World Peace Forum (WPF):
A Vision for Peace through Trade, Technology, and Inclusive Development

Background and Policy Alignment

The World Peace Forum (WPF) is an ini5a5ve established under the OAG Founda5on as part of the ODT Ini5a5ve. It responds to escala5ng global conflicts and humanitarian crises by acknowledging that sustainable peace must address not only immediate disputes but also the deeper challenges of economic disparity, resource compe55on, and social exclusion.

Recent geopoli5cal events underscore the urgency of innova5ve peacebuilding strategies. In the Middle East, prolonged conflicts—such as the intensifica5on of the Israel-Hamas struggle and the resul5ng humanitarian crises in Gaza and Lebanon—demonstrate the severe impacts of unresolved disputes. Similarly, in the Horn of Africa, persistent civil strife in Sudan, resource-based tensions between na5ons like Ethiopia and Somalia, and mari5me disrup5ons in the Red Sea due to Houthi-led attacks vividly illustrate the vola5lity of these regions. These challenges clearly signal the cri5cal need for an ini5a5ve like the WPF.

To address these complex issues, the WPF employs a holis5c, mul5-dimensional strategy that integrates academic research, fair trade, economic development, regional diplomacy, and technology-driven solu5ons. This comprehensive approach is designed to tackle the root causes of conflict while crea5ng sustainable pathways to prosperity. The Forum is anchored in global frameworks, including the United Na5ons Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16: Peace, Jus5ce, and Strong Ins5tu5ons), the UN's Sustaining Peace Resolu5ons, as well as complementary ini5a5ves like the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the World Trade Organiza5on's Trade for Peace effort. By aligning its efforts with these robust interna5onal policies, the WPF aims to enhance and complement ongoing global endeavors in conflict preven5on and sustainable development.

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Vision and Mission

Vision: The World Peace Forum (WPF) envisions a world where conflict zones are transformed through equitable trade, sustainable development, and technology-driven solu5ons. This vision is founded on the belief that commerce, resource-sharing, and inclusive coopera5on can break cycles of violence and foster enduring peace and prosperity.

Mission: To realize this vision, the WPF is committed to convening global and regional stakeholders– including governments, diplomats, scholars, and investors–to design and implement ac5onable peacebuilding projects. Its mission is to leverage finance, trade, and dialogue to address the root drivers of conflict such as poverty, inequality, and resource scarcity while promo5ng local ownership and climate resilience. Concretely, the WPF will:

- **Middle East:** Facilitate the establishment of joint economic zones and innova5ve trade corridors– building on lessons from landmark agreements like the Abraham and Camp David Accords–to foster economic interdependence and contribute to conflict resolu5on.

- **Horn of Africa:** Promote cross-border trade frameworks and develop fair trade corridors that connect resource-rich, landlocked communi5es with global markets, thereby reducing compe55on over scarce resources.

- **Global Reach:** Support post-conflict recovery in regions such as Ukraine by rebuilding vital infrastructure and reintegra5ng these areas into global economic networks. Underpinning these efforts are core principles of **Local Ownership, Inclusivity, Innovation, and Actionable Diplomacy**. By transforming trade into a pathway to peace, the WPF aims to demonstrate that economic interdependence and sustainable development can serve as robust an5dotes to conflict.

Hong Kong – A Strategic Hub for Global Mediation

Situated at the crossroads of East and West, Hong Kong offers a unique combina5on of an established legal infrastructure, neutrality, and global connec5vity, making it an ideal venue for interna5onal dispute resolu5on. The WPF envisions Hong Kong as the premier hub for media5on and arbitra5on—leveraging ins5tu5ons like the Hong Kong Interna5onal Arbitra5on Centre (HKIAC) to provide impar5al, secure environments for resolving conflicts. To further enhance Hong Kong's strategic role, the WPF will implement several key ini5a5ves:

- **Digital Mediation Platform:** U5lizing secure, blockchain-based technology, this platform will facilitate virtual dialogues, ensuring that par5es in conflict zones—where travel is limited—have access to unbiased media5on services.

- **Regional Peace Summits:** Annual summits in Hong Kong will be organized to focus on specific geopoli5cal challenges, such as security issues in the Red Sea or economic coopera5on between Israel and Pales5ne. These summits are intended to bring together governments, industry leaders, civil society, and other stakeholders to forge prac5cal, collabora5ve solu5ons.

