

Kyoto Peacebuilding Center
Global Peacebuilding Association of Japan
ACUNS Tokyo Liaison Office

And

Stimson Center

Present

Mr. Richard Ponzio

Member of ACUNS Board of Directors

And

Director of the Global Governance, Justice & Security Program at Stimson Center
Washington, D.C.

On

The Summit of the Future

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Report compiled by Maciej Witek

Part I Keynote Presentation



Mr. Richard Ponzio

Member of ACUNS Board of Directors and Director of the Global Governance, Justice & Security Program at Stimson Center

Mr. Ponzio started his presentation by introducing two reports published by Stimson Center. In “Road to 2023, Our Common Agenda and the Pact for the Future” one of the core messages is that we must be under no illusions that countries are partners of civil society, who wish to make a change, and push the UN as far as it can go to face the critical challenges.

In terms of challenges we have to face in the next 2 years, there are very difficult differences we need to bridge: Russia with the invasion of Ukraine, and Brazil with president Bolsonaro. There is a group of stubborn, almost obstacle countries pitted against the European Union, the United States, Japan, and supporting G7 countries. Moreover, we need to decide whether to endorse the Summit of the Future 2024 outcome declaration by consensus or majority voting. “Rethinking Global Cooperation, Three New Frameworks for Collective Action in an Age of

Uncertainty” introduces three particular global policy frameworks, that in addition to the overarching outcome, the document will cause deep discussion on the new agenda for peace, the global digital compact, and finally declaration on future generations.

Mr. Ponzio presented 4 Key Global Threats – The Four C’s. First, Conflict Prevention and Management for Building Peace. 2020 Witnessed the highest number of conflicts since 1945, and Russia’s recent further invasion of Ukraine displaced some 5.6 million Ukrainians. Second, COVID-19, Representation, and Human Rights Promotion. The WHO estimates (May 2022) that 15 million deaths had occurred as a direct or indirect result of COVID-19 (68% of which occurred in just 10 countries). Third, Climate Action and Governing the Global Commons. With 2022 forecasted as the hottest year on record, the need for climate action and a green recovery from the pandemic has never been greater. Fourth, Collaborative Economy and Promoting Global Public Goods. The World Bank estimates that 97 million people have been pushed into extreme poverty over the past two years. Global unemployment now exceeds 200 million, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, putting 44 million at risk for hunger and starvation.

In regard to major goals in addressing global governance challenges, Mr. Ponzio recalled building on and further developing the Secretary General’s response to the UN75 Political Declaration, crafting innovations, harnessing ideas, networks, and capabilities of state and non-state actors to capitalize on the once-in-a-generation opportunity of a Summit of the Future in September 2024. He also brought up three conceptual innovations for 2023 and 2024:

1. New Social Contract: Extending beyond the classic people-state relationship, it provides an overarching vision for progressively realizing the economic, political, social, civil, and cultural rights of all people.
2. New Global Deal: This would operationalize the vision of a new social contract by encouraging global, regional, national, and community-level plans for green recovery from the pandemic and attendant policies and programs – both recalibrating and accelerating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. Networked and Inclusive Multilateralism: Secretary General Guterres appealed for a new kind of networked and inclusive multilateralism, drawing on the ideas and capacities of academic and scientific institutions, regions and cities, civil society, and the business community.

Mr. Ponzio also introduced Six Global Governance Innovations on the Road to 2024, in terms of challenges, reform proposals, and strategies.

1. G20+ Biennial Summit for the World Economy

The challenge is how to address the need for greater stability in our globalized economy, as well as a reduction in global inequality due, in part, to a lack of representation of vulnerable countries within the G20-centered global economy. Coordination of G20 members with the UN system, the world body’s 193 Member States, and International Financial Institutions should be enhanced and supported by a small, full-time UN-G20-IFIs secretariat, by convening a Biennial G20+ gathering during the UNGA High-Level Week to foster a more sustainable and balanced global economy. Members of the Alliance for Multilateralism within the G20 should act as a leader to convince powerful countries and LDCs of the benefits of expanded multilateral coordination in global economic governance.

2. Rethink the UNFCCC and COPS

Parties to the UNFCCC have failed to curtail global carbon dioxide emissions significantly in the thirty years since its creation. Parties to the UNFCCC and COPs should allow such decisions as the near-unanimous agreement at COP26 to phase out coal production to be adopted by a qualified majority without being thwarted by a holdout minority. Greater engagement by civil society advocacy groups and mayors is needed to ensure stricter multilateral climate agreement accountability. A new “Climate Governance Caucus” at the COPs should be established, to underscore environmental governance innovation priorities in the Pact for the Future and Declaration on the Future Generations.

3. Create a UN Peacebuilding Council

Gaps exist in how the UN Security Council provides for civilian protection, sustains peace, and reduces violent conflict recurrence. UN Peacebuilding Commission into an empowered Peacebuilding Council should be upgraded. This new body would lead to conflict prevention, peacebuilding policy development, coordination, and resource mobilization. Leverage stakeholder consultations should be held in 2022, for the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture and 2020 Peacebuilding Resolution. The proposed Peacebuilding Audit tool should be pilot-tested, deriving lessons from the HRC’s Universal Periodic Review.

