#COERÈNCIA
O EIXO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO

DEVELOPMENT AND SECURTITY

## FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON COHERENT POLICIES

1. BACKGROUND

The link between **security and development** is more relevant today than ever. In a world where conflict and violence are increasing, and consequently, the human, economic and social impacts, promoting coherence with human rights and the global sustainable development goals becomes even more important.

Peace is the primary and absolutely necessary condition for a development process that enables economic prosperity, social justice and environmental preservation. Currently, many conflicts drag on into prolonged and persistent crises, forming underlined complex emergences. In many cases, these are "forgotten crises", meaning they are not geopolitically relevant, do not affect dominant economic interests and/or do not have significant potential for dissemination, thus also lacking media visibility or the necessary attention from the international community. Many countries affected by conflicts are also in a fragile situation and have weak development indicators. Exposure to various risks (economic, environmental, political, social and security) combines with a weak response capacity by the State to manage, absorb or mitigate these risks, generating a vicious cycle of perpetuating fragility.

However, even in conflicts receiving greater global attention, international law (including humanitarian law) is violated, and the need to protect human security is forgotten, as recent wars attest. Conflict is now taking on renewed dimensions, with worsening geopolitical divisions and tensions, the fragmentation of power and alliances, the weakening of the rules-based international order, the internationalisation of conflicts (with multiple local, national, regional, global stakeholders), and increased militarisation in response to the deterioration of the security environment. This creates great uncertainty for the future and does nothing to promote the aspiration for peace, shared by the peoples around the world. Although the outlook is not encouraging in this area, only the reform of global governance and the strengthening of multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity can respond to the current complexity of security threats.

Peace is a dynamic process that does not simply imply the absence of war, involving a multiplicity of elements such as: the restoration of social relations, promoting paths to justice, social cohesion and reconciliation; the strengthening of economic, social and institutional systems that respond to people's needs; and the transformation of conflicts on a constructive basis, so that they can be managed and resolved non-violently. Therefore, it consists of a process of progressive elimination or reformulation of practices and forms of action, political and institutional dynamics, and other factors that create or perpetuate violence in a society. Only then can peace be sustained and positive, contributing simultaneously to security and development.
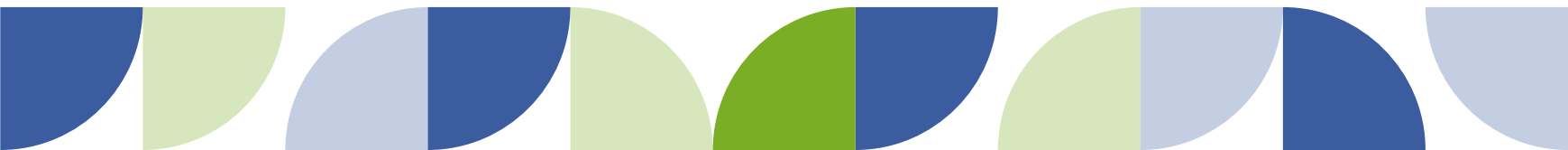
In turn, development only contributes to peace if it is fair, inclusive, and equitable. This means implementing coherent policies focused on reducing poverty and inequalities (including effective mechanisms for redistributing wealth, supporting the most vulnerable, and promoting equality and equity), improving living conditions (including human development and access to quality basic services), access to justice, and promoting strong, transparent and effective institutions. Developing institutional, social and political capacities for the inclusive management of tensions and conflicts that naturally emerge in societies is also essential to avoid exacerbating factors of instability – knowing that conflict prevention is much more effective than crisis management once they have broken out.

The promotion of security and development, as interconnected and mutually reinforcing processes, requires a foundation of non-negotiable respect for human dignity and fundamental freedoms, which are increasingly threatened. In a world where there are greater challenges to human rights and democracy – including the weakening of the rule of law, disinformation and the rise of populist extremism, the restriction of civil society's scope for action, the rise of hate speech and repression, and violence against specific social groups, among others – a greater concerted effort for the Common Good is needed. The mobilisation around conscious citizenship (particularly among young people) and the growth of social movements in defence of freedom and human rights offer hope for building a more prosperous and safe world for all.

"The solutions are in our hands. Cultivating a culture of peace means replacing division, disempowerment, and despair with justice, equality and hope for all. It means focusing on preventing conflicts; propelling the Sustainable Development Goals; promoting human rights; and tackling all forms of discrimination and hate."

