoting and building peace in post-conflict situations?
- How can we strengthen the role of religious and community leaders, including women leaders, to promote tolerance, coexistence and prevent the abuse of religion?
- What measures and approaches can the international community, including the Security Council, take to address intolerance and hate speech and to promote reconciliation and peacebuilding in conflict-affected societies?

- Are there regional models that can be looked to as models of good practice in effectively addressing intolerance, racism, extremism and their root causes?
- How can civil society and the private sector engage with relevant partners in developing strategies, that promote the values of tolerance and human fraternity in support of strengthening peace and security?

Format

The meeting will be chaired by a minister of the United Arab Emirates. Briefings will be delivered by the Secretary-General; the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayeb; a high representative from the Vatican (tbc); and a representative of civil society (tbc).