- **Mediator Training Programs:** In partnership with leading Hong Kong universi5es, the WPF will train a group of culturally aware mediators equipped with the skills needed to navigate complex, regional disputes in areas like the Middle East and Horn of Africa. By leveraging its legal, financial, and diploma5c strengths, Hong Kong con5nues to bolster its reputa5on as a neutral ground for global media5on. This approach not only solidifies Hong Kong's role in facilita5ng fair and transparent nego5a5on processes but also reinforces its broader mission of contribu5ng to interna5onal peace and stability.

Peace Research Labs: Pioneering Strategies for Conflict ResoluGon and Sustainable Development

To ensure that the World Peace Forum's ini5a5ves are both innova5ve and rigorously grounded in evidence, the Forum has established Peace Research Labs dedicated to interdisciplinary, conflict-specific research. These labs serve as the driving force behind pioneering strategies that leverage trade, technology, and policy to transform conflict zones into arenas of sustainable development and peace.

The research agenda encompasses several key themes:

- **Peace through Fair Trade:** The Labs will inves5gate how equitable trade prac5ces and ethical supply chains can mi5gate underlying economic grievances that oden lead to conflict. By examining case studies where fair trade has promoted reconcilia5on and designing tailored frameworks—such as conflict-free commodity cer5fica5ons and preferen5al trading arrangements for fragile economies—the research aims to convert commerce into a catalyst for peace.

- **Climate-Resilient Trade Frameworks:** Recognizing that climate change exacerbates resource scarcity and environmental stress, research will focus on developing trade models that are robust against climate-induced challenges. This includes exploring ini5a5ves like drought-resistant crop exports and water-sharing coopera5ves, par5cularly per5nent to regions such as the Horn of Africa where clima5c pressures oden spark disputes.

- **Commodity Markets and Conflict De-escalation:** Many conflicts are driven by compe55on over high-value resources. The Labs will delve into the nexus between commodity markets—covering oil, minerals, and agricultural products—and conflict dynamics. Through the development of blockchain-based tracking systems and transparent resource governance models, the research seeks to transform natural resources from triggers of violence into engines for community development and shared prosperity.

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- **Geospatial and AI-Driven Conflict Prevention:** This ini5a5ve harnesses cutting-edge geospa5al technology and ar5ficial intelligence to monitor and predict conflict dynamics in real 5me. Inspired by the United Na5ons' "One Map, One Humanity" ini5a5ve, the research aims to develop an integrated "One Map" platform that consolidates conflict data, humanitarian indicators, and development metrics. A cornerstone of this effort is the Geospa5al Situa5on Room in Hong Kong, which provides real-5me data to decision-makers and mediators, enabling them to monitor conflict hotspots, verify ceasefire compliance, and iden5fy emerging socio-economic stressors. By transla5ng satellite imagery and geospa5al data into ac5onable, predic5ve insights, the ini5a5ve supports evidence-based interven5ons and bolsters peace nego5a5ons.

- **Cybersecurity in Peace Processes:** As trade and dialogue increasingly move into digital spaces, ensuring the security of online media5on and digital marketplaces becomes impera5ve. Research in this area will focus on establishing robust cybersecurity protocols that protect trade infrastructure and prevent digital disrup5ons from undermining peace efforts in conflict-prone regions.

- **Lessons from Successful Peace Initiatives and the Humanitarian-Peace Nexus:** Drawing on best prac5ces from landmark agreements like the Abraham Accords and Camp David Accords, the Labs will study how economic incen5ves and neutral media5on have historically contributed to peace. In parallel, research will explore how to integrate immediate humanitarian aid with long-term stability measures, ensuring that short-term relief efforts reinforce broader peacebuilding objec5ves.

These research topics, while not exhaus5ve, underscore the World Peace Forum's commitment to adap5ng academic rigor to real-world challenges. By con5nuously refining its approach through evidence-based research, the Peace Research Labs aim to convert innova5ve ideas into scalable solu5ons that prevent conflict and promote sustainable development worldwide.

Governance Structure and Institutional Framework

The World Peace Forum (WPF) is governed under the OAG Founda5on, with a framework that is designed to uphold transparency, neutrality, and agility in all peace ini5a5ves.