António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, International Day of Peace 2024.
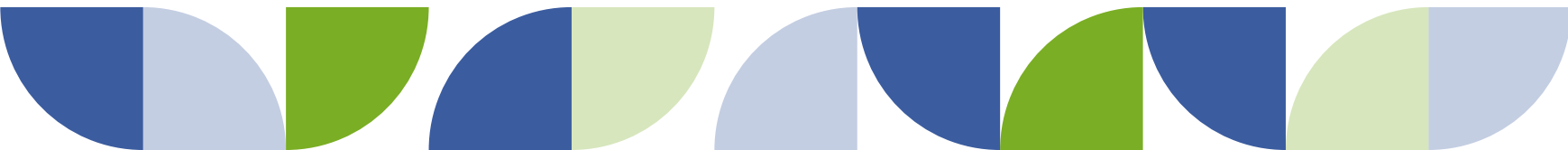
> "Peace is not only a distant goal we seek, but a means by which we reach that goal (...) True peace is not merely the absence of tension, but the presence of justice."

Martin Luther King Jr.

The pursuit of fairer, more sustainable, and inclusive global development implies that various sectoral policies – such as migration, security, trade, agricultural, and food policies, among others – do not undermine the objectives and efforts to end poverty in the most vulnerable countries, but rather actively contribute to promoting development at the global, European, national and local levels.

This is the principle of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), which is a legal obligation of the European Union and its Member States under the European treaties, as well as a political commitment and a shared responsibility.

**Video
Voices for Peace:
Visions of the Future
(United Nations)**

**Video
What is Human
Security?**

**Learning:
Toolkit and training
course on Youth, Peace
and Security**

Actions for Peace

2. FROM PERCEPTIONS TO FACTS

We clearly perceive the increase in global conflict, but are we aware of the concrete impacts and human, economic and social costs? The security crisis occurs simultaneously with a human rights crisis and threats to fundamental freedoms, also intertwined with factors weakening democratic systems. The visibility of these crises and their impacts varies greatly, revealing significant global inequalities. Promoting peace and development implies understanding the complexity of these interconnections and grounding them in facts that fuel informed, conscious and coherent decision-making.

Increased conflict and its impacts at all levels

Peace and security conditions have been steadily deteriorating over the past fifteen years, with significant human, social and economic impacts:

• **The world is currently facing the highest number of conflicts since World War II** and approximately 2 billion people, or a quarter of humanity, live in countries affected by conflict. More than 90 countries are involved in conflicts outside their borders, the highest number ever.

• In 2023, **the death toll exceeded 162,000** (after 121,000 in 2021, and 238,000 in 2022), with the conflicts in Palestine and Ukraine having the highest number of victims, followed by Myanmar, Sudan, Somalia and Burkina Faso. Between 80% and 90% of war victims are civilians.

• **120 million people are displaced** (within or outside their country) due to conflict, persecution and human rights violations (May 2024). Approximately 300 million people in 72 countries require urgent humanitarian assistance and protection, mostly as a result of war.

• The **economic impact of violence** reached USD $19.1 billion in 2023 (13.5% of global GDP), or USD $2,380 per person – the highest value ever. In the ten countries most affected by violence, this economic cost represents, on average, 37.4% of GDP, compared to 2.9% in the ten least affected countries. An example of the economic impact of war: Syria's GDP fell 85% in just a decade (2010-2020).

• Despite the downward trend in **extreme poverty**, it has increased in countries affected by conflicts. Currently, 73% of people in extreme poverty live in countries experiencing fragility and conflict.

• **Geopolitical tensions and global insecurity** are exacerbating militarisation: global military spending has more than doubled since 2000, reaching a new high of USD $2,443 billion in 2023. The two largest spenders in this area – United States and China – account for almost half of the total, while Europe has increased its military spending by 62% in a decade – reaching USD $298 billion in 2023. The United States has strengthened its position as the leading arms exporter.

• There is **weak progress toward achieving the targets** of Sustainable Development Goal 16, on Peace, Security and Strong Institutions.

Violations of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Human rights are under attack worldwide, and the situation is particularly serious in contexts of war. This is compounded by the weakening of democracy, exacerbated by growing conflicts and polarisation, and intertwined with restrictions on fundamental freedoms:

• The **most serious human rights violations** occur in contexts of conflict, such as Syria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Ukraine or Palestine, including the perpetration of war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law.

• Women and children suffer disproportionate impacts of violence and conflicts. Women and girls represent 72% of reported human trafficking victims globally. In war situations, **sexual violence against women** is frequent and used as a weapon. On average, countries in crisis or conflict have a maternal mortality rate four times higher. In 2023, the proportion of women killed in conflict doubled, and that of children tripled. **Violence against children** in these areas has reached unprecedented levels.

• **Democracy is under threat, and the global trend is toward "autocratisation"** - in 2019, for the first time since 2001, autocratic regimes became the majority in the world. Only 8% of the world's population lives in a fully democratic regime, and almost 40% lives in autocratic regimes.

• There is a **clear decrease in civic space**, including in Europe, with civil society facing increasing difficulties in its activities.

• Most people continue to live in countries where it is very difficult, or nearly impossible, to exercise fundamental rights and freedoms without **consequences**. Thousands of people are imprisoned for expressing their opinion. Torture and politically motivated detention, often without a trial, have become common and tolerated. Transnational repression has become a silencing strategy for authoritarian regimes that threaten and persecute dissidents.

