Global Resilience Agenda: A Foreign Policy Perspective on the SDGs

Drawing the links between the sustainable development agenda and foreign policy objectives

Tuesday, 17 July 2018, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Restaurant of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations,
871 United Nations Plaza, New York, USA

Achieving the 2030 Agenda is essential to peace and stability worldwide and is becoming an important point of reference in foreign policy. Progress on the SDGs, especially in countries emerging from crisis and conflict, is needed to reinstate livelihoods and strengthen resilience. The SDGs’ strong links with foreign policy priorities, such as conflict prevention, stabilization and peacebuilding, have been recognized in the Sustaining Peace Agenda.

Yet, the extent to which the SDG’s can influence – positively or negatively – violent conflicts, migration, extremism and other pressing issues has not been sufficiently and systematically assessed in research or practice. The five SDGs under review at this year’s High-Level Political Forum (SDG6 water; SDG7 energy; SDG11 cities; SDG12 consumption and production; SDG15 life on land) are valuable entry points for a more methodical analysis of how sustainable development supports peace.

Objectives of the side event

The side event will address how the SDGs under review relate to peace and how they can contribute to achieving SDG16 (peace) and strengthen climate resilience (SDG13). The focus will be on regional and country examples, i.e. small island developing states (SIDS) and the MENA region. The aim is to provide context-specific, in-depth insights and equip various stakeholders involved in SDG processes with conceptual knowledge and examples.

Following short remarks from foreign policymakers, national governments, international organizations and civil society/academia, the discussion will revolve around these questions:

- Why and how is the 2030 Agenda relevant for foreign policy and what can we learn from the SDGs under review in 2018?
- How does implementing these SDGs affect progress on SDG16 (peace) and how can we identify the most relevant synergies to be supported?
- What are the conflict drivers linked to SDGs in fragile countries? How does progress on SDG targets help reduce conflicts? To what extent are peace dividends likely?
How do our peacebuilding activities in fragile countries need to change to best account for the role of the five SDGs under review?

Provisional Agenda

6:30 p.m.  Introduction by Ambassador Dr. Christoph Heusgen, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

6:40 p.m.  Setting the scene: “A Foreign Policy Perspective on the SDGs”

6:50 p.m.  Panel discussion: The implications of the SDGs for peace and geopolitics
- Mr. Henk-Jan Brinkman, Chief of Policy, Planning and Application, UN Peacebuilding Support Office
- H.E. Ms. Marlene Moses, Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations (tbc)
- Mr. Alexander Müller, Managing Director of TMG Think Tank for Sustainability, and former Assistant-Director General of the FAO of the UN Department for Natural Resources and Environment
- Ms. Elisabeth Pape, Senior Expert, EU Delegation to the UN; former Acting Head, Fragility and Resilience Unit, DG DEVCO

7:15 p.m.  Open floor discussion
7:55 p.m.  Closing remarks

The event will be moderated by Mr. Alexander Carius, Managing Director of adelphi.

Refreshments and a light buffet will be served after the event.

This side event is targeted at high-level decision-makers and participants in the High-Level Political Forum (delegations and stakeholders).

For security reasons, a photo ID is mandatory to gain access to the premises of the German Mission.