In 2016 the UN Security Council and General Assembly passed dual resolutions (70/262 and 2282 respectively), in which member states expressed a strong commitment to building and sustaining peace. On April 24-25, 2018, the Office of the President of the General Assembly (OPGA) will host a High-Level Event to assess current efforts and opportunities to strengthen the UN’s work on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

While member states are the principal drivers of the sustaining peace agenda, the participation of local actors, a key aspect of the sustaining peace agenda, is vital to guaranteeing that a broader range of society is represented and heard. Sustaining peace also requires trust between a state and its people, which is possible through open dialogue and communication, along with strong accountability mechanisms. Peacebuilding at the local level often seeks to bridge the gap between communities and the state. It also encourages open discussion and nonviolent mobilization through which individuals can air grievances that could fester and turn into conflict and violence if left unaddressed. This can be done by either nonviolently challenging existing institutions that promulgate inequalities and tensions, or by creating alternative institutions that better serve the communities in question.

Nonviolent action or civil resistance is a powerful tool that is rooted in communities and relies on collective civic action of ordinary people to address institutional inequalities and build just, peaceful, and inclusive societies. In a study of 323 major violent and nonviolent campaigns from 1900-2006, researchers found that nonviolent campaigns were twice as successful at achieving their goals as armed insurgencies. Further, the most important variable in determining the success of these campaigns was the size and diversity of participation—or the level of inclusiveness of the campaign. Exclusivity drives conflict and violence; inclusivity drives peace. It is thus no surprise that the countries that experienced nonviolent "people power" are much less likely to return to civil war than those in which conflict was violent.¹

Peacebuilding and nonviolent movements share the same goal: To bolster the voices of local people using peaceful means to advocate for social, economic, and political change to build a more just and peaceful society. By exploring and facilitating collaboration between these two overlapping approaches, practitioners at the local, national, and international levels can strengthen their work to promote the sustaining peace agenda.

On April 12, 2018, the International Peace Institute (IPI), Peace Direct, and United States Institute for Peace (USIP) will host a side event to the High-Level Meeting that seeks to bring local voices in both the nonviolent action and peacebuilding fields to the United Nations context. This event will look at grassroots perspectives by discussing peace initiatives taking place on the ground in three countries. It seeks to deepen our understanding of the intersection between local peacebuilding and nonviolent action and how these tools

can be implemented to promote the sustaining peace agenda. This event will provide an added dimension to the conversations around peacebuilding and sustaining peace by bringing attention to the local level.

**Potential Facilitator:**

- Youssef Mahmoud, Senior Advisor, IPI

**Potential Speakers/Case Studies (will select 4):**

- Representative from Balai Citoyen, Burkina Faso (USIP)
- Sudan (Safeworld)
- Ala Queslati, Tunisia (IPI)
- Cristina Serna, current President of the ATCC in Colombia (Peace Direct)

**Potential Respondent:**

- PBSO