• Independent journalists and media face increased intimidation and repression, and more than 50% of the world's population lives in areas with **weak press freedom**. Between October 2023 and April 2024 alone, more than 100 journalists were killed in Palestine. There has also been an increase in the criminalisation of and attacks on humanitarian workers, environmental activists, and human rights defenders, with more than 300 people murdered every year since 2015.

Consult the continuous monitoring tools:

Risk of conflict | **Victims of violence and conflicts** | **Evolution of extreme poverty** | **Humanitarian needs (United Nations)**

3. COHERENT INTERCONNECTIONS

Development is simply impossible without peace and human security, so violence, crime, insecurity, and armed conflicts are also challenges to human rights, social justice and development. Threats to global peace and security today include a wide range of issues such as poverty, public health (as the pandemic has demonstrated) or environmental degradation, which are interconnected at the global level and increasingly affect all countries in all latitudes. In turn, economic marginalisation, discrimination and exclusion, as well as inequalities, lack of access to justice, and institutional ineffectiveness weaken, in various ways, peace, democratic systems and development processes.

The interconnections are complex and multiple, but just as negative vicious circles are generated, it is also possible to identify (and foster) positive synergies between various aspects of peace and development.

Human Rights

Violent conflicts affect all human rights, including the right to life, freedom and personal security, but also to education, health, housing, justice or employment. The right of peoples to Peace and the right to Development have been recognised since 1984 and 1986, respectively, by the United Nations General Assembly. People pay an unacceptable price for the continuation and emergence of new conflicts, witnessing war crimes and violations of international law, such as attacks to hospitals, schools and basic civilian infrastructure, including a widespread sense of impunity. The disproportionate impact of conflict, violence and insecurity on the most vulnerable social groups is interconnected with other structural factors of discrimination and inequality, meaning that they are especially subject to violations of their rights and more unprotected in practice, despite the instruments of international law.

Annually, at least one billion children, or about half of all children worldwide, are affected by various types of violence, but violence caused by war has increased alarmingly. In situations of crisis and conflict, there is higher infant mortality, greater difficulty in accessing education, and greater vulnerability to organised crime or economic exploitation. Maternal mortality is also higher. In humanitarian contexts, in situations of conflict and fragility, women and girls are much more exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, and access to health care or justice is particularly difficult. In recent decades, the use of violence against girls and women in conflict situations, including sexual violence as a war weapon, has become more visible, constituting a war crime and a crime against humanity. Migrants and refugees are also particularly exposed to risks, including violence, exploitation, trafficking and sexual abuse. Human trafficking affects people in situations of greater vulnerability, such as those fleeing conflicts and extreme poverty.

Forced displacement and humanitarian crises

Violent conflicts threaten human dignity, contributing to the increase in the number, intensity, persistence and duration of humanitarian crises. Beyond the loss of life, among the most immediate human impacts of war and insecurity is the forced displacement of large populations. Most of these people are displaced within their own country. However, of more than 36 million people who are refugees in other countries from conflict situations, the majority are welcomed in countries neighbouring these conflict scenarios, such as Turkey (mainly from Syria), Iran and Pakistan (from Afghanistan) and Sudan (from South Sudan). Approximately 75% of refugees are in low- and middle-income countries, placing increased pressure on access to basic rights, in countries with already fragile structures, and potentially generating greater social tensions.

Food and nutrition security

Wars play a crucial role in ongoing food crises. By contributing to the disruption of trade and supply chains, and to a widespread increase in food prices, the war in Ukraine has been particularly damaging for several countries that depended on these imports, several of which were already experiencing food insecurity. Hunger and food deprivation have also been a weapon of war for many years, as recognised by the United Nations Security Council. The prolonged and persistent crises caused by instability and conflict in many countries impede the stability of production systems (particularly agricultural activities) and the structuring of populations' livelihoods, combining with other crises (economic, climate) to make food crises more complex, protracted, and difficult to reverse. The escalation of violence also affects the provision of food aid and the continuation of essential development projects in this area. In turn, persistent food insecurity also contributes to social tensions and conflicts, as has been most acutely observed in countries in the Sahel region. About 70% of people facing acute hunger live in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

Poverty, economy and employment

Economic marginalization, discrimination, and the exclusion of social groups - political, economic and social -, as well as the growth of income inequalities within and between countries contribute to **worsening conflict and violence**. An unbalanced distribution of public expenditures or the lack of adequate income redistribution policies; discriminatory laws (e.g. discrimination in property rights and access to water); high unemployment rates or weak prospects for economic improvement; as well as the exclusion of the poorest from the resources, opportunities, and information necessary to improve their poverty are some of the risk factors that tend to undermine social cohesion and favour criminal activity and instability in general. Unemployment and the lack of educational and professional opportunities also play a clear role in the penetration of extremist ideas, particularly among young people, to swell the ranks of radicalized movements or groups. Conversely, when people's basic needs are met, there is less incentive for social conflict, violent protests, or political instability. By destroying the social and economic fabric, violent conflicts affect the possibilities of combating poverty and inequalities, which is why countries affected by conflict generally present more negative social and economic indicators.