4. Establish a UN Parliamentary Network

To address the UN’s democracy legitimacy deficits, a UNPN composed of individual members of national and regional parliaments should be established, to facilitate direct participation and input into UN Governance. To leverage stakeholder consultations, in 2022, for the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Advocates could create a “UNPN Group of Friends” consisting of Member States and CSOs in support of the UNPN. Support should come from related campaigns, including “We the Peoples’ for Inclusive Global Governance. Also, there is a need for establishing the UNPN as an advisory body under Article 22 of the UN Charter and initiating a strong relationship with Member States and UN organs.

5. Strengthening the HRC

Elections to the HRC pay limited attention to the quality of the human rights records of its members (undermining the body’s legitimacy). HRC elections should be open to greater scrutiny and adopt a code of conduct. Also, the enforcement of the HRC’s decisions should be enhanced by allowing it to refer cases to international human rights courts. There is a need to capitalize on the convergence of the 75th anniversary of the UDHR in 2023 and the subsequent 2024 Summit of the Future to push through long-overdue reforms and innovations for strengthening the UN's HR machinery.

6. International Anti-Corruption Court

A legal punitive response at the global level is missing for combatting corruption and illicit financial flows. A new International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC) should be an international institution of last resort, like the International Criminal Court, operating on the principle of complementarity. The IACC should have a chief prosecutor who could pursue alleged corruption offenses committed by sitting/former political figures. The 2024 Summit of the Future can help to rally support for this idea, endorsed by 40 former world leaders, and 30 Nobel laureates, and is now official Canadian, Ecuadorian, and Dutch foreign policy.

Part II Panel Discussion



Mr. Nishida Tsuneo

Former Senior Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to the United Nations

Mr. Nishida brought up a question he often asks his students. Are they disappointed with the UN and familiar organizations in the last couple of years? Unanimously students are saying that they are disappointed. The next question is what is their solution for the UN and diplomacy as a whole? Students are saying it is very clear – we need to reform the UN. We abolish international organizations because they are not productive and not functioning as expected. We are disappointed, especially about how to keep peace and stability, and how to prevent conflict. We need to be more engaged in how to promote multilateralism by changing the status quo and the stagnant situation in the UN systems. What the NGOs and organizations have done? Almost nothing. Despite all of the defects, and shortcomings, we have only one common sense, the most important message is to increase our efforts to address the challenges the UN is facing, not in terms of states, but individual people. For Mr. Tsuneo, two things are very clear. First is poverty. In the coming 2 years before the summit, we are not able to say that we eliminated poverty. Number 1 SDG was poverty, and number 2 hunger, was the most fundamental development goal, but we continued to struggle almost hopelessly. Second is the population, the number of people will be increasing but unproportionally. Movement from the south to the north never stops and creates difficulties on both sides. Time is limited, and resources to solve the problem are also limited. The Japanese government and major countries contributed to multilateralism and the payment gap, but it is still huge and widening. That should be addressed especially during the summit in 2024. The other problem is the number of tools for the UN, which is almost nothing. In the case of Ukraine, a lot more can be done, what we are doing now is still not enough.



Mr. Vesseling Popovski

Vice Dean and Professor, Center for the UN Studies, Jindal University, Dehli, India

Mr. Popovski stated that it is crucial to not only ask the question of why the UN did not deliver but also signal the solutions in several aspects. First, there is an overfocus on states, and less focus on civil society, the private sector, and individuals. If we analyze the suggestions that Mr. Ponzio made, all of those need a very large participation of the stakeholders, states alone are not enough. The climate negotiations proved that. The major problem is state focus. The actual work should come from civil society, youth, academics, universities, and the business sector. In the sectoral approach, we should not think about one target. Kofi Anan was talking about this back in 2005, urging solutions that are not made on

consensus. We can see it over time in climate, security, and human rights agendas. Mr. Popovski would like to see the General Assembly taking more action – with a 2/3 majority, they can do what the Security Council and other bodies operating on consensus cannot do. The role of the General Assembly should be reemphasized in every document to be issued before 2024. Luckily they did it on a couple of resolutions on Ukraine, which is a signal that in a crucial moment, the General Assembly can act. The next point Mr. Popovski made is that in terms of the New Agenda for Peace, the way we need to wait a little bit to see how the dynamics go. The General Assembly will qualify the majority only if we solve another big problem – Global North, Global South. In terms of multilateralism, we need a common voice between the north and the south. Unless we realize how important it is, to create a common voice, very little can be done.



