

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 31 December 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of Viet Nam, the Security Council will hold a ministerial-level open debate on the subject “Upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security” on Thursday, 9 January 2020. The meeting will be chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Pham Binh Minh.

I attach herewith a concept note for the benefit of Member States wishing to participate in this open debate (see annex). I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Dang Dinh Quy**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 31 December 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the subject “Upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security”, to be held on 9 January 2020

Introduction

1. During its presidency of the Security Council in January 2020, Viet Nam intends to organize a ministerial-level open debate on the topic “Upholding the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security”. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Pham Binh Minh, is expected to chair the open debate. The Secretary-General and the Chair of the Elders, Mary Robinson, are expected to brief the Council. This will be followed by remarks by members of the Council and other States.

Background

2. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the peoples of the world came together in the collective endeavour to maintain international peace and security and eradicate the scourge of war for succeeding generations. In signing the Charter of the United Nations, the Member States aspired to establish a legal foundation for a new world order, based on international cooperation, with the United Nations at the centre of that multilateral system.

3. During the seven decades of its existence, the Charter of the United Nations has helped Member States to make significant achievements and progress in fostering peace, security and international cooperation. The Charter, particularly its purposes and principles, has become the foundation of international law. In banning the use of war as an instrument of State policies, the Charter affirms the primacy of conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes in international relations. The Charter has cultivated a culture of peace among Member States and contributed to saving the world from another world war. In this connection, the United Nations system has played a crucial role, side by side with each and every Member State, in bringing about such great achievements.

4. As global circumstances have been constantly changing, however, the Charter and the multilateral system established as a result have encountered severe tests. Conflicts continue to abound and crises are erupting across regions. The use of unilateral measures and power politics causes States increasingly serious concerns. The global arms control and non-proliferation regime has been faced with mounting challenges. New actors and underregulated fields of international life have been testing the entire body of international law and agreed principles derived from the Charter.

5. The Charter bestows upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, the Council has sometimes found it difficult to respond effectively and quickly to emerging crises with united strength. Against this background, as the Secretary-General has stated, it is essential that the Council not only reaffirm the ideals of collective action, but also explore and pursue an innovative approach and architecture capable of responding to new challenges, in order to fully uphold the responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

6. The commitment to uphold the Charter has been reaffirmed on multiple occasions by the members of the Security Council and other Member States. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations provides an opportunity to once again reiterate the firm commitment to the Charter and the embedded collective security system and also reflect on its approach to international peace and security, with a view to enhancing the responsiveness and effectiveness of the United Nations in responding to the dynamic and evolving threats facing humankind.

Objectives of the debate

(a) To reaffirm the irreplaceable importance of the Charter and reiterate the commitment of the international community to uphold the Charter to maintain international peace and security;

(b) To discuss ways and means for the Security Council, the United Nations system as a whole, regional and subregional organizations and Member States to further promote the upholding of the Charter to maintain international peace and security.

Indicative questions and issues for consideration

7. During the open debate, participants are invited to discuss the following questions and issues:

(a) The importance of upholding the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security;

(b) How the Security Council can discharge the crucial role of safeguarding and enhancing respect for the Charter;

(c) How Member States, the United Nations system, regional and subregional organizations and the Security Council can better employ the tools provided by the Charter. Participants may wish to consider, among other things, the need to raise public awareness of and increase training on Charter-related issues, as well as ways and means to deeply instil the culture of adherence to the Charter in policymaking processes, enhance dialogue on sharing best practices and lessons learned in upholding the Charter and improve collaboration between the Council and key actors, such as the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, regional organizations and other stakeholders, in order to promote adherence to the Charter.

Briefers

- The Secretary-General
- Mary Robinson, Chair of the Elders

8. Briefers are kindly reminded that their remarks should not exceed 15 minutes. Interventions by all other participants should not exceed 5 minutes.