Climate Change and Resources

Climate change is increasingly a crucial factor in development and human security, as extreme weather events, ecosystem degradation, and the pollution of resources essential to human life impact all aspects of economies and societies, contributing to multiplying threats, disrupting livelihoods, driving population displacement, and exacerbating social tensions (see the example of countries in the Sahel region). Countries currently affected by conflicts are also among the least resilient and most susceptible to climate disasters, whose consequences exacerbate fragility and instability. They are also among those that receive the least climate finance.

Poor management of natural resources, especially when it coincides with other structural inequalities at the socioeconomic, cultural or ethnical level, can be a catalyst for conflict. Competition for resources such as water, land, or minerals fuels social tensions and political disputes, potentially fuelling local and international conflicts over the use and control of these resources. On the other hand, sustainable governance and management of natural resources, with effective and balanced regulation, based on the empowerment of communities and the equitable distribution of benefits, can contribute to strengthening peace, stability and sustainable development.

Governance and institutions

Issues related to poor governance and institutional ineffectiveness impact the development of societies and economies, primarily by undermining citizen trust and representing a breach of the social contract. When citizens feel unprotected in their rights and needs (including, for example, access to justice), when there is a culture of impunity or favouritism toward certain social groups, with high levels of corruption, and/or when the functioning of institutions is subject to arbitrary actions and systematic abuses of power, a process of degradation and weakening of the State occurs, with negative repercussions on security and development. Countries with less capacity to enforce the law, effectively manage public services, and ensure transparent and inclusive governance mechanisms are more vulnerable to violent conflicts.

Conversely, there is a clear link between more inclusive and participatory societies – with accountable, transparent and democratic institutions – and the capacity for resilience in adapting and recovering from shocks, sustainable development, and conflict prevention. When development is inclusive, it promotes social justice and cohesion, reducing ethnic, religious and political tensions, and creating a sense of belonging to a common space for living and sharing, which is essential for maintaining peace.

Democracy and fundamental freedoms

The erosion of democratic mechanisms and the spread of anti-democratic practices around the world is not only a setback for fundamental freedoms but also poses enormous risks to development and people's security. Countries with greater guarantees of respect for fundamental freedoms tend to be safer and more prosperous, more open to new ideas and opportunities, while more autocratic and repressive countries generate more instability and conflict, violence and corruption, and more space for radicalisation and extremist movements. In democratic systems, the growth of disinformation, populist parties and movements, xenophobic narratives and hate speech is undermining the foundations of democracy and peace, resulting, for example, in the normalisation and increase of violence against specific social groups (e.g. migrants), exacerbating polarisation and threatening social cohesion, which in no way contributes to peace and development.

Multilateralism and internacional cooperation

The United Nations system plays an important role in <u>preventing, maintaining and building peace</u>, as well as coordinating global <u>humanitarian assistance</u> and promoting development in all its dimensions. However, factors such as the increasing complexity of security threats and conflicts, the fragmentation of stakeholders, and growing polarisation and geopolitical divisions, combined with inadequate international governance instruments, have contributed to the reduced relevance of <u>multilateralism</u> in responding to the greatest challenges. On the other hand, investment in conflict prevention may be further threatened by the increased international attention focused on responding to emergencies or urgent situations that cannot be postponed, when prevention is more important than ever. Greater cooperation and a more coherent, cohesive, and influential multilateral approach to existing armed conflicts depend primarily on the will of the parties involved (particularly the major powers), but also on the reformulation of governance, institutions, rules and instruments, so that they reflect global realities and can foster greater dialogue and concertation.

Video
Why is Peace essential for economic development?

Global campaign:
Education for Peace

Video
What is the triple nexus (humanitarian-development-peace)

4. MAIN EXISTING POLICY FREAMEWORKS

Global

United Nations Charter (1945) – Article 1. Saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war was the main motivation for the creation of the UN, and the organisation's primary objective is to maintain international peace and security.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) – Article 3, 4, 5, 9.

Geneva Conventions (1949) **and protocols** – international treaties containing the most important rules on armed conflicts and the protection of war victims; they are the basis of international humanitarian law.

Nuclear Weapons: The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1970) is in force and binds 191 member countries. In 2021, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the first agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, entered into force, but it has only been signed by the majority of developing countries.

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998, entered into force in 2002).

Crime – United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (2003). It is a response by the international community to the growth of organised crime groups and operations that transcend national borders.

Women, Peace and Security – United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). It was the first of several resolutions on the subject, followed by others on specific issues such as sexual violence in conflict situations, and the full participation of women in peace processes. The III National Action Plan for the implementation of this Resolution is in force in Portugal.

