

## International Legal Instruments for Cessation of War

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Greetings to everyone. I am Teodor Meleşcanu, former Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, former President of the Romanian Senate, and a professor of international law. It is my pleasure to be a part of this DPCW Conference and even more so to be surrounded by so many peace messengers from around the world.

At present, the worst situations in the world are caused by actions taken against peace and security of humankind.

Initially, public international law evolved when solidarity and interdependence between States were limited only to national solidarity in its early form when the channels of communication were much narrower than today. The idea of peace between communities was more concerned with organizing relations between them.

In 1920, after the First World War, the League of Nations was created, which represented a great step forward in international law, especially because it highlighted the instruments needed to ensure peace. After the Second World War in 1945, the United Nations was created, an international body that still functions today.

The UN Charter confirmed that at the heart of relations between States is the principle of sovereign equality. It also highlighted the instruments of treaty compliance and the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense in the event of an armed attack against a UN Member State.

Chapter 1 of the Charter has structural principles stated in Article 2, and Paragraph 1 is the sovereign equality of States. States exercise exclusive power over their territory and subjects and no other authority in their relations with other States. They are regarded as legally equal regardless of their size, internal resources, military power, form of government, ideology, or religion.

Later in 1970, the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration of Principles concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States as a component of the sovereign equality of States. States have the right to choose their economic system and to organize themselves economically without the involvement of other States.

The UN Millennium Declaration on 8 September 2000 aimed to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peace-keeping, post conflict peace-building and reconstruction.

In 2016, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right to Peace as a step towards sustainable positive peace within societies. This further entrenches States' pre-existing obligations under the Charter with respect to maintaining international peace. These obligations include the prohibition of the threat or use of force against both the territorial integrity and political independence of other States. The content of States' and individuals' right to international peace is essentially the same, deriving from the Charter principles.

In 2023, the Report of the Secretary-General presented that the most important issue is maintenance of international peace and security as the work of the UN. The UN supports Member States through a range of international peace and security activities, grounded in the principles of the Charter and the mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The UN's political, peace-making, peace-building and peace-keeping efforts are aimed at preventing and managing conflicts, responding to women's and youth participation in political and peace processes.

However, peace and security are constantly threatened by the evolving nature of conflicts, shrinking space, mis- and disinformation, hate speech, unregulated cyber space, and the climate emergency.

We are also seeing the highest levels of geostrategic competition in decades. The war in Ukraine has sharpened global divisions among Member States. There are mounting concerns over rising global tensions, active armed conflicts, increased military spending and heightened nuclear risks, as well as the threat of mass destruction.

This environment undermines the effectiveness of the global peace and security architecture and challenges our ability to prevent, manage, and mitigate conflicts and assist with peace-making. One of the main problems is that the system of principles and rules of international law are quite modest.

So, to chart a path forward, we need a renewed commitment to multilateralism and the UN Charter as called for through the Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW).

The DPCW aims to significantly supplement the UN Charter, thus further building upon established principles of international law for global peace and cessation of war. With a system of institutionalized peace through the

DPCW, the United Nations, its Charter, the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the many Departments can become better equipped to deal with unprecedented challenges and evolving forms of conflict that may arise with the passage of time, ultimately working toward a more hopeful future of harmonious coexistence in peace.

The most likely scenario is to go back to defining the characteristics of the international system based on clear laws and necessary supplementations through the DPCW, so that in the years to come we can consider a multilateral world with more decision-makers in the international community.

This means that States like the USA, the European Union, China, Great Britain, Russia, France, Brazil, India, Turkey, the Middle East, South Korea, Japan, Australia, and South Africa need to take part in the elaboration of international rules for peace.

The United Nations is still the best forum for promoting international peace and security. However, all that I've shared about the activities of the UN is confronted with the activities of States and their interests because any country, small or big, is interested in their national problems.

Even though the UN is a system devoted to world peace and security, it cannot achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals alone. A broad involvement of State leaders as well as non-governmental organizations, such as HWPL led by Chairman Lee, is necessary to strengthen and develop a consciousness and culture of peace throughout the world.

South Korea has evolved democratically, becoming a regional power, and is highly advanced both economically and technologically. It is clear why this nation was able to achieve such level of development despite the 36 years of Japanese Occupation and facing the Korean War. Starting with the fighters for independence, the Korean people are driven to make a better world for their future generations. In that sense, HWPL and its members are successors to that aim but in a global scale.

The HWPL World Peace Summit is an important international forum for sustainable peace in the world. The fact that the young generation as well as women should be involved in working for peace is a great idea, so that in the future people all over the world will learn that peace is the most precious value in life. Only by living in peace, humanity will be able to evolve, build instead of destroying, and develop a society based on authentic values.

I personally want to congratulate HWPL and thank them for supporting and activating peace consciousness and spirituality in the world. Thank you.

