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*Amika Bawa**



*Kartikeya Dwivedi***

The intention of the Forum is that it becomes a consistent effort and a vanguard of the world order, which is essentially global in nature.

Peace and economic prosperity, which are both a precursor to and a consequence of good governance, are imperative for a stable global development architecture. These ethos have been captured over time by a number of initiatives such as the *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2015* in consonance with the 18th SAARC Summit, the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security and the Basel Peace Forum. These spaces delved into the themes of simultaneous interactions between peace-creating prosperity and prosperity inducing peace, recently reflected on the stages of the Paris Peace Forum (PPF). PPF continued with the efforts of earlier processes to bring forth the role of multiple stakeholders in peace-building.

The Context

Held from 11 to 13 November, 2018, the PPF brought together global governance actors to discuss issues of transnational importance to achieve durable peace. Hosted by the French Government at La Grande Halle de La Villette, it gathered more than 6,000 visitors, 65 Heads of State and over ten international organisations. The centennial celebrations of the end of World War I and the first Paris Peace Conference preceeded the first edition of PPF, a three day forum that initiated discussions on sustainable peace, digital policies, human security and climate change within the overarching ambit of multilateralism. Convened under the idea that when collective cooperation and governance are under threat from rising tensions among countries and populist insurrections, PPF can strengthen and improve time-tested solutions like multilateral institutions, norms and standards. The various stakeholders included states, international organisations, local governments, NGOs and

* Editorial Assistant, DCR

** Intern, RIS

foundations, companies, experts, scholars, journalists, trade unions, religious groups and citizens.

The forum functioned in three spaces where 121 teams representing six geographical areas and including organisations that cut across continents showcased projects that aim to provide concrete solutions to international challenges. The *Space for Solutions* showcased governance projects in five “Villages”, namely, peace and security, environment, development, new technologies and inclusive economy; a *Space for Debates* where initiatives from the Villages as well as cross-cutting themes were discussed; and *Space for Innovation* which invites developers and programmers to devise digital solutions for identified challenges.

The Space for Solutions and Debates featured specific global governance projects like the Environmental Pact and International Solar Alliance with the objective of assessing their impact and formulating recommendations for development and implementation. The Space for Innovation hosted an event

during which computer programmers and professionals could collaborate, assisted by governance experts, on software projects that aim to address a specific challenge of global governance – this year, financial transparency.

Around fifteen projects from Africa, eighteen from Asia, thirty-eight from Europe, nine from Latin America, six from Middle East and twelve from North America were selected. The trans-continental projects included the World Justice Project on Data to Combat Torture, World Benchmarking Alliance by Index Initiative and the Network of Southern Think-Tanks (NeST).

Presence of NeST

The Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST) is based on the premise that good governance of development cooperation is an important and necessary pre-condition to ensure inclusive global peace. As a follow-up to the Conference of Southern Providers held in New Delhi in April 2013, NeST was set up on the side-lines of the first high-level meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in Mexico in April 2014. NeST has committed

World Leaders at the Paris Peace Forum



itself to 'generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South-South Cooperation (SSC) approaches to international development'. A collaborative initiative for the South and by the South, NeST is primarily a forum that provides policy inputs into the arena of SSC. NeST welcomes inputs from a diversity of Southern stakeholders, through the open engagement with governments, civil society organisations, private sector institutions and various Southern practitioners, to contribute towards creating an unified understanding and common framework for debates around SSC.

NeST engages in the theorising of SSC, the identification of operationally successful models of the SSC; and impact assessment and documentation of SSC. Members of NeST are convinced that a prominent space for SSC will go a long way in contributing significantly to the process of global development and in ensuring the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Being a platform populated by important think tanks from the South that work very closely in association with civil society organisations and policy makers, NeST is keen to contribute to improving the status of global governance through cutting edge policy research on development cooperation in general and SSC in particular with an aim to develop a governance framework for the same.

The motivation to participate in the PPF emerges from the values of SSC, characterised by solidarity within the Global South, which is a pre-requisite to inclusive development cooperation forming the basis for global governance and sustainable peace. Indeed, the institutionalization of global governance is in itself a form of development cooperation,

and globalization has increased the need and urgency of the provision of global goods necessary for the successful response to global problems and for meeting the SDGs. NeST and PPF being an embodiment of these efforts collectively form an appropriate partnership. At PPF, NeST was represented by former Indian ambassador to Paris and currently RIS Chairman, Dr. Mohan Kumar, leading the delegation with Mr. André de Mello e Souza, IPEA, Brazil, and Mr. Pranay Sinha, RIS.

Amb. (Dr.) Mohan Kumar, noted that PPF served as a meeting place for all international institutions sharing views on sustainable development and global governance. He emphasised how PPF was opened by Trisha B Shetty, an Indian lawyer, social activist and founder of the NGO 'SheSays' who called for peaceful leadership and international cooperation.

The remarkable potential of PPF, noted Dr. Kumar, was reflected in the meeting called the Dialogue of International Organisations on Global Governance and moderated by former Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta and comprising of Robert Azevedo, Director-General, World Trade Organization; Audrey Azoulay, Director-General, United Nations Organization for Education, Culture and Science; Angel Gurría, Secretary-General, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Jim Yong Kim, President, World Bank; Christine Lagarde, Managing-Director, International Monetary Fund; and Guy Ryder, Director-General, International Labor Organization. Concluding remarks were given by Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations and Emmanuel Macron, President of the

French Republic. The panel came to the conclusion that the central importance of multilateral institutions was under attack due to increasing unilateralism. But, more importantly and optimistically, despite such threats, effective multilateralism will prevail, as global challenges cannot be addressed by states acting alone or in small groups.

Future Direction

Looking forward, it is worth revisiting and comparing the context of the Paris peace conferences. The first conference following the end of First World War was to establish the terms of peace set by the victorious Allied Powers for the defeated central powers. The centennial and the PPF, in 2018, was organised at a time when international cooperation is considered to be in danger as challenges are rising on various fronts that require collective action. The conference of 1918 ended with the inaugural General Assembly of the League of Nations. However, the 2nd World War itself was testimony to the fact that these negotiations and the peace process collapsed. Set in this context, PPF demonstrates that there is still a momentum for multilateralism and a better organisation, both among states

from North and South, and civil society actors.

PPF questioned the trajectory of multilateralism and push towards effective working of governance institutions, highlighting the need for reforming the international architecture to reflect the contemporary structural realities of international affairs. PPF showcased a diversity of projects from the developing world which can interact with counterparts, creating rich discourses with valuable sharing of knowledge and experiences from the grass roots of change.

The relevance of PPF is that this summit will be known as the inception of the effort to underscore the commitment of the members towards multilateralism, trans-national cooperation and global governance. The intention of the Forum is to become a consistent effort and a vanguard of the world order, which is essentially global in nature. Actors of all kinds can approach this Forum and reflect the importance of the concepts of burden sharing, mutual-benefit and value creation through transparent dialogue.

As noted by President Macron, “peace is achieved through good governance and is not just the absence of war.”

NeST represented at the Paris Peace Forum