Youth, Peace and Security – United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015). It recognises for the first time, at a global level, the specific role of youth in promoting peace and aims to increase the representation of young people in decision-making, institutions, and mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution.

2030 Agenda for Sustainble Development

"We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development (...) We must redouble our efforts to resolve or prevent conflict and to support post-conflict countries".

SDG 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. (With coherent interconnections to all SGDs)

The Pact for the Future (approved in September 2024) establishes the commitment to building a **safe, peaceful, fair, egalitarian, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world**, with 56 priority actions within the scope of (1) Sustainable Development, (2) Peace and Security, (3) Science, Technology and Innovation, (4) Youth and Future Generations, (5) Transformation of Global Governance.

European Union

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights – Article 6 (Right to freedom and security)

Treaty on the Functioning of the EU – Part V (Union's external action), Article 208 (development cooperation and policy coherence); Article 214 (humanitarian aid)

European Consensus for Development (2017) – Strengthens the response to fragile contexts, focusing on resilience, sustainability, the fight against poverty and crisis situations.

Strategy to combat human trafficking (2021-2025)

Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 - Human rights and democracy must be at the forefront of the EU's efforts to prevent and resolve crises, and in all areas of external action.

EU Strategic Agenda 2024-2029

The UE aims to protect and promote its founding values, be the strongest supporter of the international legal order (in compliance with the United Nations Charter), and promote global peace, justice and stability, as well as democracy, human rights and the SGDs – supporting a reformed multilateral system and engaging in coherent and influential external action.

Security Policy

The **Strategic Compass for Security and Defence** (2022) defines the vision of an EU that protects its citizens, values and interests, and contributes to international peace and security, by 2030. It is based on 4 pillars:

ACT	ENSURE SECURITY	INVEST	PARTNERSHIPS
more quickly and decisively in the face of crises	of citizens against rapidly changing threats	in the necessary capacities and technologies	with others to achieve common goals

Development Policy

According to Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty, EU's development policy also contributes to supporting democracy, the rule of law, preserving peace and preventing conflicts, and promoting an international system based on strengthened multilateral cooperation and good global governance.

The European Consensus for Development (2017) reinforces the response to contexts of fragility, focused on resilience, sustainability, fight against poverty and crisis situations, in cooperation with local stakeholders and with a focus on their appropriation of these processes.

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD)

In 2009, Security was one of the five sectoral priorities defined by the EU to minimise inconsistencies and foster synergies for more sustainable and inclusive development.

Portugal

Constitution of the Portuguese Republic – Article 7 (International Relations); Article 8 (International Law): Title II (Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees)

National Strategy for Security and Development (RCM 73/2009). It was intended as an instrument for international intervention based on more coherent, integrated and coordinated policies. It provided for several coordination and working instruments between security and development agents, but it was not operationalised.

Operational Strategy for Humanitarian and Emergency Action (RCM 65/2015). Promotes coherence and coordination among public agencies involved in humanitarian action, as well as articulation with other cooperation agents, such as civil society organisations.

Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030 (RCM 121/2022) Contributes to an international order based on the promotion of peace, solidarity and conciliation. The consolidation of peace and security, democracy and the rule of law are cross-cutting principles of cooperation policy. It promotes Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) in the area of security, through intergovernmental and intersectoral approaches. Among the Cooperation priorities, the "Peace" pillar aims to promote the security-development link and focuses on supporting States in fragile situations, investing in more integrated responses, such as the "humanitarian-development-peace" triple nexus.

Video – International rules of war in a nutshell

Interactive tool: progress on SDG 16

Video – United Nations Secretary-General on the International Day of Peace (21 September 2024)

5. INCOHERENT TRENDS AND PRACTICES

In the <u>interconnectedness between security and development</u>, recent years have demonstrated worrying trends in policy coherence, with a clear preponderance of the military and security approach (in the strict sense) in supporting countries affected by conflicts, instability and fragility, which overrides inclusive and sustained processes of peaceful resolution of conflicts; with a lack of investment in supporting lasting peace and inconsistencies in funding; and with the exclusion of social groups essential to security and development objectives (such as local communities and women). More and more, development policy must serve defence and security interests, highlighting the trend toward "reverse coherence" in practice, the impacts of which can be unfavourable to conflict prevention and combating its causes, undermining the aspiration to "promote peaceful, just, and inclusive societies free from fear and violence", as expressed in the 2030 Agenda. Desensitisation to human suffering is simultaneously a cause and a consequence that is linked to some of these inconsistencies, relegating human security and dignity – which should be the basis of all policies, approaches and actions – to the background.

