

International Dialogue Strategy Paper for the Future of the International Dialogue

Document 05 - Background document

EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE WORKING GROUP
MEETING ON NEW DEAL IMPLEMENTATION
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Strategy for the Future of the International Dialogue: Background Document

1. Introduction

The world has changed dramatically since 2008 when the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding was formed. The number of conflicts and crises is on the rise and more people than ever have been forced to leave their homes due to injustice, human rights violations, inequality, exclusion, climate change, poor management of natural resources and the absence of political settlements and capable institutions. At the same time, extreme poverty continues to take root in countries facing conflict and fragile situations. The entire international system set up to deal with conflict and fragility has changed. The landmark adoption of a global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the UN's stated ambition to improve its peacebuilding, approach coincide with the end of the trial period of the New Deal.

The International Dialogue will take advantage of this unparalleled opportunity for genuine transformation in countries affected by conflict and fragility to renew and refocus its attention on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding in ways that rebuild the social contract. Building on the experience gained and lessons learned, the International Dialogue will strive to become a robust network of countries, organizations, and forums committed to finding new and better ways of building peace and preventing conflict, in line with the means of implementation objectives of SDG 17. It will also be open to new members united in their desire to build sustainable peace and peaceful and inclusive societies, and to prevent conflict. It will seek to increase its relevance both inside countries grappling with conflict and fragility and at global policy levels.

The overarching approach of the activities of the International Dialogue stems from the firm belief that building sustainable peace is the best way of preventing conflict. In order to do so, addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility must be a priority and this is, first and foremost, a country-level process that must be owned and led by local actors with the support of development partners, civil society, and other external actors. The International Dialogue will continue to bring together countries seeking to move beyond fragility and conflict, their development partners, and civil society representatives committed to supporting their efforts.

The main role of the International Dialogue is to support peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts on a national level and, at the same time, to take part in regional and global policy discussions on peacebuilding and statebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The International Dialogue will thereby strengthen its comparative advantage with the aim of creating sustainable peace in countries affected by fragility and conflict. A reinvigorated International Dialogue will also strengthen its comparative advantage as a distinctive forum where popular support, engagement, development work and diplomatic efforts come together to prevent conflict and build sustainable peace.

The future of implementation at national-level will be the interlinking of the New Deal and the 2030 Agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals, including but not limited to SDG 16 and SDG 17, represent an opportunity for genuine transformation in fragile and conflict-affected situations, if support is tailored to the special needs arising in fragile contexts. The New Deal offers a unique platform where national leaders, development providers, and other stakeholders, notably the private sector, come together to resolve issues relating to politics, security, and the economy. The 2030 Agenda should therefore be operationalized in line with the New Deal principles.

2. Renewal and update of the mandate

The mandate of the International Dialogue, which was last updated in 2013, lays out the International Dialogue's working methods. Taking the 2030 Agenda into account, the mandate must be revised to reflect New Deal implementation that is aligned to the delivery of the SDGs. The Mandate must also include clear governance and operating structures that are sustainable and efficient.

Renewing and updating the mandate of the International Dialogue in order to make it more fit for purpose and better able to reflect current realities will not require a wholesale change in its ways of working. What is required, however, is a strengthening of political will and recommitment to the mandate. This will entail a focus on country level implementation and global advocacy.

The process of renewal also means that the Dialogue needs to consider the proposals of the Independent "*Review of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*" and the proposals outlined in the October 2013 OECD Technical paper on restructuring and strengthening the Secretariat. The renewal must ensure that the voice of all the International Dialogue constituents continue to be heard.

3. Working Groups

The **Implementation Working Group**, currently the sole working group within the International Dialogue, is being reviewed and updated to increase its usefulness. Its primary focus should be to serve as a platform to support New Deal implementation, where g7+ implementing countries converge with other partners of the International Dialogue, where they share experiences, reflect on and resolve challenges to New Deal implementation, and where they can arrive at practical solutions and strategies. The focus of the Implementation Working Group will also now include New Deal/SDG alignment. This means supporting g7+ country and partner efforts to develop strategic linkages between New Deal instruments (e.g. fragility assessments and the PSGs, compacts and national plans), and the SDG goals and targets. To this end, the IWG should focus its support on countries and development partners that are willing and ready to step forward and commit to implementing the New Deal at country level. As much as possible, citizen views will be sought and incorporated, both through structured consultations and through monitoring and review. The working group will ensure that the International Dialogue remains a place for serious and earnest dialogue on important

issues, and that it is relevant and useful for country-level implementation, based on the issues that country-level actors bring to the working group's attention. The working group will also continue to produce guidance as and when needed, and conduct New Deal monitoring surveys in order to track progress.

In addition to the Implementation Working Group, a ***Policy Advocacy Working Group*** should be formed to support the policy work stream of the International Dialogue. A Policy Advocacy Working Group should develop and advocate for policies in support of fragile and conflict-affected countries, based on the New Deal and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The group should strategically work for policy adoption and use by the main international actors, such as the UN, the EU and IFIs. Suggestions put forward by the Policy Advocacy Working Group should build upon experience gained from the Implementation Working Group, as well as the knowledge and thinking generated by civil society, multilateral organizations, and governments. Initially, the Policy Advocacy Group will need to rightfully focus on bolstering the outcomes of the work of the Implementation Working Group. Subsequently, the relationship between the two working groups will have to be one in which implementation will be informed by policy. Likewise, policy would be revisited in the light of evidence gathered from implementation.

Ad hoc-working groups can also be created, as and when determined by the Steering Group and/or the Global Meeting.

Each of all ID working groups will now be jointly chaired by a representative of g7+, development partners, and civil society, on a tripartite basis, thus more adequately reflecting the significant contribution of civil society and the unique tripartite foundations and objectives of the International Dialogue.

4. Structures

The International Dialogue as a whole, and the Steering Group, will continue to be led by the co-chairs representing the g7+ and INCAF. The co-chairs will be responsible for taking policy issues forward on behalf of the International Dialogue constituencies, based on an agreed annual work plan. The Dialogue will aim to have one Global Meeting at ministerial level and 1-2 Steering Group meetings per year, led by the co-chairs or their senior representatives. The Global Meeting will remain the highest decision-making body of the International Dialogue. It will set the political agenda and remain the forum for approval of co-chairs. The Steering Group meeting is a sub-decision-making body that manages the work plan of the International Dialogue and the work of both the working groups and ad hoc-groups.

The International Dialogue Secretariat shall serve as the coordinating body and support and report to the co-chairs. While the International Dialogue Secretariat ensures that all voices are heard on a more general level, the three constituency secretariats have the responsibility to coordinate opinions and policy in their constituencies for further consideration by the co-chairs.

5. Hosting and Financing

The Dialogue Secretariat shall be hosted by an organization capable and willing to provide the logistical and administrative support needed for the International Dialogue to do its work. It should function independently of the host institution, while adhering to general policies, work rules and regulations of the host organization. The host shall also take on fiduciary responsibility for International Dialogue funds and will also be responsible for helping the Secretariat to raise operating funds from amongst its members, and should report on such at Steering Group meetings. Support to the Dialogue Secretariat by members could be direct financial support or, when possible, in the form of secondments.

6. Suggested Way Forward

A revised mandate of the International Dialogue, as well as the size, composition, and hosting of the International Dialogue Secretariat, and the terms of reference for the working groups will be discussed further using the above guidelines. A working group will be tasked by the co-chairs to produce a suggestion for the future structure of the International Dialogue before July 2016. Based on that, the International Dialogue Steering Group will be able to agree on the new structure at its meeting planned for October 2016.

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