

UN chief Guterres announces steps towards reforming Organization's peace and security architecture

14 February 2017 – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today announced the establishment of an internal review team that will take forward the reforms to the UN Secretariat peace and security strategy, functioning and architecture, which he outlined when he was appointed the Secretary-General last year.

According to a statement issued today by the UN chief's office, the team will be led by Tamrat Samuel, an Eritrean national who held numerous senior UN appointments.

The review team has been tasked to submit recommendations to the Mr. Guterres by June this year, which will then initiate a process of consultations with UN Member States and other relevant entities.

In the statement, he further noted that pending those evolutions, the mandates of senior officials working in the peace and security pillar would be maintained for until 1 April next year.

"The mandates of Jeffrey Feltman, as Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, as Assistant-Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, and Atul Khare, as Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, will be extended for one year until the 1 April 2018," the statement read.

Jean-Pierre Lacroix, of France, takes helm of Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Also in the statement, Mr. Guterres announced his intention to appoint Jean-Pierre Lacroix, of France, as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for one year beginning 1 April. He is currently the Director for the UN and International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France and has over 25 years of political and diplomatic experience, mostly handling multilateral organizations, UN activities and programmes.

Mr. Lacroix succeeds Hervé Ladsous, who informed Mr. Guterres that he would be unavailable for an extension at the end of its current term, until end-March.

"I would like to express my gratitude [to Mr. Ladsous] for his service to the United Nations, his tireless efforts and dedication to peacekeeping, especially in modernizing capacities both to address multidimensional crisis and protect civilian populations," said Secretary-General Guterres.

[Jean Lambert MEP: EU moving forward on whistleblower safeguards, as UK moves backwards](#)



Green Party

14 February 2017

Jean Lambert MEP: “While the European Parliament is moving forward on whistleblower safeguards, the UK appears determined to move backwards”

The European Parliament has today (Tuesday, 14 February) [voted in favour](#) of a report calling for the protection of whistleblowers across the EU.

At the same time, the Conservative government is desperately attempting to defend its proposals to launch a ‘[full frontal attack](#)’ on whistleblowers in the UK.

Commenting after today’s vote, Jean Lambert, Green MEP for London and a member of the European Parliament’s Civil Liberties committee, said:

“At a time when Theresa May is failing to convincingly defend her government’s proposals for a damaging and chilling attack on whistleblowers, the European Parliament has once again called for the EU to implement new protections for whistleblowers across the EU.”

“Green MEPs have long been pushing for EU-wide legislation that would protect whistleblowers in all areas of EU competence. This way, citizens across Europe will be able to speak up about environmental crimes, human rights violations, and other wrongdoing without fear of reprisal.”

“While the European Parliament is moving forward on whistleblower safeguards, the UK appears determined to move backwards; undermining freedom of the press and the fundamental principles of democracy along the way.”

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UN food relief agency working with Sri Lanka to end hunger and malnutrition

14 February 2017 – Sri Lanka is making efforts to achieve zero hunger and zero undernutrition, having launched a national review of food security and nutrition with the United Nations emergency food relief agency.

The review fulfils “the country’s potential to feed its own people” said the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme (WFP), Ertharin Cousin, who participated in the official launch during a visit to Sri Lanka.

“This strategic review provides a framework for the partnerships across sectors that are vital to translate global aims into local actions,” Ms. Cousin said.

The Executive Director praised all the Government officials with whom she met – including President Maithripala Sirisena – saying that they are “clearly committed to developing sustainable food systems.”

In addition to Government officials, Ms. Cousin called for partnerships with the private sector, civil society, academia, non-governmental organizations and the UN system.

The launch is part of Sri Lanka’s effort to reach the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), which aims to end hunger, achieve improved food security and nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030.

During her visit, Ms. Cousin also travelled to Monaragala, one of the country’s poorest districts, to view WFP’s work to boost the resilience of vulnerable communities. She visited cash for work programmes involving organic home and community gardens and elephant fencing, designed to prevent the loss of lives homes and farms due to elephant-human conflict, which is likely to be exacerbated by the current drought.

According to the press release, WFP and the Government are planning to expand existing cash and food for work programmes to support farmers and rural communities who risk falling deeper into food insecurity because of the current drought, which means the upcoming Maha harvest could be the worst main agricultural harvest in decades.

Workers and investors need confidence that automotive industry will be robustly supported by Government – Long-Bailey

Rebecca

Long-Bailey, Labour's Shadow Business Secretary, commenting on reports that General Motors is in talks to sell its European arm Opel, which includes the UK's Vauxhall, said:

"In light of plans by General Motors to explore the option of selling Vauxhall and Opel, the Government should be pushing protection of our automotive sector right to the top of their agenda.

"Workers and investors need confidence that this industry will be robustly supported by Government for many years to come so that jobs are secure and investors are able to make long term decisions.

"I would also urge General Motors to work very closely with trade unions in progressing any deal to ensure that jobs are protected."

Ends

Press release: PM call with US President Trump: 14 February 2017

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Prime Minister Theresa May spoke with US President Trump.

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister spoke to President Trump this afternoon, as part of their regular engagement. They discussed a range of issues, including trade and security and also discussed the President's upcoming state visit to the UK. The Prime Minister said she looks forward to welcoming him later this year.