Palestinian family flees their home in Rafah, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, UNICEF

Militarisation and securitisation of policies, to the detriment of peacebuilding and development

In the European Union, as in the rest of the world, the prevailing discourse in recent years has been about war, not peace. The focus on security issues in the narrow sense and the growing militarisation raise questions about what kind of security we want, who decides and who benefits from this trend, and what impact it has on human security and peace. **Several inconsistencies emerge regarding the promotion of a more prosperous and peaceful world**:

• The **increase in military spending** to historic highs since the Cold War is focused on armaments and defence, as spending on peacekeeping and peacebuilding was only USD $49.6 billion in 2023, representing 0.6% of global military spending (in PPP). At the same time, military spending absorbs a significant portion of financial resources that could be used for sustainable socioeconomic development. It is estimated that the costs of providing basic water, sanitation and hygiene to populations without access, achieving universal primary and secondary education for all, and ending extreme poverty and hunger would be only 2%, 6% and 13% of global military spending, respectively.

• **Militarisation and rearmament** (including nuclear weapons) also imply an **increase in the supply and export of arms**, which can contribute to: financing authoritarian regimes and/or regimes that advocate serious human rights violations, financing conflicts and increasing instability in fragile countries, fuelling active intervention in other conflicts, and/or unpredictably altering regional dynamics. For example, Saudi Arabia is the world's second largest arms importer, playing a significant role in the worsening of the conflict in Yemen and the numerous human rights violations reported in that context, with Yemen being one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world. In the case of the EU, European arms control legislation (such as the 2008 Common Position on the export of military technology and equipment) has limited scope, and Member States continue to export arms to third countries in conflict situations, as is the case in the Middle East.

Darfur, Sudan, 2018. © Mohamad Almahady, UN Photo Bank

• With the EU's growing need to develop its military capabilities, the arms industry lobby has increasingly gained prominence **in various policies and instruments** (not just security and defence), exploiting the political space and influence granted to them, including in decision-making, budgets, and financial instruments. Arms and security companies have managed to gain ground, e.g., in external border and migration management, or in energy security and natural resource management. This more militaristic and security-oriented EU paradigm may diminish the importance of the proclaimed support for peaceful peacebuilding mechanisms, the focus on human and humanist security, and the fight against the root causes of conflicts.

• **Peace support instruments have evolved toward a more militaristic and restricted version of security.** The European Peace Facility was created in 2021, outside the EU budget, which allows it to circumvent treaty provisions on the supply of arms, as well as the oversight of the European Parliament. Despite its claims to "empower partner countries", experience shows that this type of military assistance has unpredictable and often counterproductive effects on peace and human security. Providing arms and ammunition to security forces in fragile countries can reinforce their impunity and encourage repressive actions, tending to exacerbate rather than mitigate local and regional conflicts. Furthermore, it is an instrument focused on Europe's internal security, with a militaristic approach aligned the Strategic Compass, which distances itself from broader foreign policy objectives and the pursuit of comprehensive partnerships (particularly with Africa), contradicting the EU's traditional role as a civilian power in peacekeeping and defending human rights (much more prominent in the previous African Peace Facility).

• Many **fragile countries** have been battlegrounds for regional powers and hegemonic conflicts, a situation that has been exacerbated by recent geopolitical divisions and global instability. Interventions in these countries often lack local leadership and ownership, are not tailored to the context, and fail to respect the peacebuilding and State objectives agreed upon under the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. So-called "proxy wars", with the provision of weapons, money, and security forces (mostly informally), contribute to reviving or exacerbating unresolved social and political wounds from previous conflicts, leading to further fragility in these countries and compromising their future prospects for peacebuilding and development, contrary to the principle of "do no harm").

• Securitisation also manifests itself in the **instrumentalization of development aid and humanitarian aid** to achieve security and defence objectives. Many development aid programmes increasingly pursue geopolitical and security interests, including, for example, border control, which diverts already scarce resources to priorities not directly linked to financing sustainable development. By placing the emphasis on using development aid to ensure national and European security (and not on promoting development in insecure and unstable countries), the central objective of EU development principle and the principle of Policy Coherence for Development are jeopardised, which constitutes a legal obligation under the Lisbon Treaty. Humanitarian aid also obeys geopolitical logic, can be exploited by various actors and used as an instrument of war, failing to adhere to needs-based and rights-based assessment criteria that should underpin it, and in some cases failing to respect the internationally agreed humanitarian principles of **humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence**.

Negotiations for the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework (2027-2034) are approaching, leaving questions about whether this will be a defence/war budget and how to preserve the integrity of global development funds.

Inconsistencies and inequalities in approaches to and financing for peace

Prevention. Conflict prevention is much more effective and affordable than a reactive response in a war situation or after a conflict: it is estimated that every USD $1 invested in prevention generates USD $16 in savings in responding to violent conflicts. However, the international community continues to focus on short-term crisis management and militarised/security responses after conflicts have emerged, with costs increasing in recent years. Overall, there is much greater difficulty in mobilising funds for prevention, including, for example, programmes to strengthen population resilience, consolidate positive relations between the State and society, promote reconciliation and peacebuilding at the local and community level, and provide access to justice, among others, which would be fundamental to lasting peace. A stronger and more coordinated commitment to prevention would save many lives and save significant financial resources. This prevention means addressing the root causes of conflicts, accelerating the achievement of all the SGDs – whose financing gap compared to the needs has widened and currently stands at between USD $2.5 trillion and $4 trillion annually.