Mr. Tadamichi Yamamoto
Former SRSR to Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA

Mr. Yamamoto admitted he is a little bit skeptical if the final report and summit will be a success, but it needs to be comprehensive to have an impact. We should focus on what is achievable. Ideas about the establishment of the Peacebuilding Council and anti-corruption courts are excellent, however, there has to be a strategy that should enable both of these to be functional and effective. Unless we can work out the proper way of progressing this idea and finding which countries should be involved and take lead, it will be very difficult. After the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, we have seen the dissatisfaction outcome. People know it is important, but also believe that they can do more. Why is the Peacebuilding Commission not effective? Unless we identify the reason, the creation of the Peacebuilding Council may see a similar problem.

Regarding the anti-corruption courts, the problem must be addressed, but Mr. Yamamoto has difficulty thinking that the UN will focus on anti-corruption. There has to be a very well-thought way of enabling UN missions in those countries that may be affected and getting all the information that might be used in the international court. Democracy and human rights are our common inspiration, but at the same time, the problem of peacebuilding is that it ignores the realities on the ground. It tends to establish governments based on liberal democracy, it is imposed on the people who have been living in a much different way of maintaining sustainable political stability in those countries. If we do not address the issue of discrepancy between the position of the idea of democracy, and what is the reality on the ground, we will not get very far.

Part III Open Discussion

The first topic raised during the open discussion was the balance between the time and effort we have to put into so many different areas to be reformed and innovated. Mr. Ponzio stated that there are two stages in the process, the first being realistic achievable goals for the next months or one year before the summit. Peacebuilding architectural changes, G20+, qualified

majority, that needs to be a big focus leading to the summit, to push the bigger ideas. And those like UN Security Council reform which requires charter amendment. We will be lucky coming out of the Summit of the future, that maybe there is an agreement.

In terms of enlarging the Permanent Members of the Security Council, Mr. Ponzio stated that it will enhance the effectiveness because it will put more pressure on the issue of the misuse of the veto, which paralyzes progress.

Speaking about improving multilateral institutional arrangement by expanding the multilateral stakeholders' involvement, Mr. Ponzio admitted that there is a very common point to focus on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs rather than coming up with something new for the future. However, the reality is that there are points that should have occurred at least in the 90s at the end of the cold war including Security Council reform. We need to talk about those issues ahead, to address them on time.

There is also an interesting issue between the Peacebuilding Council and the Security Council. In the end, it is in the charter – the international mandates of peace and security, the only binding and enforceable law is the Security Council. If the commission would like to take over parts of the charter on the trusteeship, it would not be given that level of authority. Division of labor on first versus second in order conflicts, beyond the radar, the peacekeeping missions, blue helmets, and boots on the ground would still have to be under the Security Council.

In terms of the enlargement of Permanent Members of the Security Council, and Japan as a potential candidate, it has been part of the US policy, that Africa and Latin America deserve permanent seats, but also more non-permanent seats. But the pressure could not be greater, because of the Ukraine crisis, it is one thing to build up a quick coalition, and another to sustain that support over months if not years to come. The US knows it is important to have allies, and allies want to have seats that will give opportunities for countries like Japan, Germany, and India to support politically, financially, and technically by being part of the UN.

Another issue raised during the discussion was the fact that sometimes governments do not represent the people. Probably there should be a People's General Assembly with the representation of academic, business, and civil society. Mr. Ponzio admitted that the involvement of civil society is crucial, moreover, there is a need for cooperation between like-minded states – that will allow smaller countries to be a part of the conversation. There is a need to put the world on the right trajectory. We can witness the rise of populism, groups democratically elected that are working for a completely different purpose, against multilateralism. Mr. Ponzio believes that effective regional organization is a basis for a stronger collective global governance system. To tie it to president Biden's call for Africa to be part of G20 now, we should take that debate into advocating for regional membership in the Security Council. It will take two, two half decades, but the 100 anniversary of the UN in 2045 is just around the corner, that should be a target date. We need to realize, especially western powers, the excesses of going outside of the charter, it happened on more than one occasion. At the same time, the G20 has shown that when it gets itself organized it can be effective around the climate agenda, responding to financial crises and pandemics. Taking that energy from G20 into the UN system is the genesis of the Biennial Summit on the World Economy idea, that is where things begin to happen. We are going to get legitimacy, representativeness, and follow-through from international organizations when the major powers play the key role. We should

use these institutions and not start building parallel systems because sometimes things do not move as quickly as we would like to see.

With the postponement of the Summit of the Future to 2024, we have additional time. The fundamental question is how much of an embrace is there by the 193 member states, cannot there be a few champion states? It is time that we roll out our sleeves, use this postponement effectively, and note that there are several very small UN mission staff, overwhelmed with the daily rhythm of the UN.

In the end, the moderator summarized that the discussion highlights the dichotomy of human nature. On one hand, we strive for idealism, but at the same time, there were a lot of views expressed to be realistic. The fact that we have now the Ukraine war reminds us that human nature, as long as we existed, has conflicts and wars. We have to address human nature and how we can accommodate it. We need to think about how the UN system should be reformed so that negative aspects of human nature can be contained.