Fossil fuel burning, 2018 © Patrick Hendry, Unsplash

Humanitarian aid. Humanitarian assistance is called upon to respond to <u>an increasingly broad range of needs</u>, from food security to health, from education to water and sanitation. The increase in conflict and the resulting humanitarian crises has not been matched by an increase in funding for the response, as while <u>some more strategic conflicts attract international attention</u>, others remain forgotten crises. The <u>United Nations' humanitarian appeals</u> are underfunded, and the lack of contributions has led to cuts in food assistance in countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, and others. Not only has the disparity between the increase in humanitarian needs and available funding increased, but 2023 was the first year in which there was a real drop in funding for United Nations appeals. By the end of the first half of 2024, <u>only 18% of the funds needed</u> to meet these urgent needs had been received, which has concrete and direct impacts on survival. The decline in funding is even greater in <u>programmes for assistance and protection of children</u> in conflict situations.

Development aid. Despite the increased global conflict, <u>development aid for peacebuilding</u> reached its lowest level in 15 years in 2023. Furthermore, this aid <u>depends on a small group of donors</u> (the United States, EU institutions and Germany), making these activities highly vulnerable to political volatility and shifts in priorities and budgets. Expanding development needs, combined with growing pressure on development aid budgets in developed countries (with <u>announced cuts in foreign aid</u>) are expected to <u>particularly affect fragile countries</u>, which are most dependent on this flow, potentially contributing to increased instability and insecurity.

Volatility and inequalities in funding. Funding for peacebuilding, reconstruction, and development in conflict-affected countries continues to be concentrated primarily in a limited group of countries (with Afghanistan and Iraq being the top recipients for five consecutive years). Countries not strategically important to global security or the economy receive very little investment in peacebuilding. Furthermore, foreign aid flows are <u>less predictable and highly volatile</u> (with donors making decisions to withdraw or resume aid discontinuously) and increasingly focused on humanitarian aid, that is, <u>short-term objectives</u>. This does not allow for the necessary predictability to plan and implement sustainable development and peacebuilding strategies – which are complex, often non-linear, social and political processes that required sustained commitment, perseverance, and long-term engagement. Inadequate funding also reveals significant <u>imbalances in the humanitarian-development-peace "triple nexus"</u>. Finally, funding and interventions tend to neglect, or fail to adequately include key actors in the prevention and consolidation of peace and development, particularly local communities and civil society.

The exclusion of women from peace processes undermines security and development objectives

In most conflict-affected countries, women and their organisations are instrumental in peace and reconciliation in their communities, organising demonstrations and pro-peace movements, attempting to present alternatives for peaceful conflict resolution and mediation proposals, and leading the post-conflict recovery of their communities. There is a link between militarisation and gender inequality, as well as strong evidence that greater women's involvement tends to better reflect the needs of communities and pay greater attention to the causes of conflict. It is estimated that when women are fully included in peace negotiations and processes, peace agreements are 20% more likely to last at least two years and 35% more likely to last at least 15 years. On average, a peace agreement is 64% less likely to fail if it includes women's organisations and organisations advocating for their rights.

Since 2000, the United Nations has attempted to promote women's participation at all levels of decision-making in the sphere of peace and security, the protection of rights, and the integration of a gender perspective in conflict prevention, as well as in aid, recovery and reconstruction efforts. However, women are largely unable to influence or even "have a seat at the table" in the decision-making that most impact them. In 2022, less than a third of the peace agreements signed worldwide included any provision on women or gender. On average, between 1992 and 2019, as women represented 13% of negotiators, 6% of mediators, and 6% of signatories in peace processes. In fact, 7 out of 10 formal peace processes did not include any women in any of these categories. The international community has also failed to adequately recognise its importance: development aid amounts are negligible – only 0.4% of bilateral aid in conflict-affected countries is directed to women's organisations.

6. CHECKLIST OF COHERENT POLICIES

Faced with trends that are adverse to international solidarity and the protection of human security, as well as profound inconsistencies fuelled by global geopolitical divisions, Human Rights must acquire new relevance and centrality, placing people at the centre of concerns and policies, from local to global. In this sense, it is important to go beyond the narrow conception of security, bringing back the concept underlined on freedom, which encompasses protection against violence and physical threats (*freedom from fear*) and the security that emerges from development, the right to live with dignity, keeping people safe from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression (*freedom from want*).

Creating the foundations for lasting and positive peace drives sustainable, just, and equitable development processes – and vice versa. This requires an approach that truly addresses the causes of conflicts, values community resilience, and promotes a culture of peace at all levels, through integrated approaches that are adapted and appropriate to the needs of each country or region.

Peacebuilding is a process going back and forth, and the changes of conflicts rekindling are quite high. This highlights the need for the international community to effectively and continuously support the efforts of the most fragile and conflict-affected countries, based on criteria of necessity and in line with the principles of international law and humanitarian law.

Pillars of coherent policies

Coherence with international law and agreed principles

Ensure that all interventions, positions and measures of external action comply with international law and international humanitarian law, placing human dignity and security at the centre of policies and actions. Ensure integrity and respect for the internationally recognised principles of humanitarian and emergency aid, in all contexts of action.

Coherence with local priorities and support for local peacebuilding and development efforts

Sustained support for locally led and/or appropriate peace and development processes, ensuring adaptation to each context and alignment with the priorities of each country in a fragile or conflict-affected situation, in line with the New Deal and the internationally agreed Principles of Peacebuilding and State building.

Coherence of external action between security and development actors

Regular dialogue and consultation, implemented through integrated and multisectoral approaches between the various instruments, funding and stakeholders in the security/defence and development/cooperation sectors, including, specifically, the implementation of the **humanitarian-development-peace nexus**

General

✔ Strengthening **dialogue, coordination and systematic consultation between actors in the security/ defence and development/cooperation sectors** (including joint analysis and programming, systematisation of best practices and systematic information sharing, and the definition of integrated and multisectoral approaches), namely through the review/update and operationalisation of the National Strategy on Security and Development (RCM 73/2009).

✔ Solid and reinforced investment in **Education for Peace, Education for Human Rights and Education for Development**, as crucial instruments for developing critical awareness and mobilising citizens for a more peaceful, fair and inclusive world.

✔ Accelerating the **implementation of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the targets of SDG 16**, taking into account the impacts and interconnections with other SDG targets.

✔ In line with the OECD-DAC recommendations for Portuguese cooperation (2022) and in compliance with the Council of Ministers' Resolution on Policy Coherence for Development (RCM 82/2010), **improve the analysis and monitoring of how sectoral policies in key areas are affecting developing countries**, taking measures to address inconsistencies and generate synergies that guide the actions of the numerous actors working in fragile States.

Externally/Internationally

✔ Adequate support for **fragile states** through integrated, coordinated and strategic cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels, with predictability, that responds to the needs/priorities of these countries and reflects Portugal's added value, in line with the provisions of the Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030 and with the international principles and best practices of the New Deal and the Principles of Peace and State Building.

✔ Greater attention and support for the **prevention of violence and conflicts** as a way to achieve sustainable and positive peace, addressing their root causes through: early risk identification (early warning) and institutional capacity-building programmes in all sectors; peace and security policies/actions that take into account their impact on issues such as inequality or poverty; and development cooperation policies/actions that are sensitive to the various dimensions of conflict (conflict-sensitive) in all sectors. Governments, international development agencies, NGDOs and other stakeholders in fragile and conflict-prone scenarios must integrate peace efforts into their organisations' mandates, economic policies, programmes and projects.

✓ Focus on action plans and solutions with national/local ownership and leadership whenever possible, including direct support for local and national actors and mechanisms for **promoting peace** in partner countries, fully ensuring inclusiveness and participation, based on the identification of stakeholders who are agents of peace and development in communities and whose work should be promoted and appropriately supported (civil society organisations, local initiatives, women's and youth groups, community movements, activists, etc.).

✓ Promote, in every possible way, the **full inclusion of women** in processes of peace, the consolidation of peaceful societies, reconciliation and the building of resilience.

✓ Advocate and work for the **revitalisation of multilateralism and international cooperation** in responding to global security and development challenges, which implies supporting a reform of global governance and the United Nations system that is inclusive, fair, transparent, and capable of responding to existing challenges.

✓ Preserve the **integrity of EU development policy funds and objectives**, focused on ending poverty and promoting more inclusive and sustainable development, namely by opposing the instrumentalization of aid, the securitisation of development programmes, and the diversion of funds to promote donors' security interests – including in the negotiations for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2027-2034).

✓ Actively advocate for the respect of **humanitarian actors' scope of action and international humanitarian principles** – humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence – in all approaches and contexts in which Portugal and the EU intervene, both formally and operationally, preventing the purposes of this aid from being subverted by other interests and placing human dignity at the centre of all interventions, in line with international humanitarian law.

✓ In all forums and settings in which Portugal participates, advocate for placing **coherent external action** in fragile and/or conflict-affected countries at the top of the agenda, and pursuing it at all levels – within EU Member States, between them and EU institutions, between the EU and other international actors, and on the ground (in fragile countries). This requires greater political will, institutional changes and changes in working methods, more effective coordination mechanisms, and common understandings within the "humanitarian-development-peace" **triple nexus**, in line with the OECD-DAC Recommendation on this matter (2019).

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This document is part of the production of knowledge and awareness about PCD, complemented by other studies and papers prepared. For a more in-depth analysis on this topic, see the study **Development and Security: Challenges and (In)coherence (2020)** and the website **www.coerencia.pt**

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