- **Advisory Council:** The Advisory Council comprises high-level experts from diplomacy, academia, business, and civil society, recrui5ng people such as former statespersons, renowned economists, regional peace envoys, leaders from partner organiza5ons (e.g. the UN or African Union), representa5ves from conflict-affected regions (such as former AU mediators and Arab League envoys) as well as youth and women leaders. This diverse body provides strategic, culturally sensi5ve guidance to ensure that WPF's ini5a5ves remain globally relevant and inclusive.

- **Executive Secretariat:** Based in Hong Kong with satellite offices in Addis Ababa (serving the Horn of Africa) and Amman (serving the Middle East), the Execu5ve Secretariat manages daily opera5ons, coordinates research, organizes annual convenings, and deploys field missions. It adheres to the OAG Founda5on's policies to ensure transparency and accountability while facilita5ng effec5ve global coordina5on.

- **Thematic Working Groups**: WPF establishes dedicated thema5c working groups aligned with its core pillars–research, trade frameworks, diplomacy, and development projects. In addi5on, a separate Climate and Resource Security Group will be set up to specifically address environmental conflict drivers.

- **Legal and Ethical Framework:** A strengthened Ethical Review Board and dedicated legal team enforce strict adherence to interna5onal law and UN human rights standards. This framework rigorously vets all projects and partnerships to maintain neutrality in complex conflicts such as Israel-Pales5ne.

- **Financial Management:** Opera5ng within the OAG Founda5on's funding structure, WPF is financed through the Founda5on's endowment, philanthropic dona5ons, and partner contribu5ons. A Finance Committees oversees budge5ng and maintains a public dashboard tracking funding sources and expenditures, ensuring complete financial transparency and unbiased support. Addi5onally, borrowing from the World Economic Forum model, WPF may establish a partnership or membership scheme for companies and organiza5ons that wish to support its mission.

Implementation Roadmap

This five-year roadmap is designed to priori5ze rapid impact in high-conflict zones. This is

Year 1: Launch and Coalition-Building (2025–2026)

- Launch the WPF at a Hong Kong summit, with a focus on Red Sea security and Sudan's crisis.
- Secure MOUs with key partners, including the AU, Arab League, and UN Peacebuilding Commission.
- Establish the Geospa5al Situa5on Room and pilot AI-driven conflict mapping in Yemen.
- Deliverable: A "Middle East and Horn of Africa Peace Trade Strategy" whitepaper.

Year 2: Research and Regional Dialogues (2026–2027)

- Opera5onalize Peace Research Labs; publish reports on climate-resilient trade for Somalia and commodity governance for Sudan.
- Host a Horn of Africa Trade and Peace Dialogue in Addis Ababa, engaging Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea.
- Ini5ate backchannel Israel-Pales5ne talks in Hong Kong, exploring the crea5on of joint economic zones.
- Deliverable: A pilot "Peace Coffee" export program in Yemen.

Year 3: Pilot Projects and Mediation (2027–2028)

- Launch Ac5on Platforms, including a Red Sea Trade Corridor Platform for mari5me security and a Sudan Resource-Sharing Coopera5ve.
- Mediate a local ceasefire in Sudan 5ed to a gold revenue-sharing agreement.
- Deliverable: A func5oning trade coopera5ve established within a demilitarized zone.

Year 4: Scaling and Innovation (2028–2029)

- Scale successful pilots by replica5ng Yemen's trade model in Somalia.
- Introduce a "Peace Tech Accelerator" in Hong Kong to fund startups developing innova5ve conflict-resolu5on tools (e.g., AI for ceasefire monitoring).
- Deliverable: A regional trade pact in the Horn of Africa.

Year 5: Institutionalization and Global Impact (2029–2030)

- Establish permanent WPF regional hubs in Addis Ababa and Amman.
- Publish a "Global Peace through Trade Index" to measure impact.
- Secure WPF's recogni5on as a UN-affiliated peacebuilding platform.
- Deliverable: A comprehensive impact report documen5ng jobs created and conflicts mi5gated.

This phased approach secures early wins that build credibility while steadily advancing toward larger ambi5ons. By beginning with convening and research, moving through targeted dialogue and tangible pilot projects, and ul5mately scaling up efforts, the WPF systema5cally reduces the inherent risks in peace ini5a5ves and lays a solid founda5on for transforma5ve, long-term impact.

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Strategic Collaboration: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Peace

WPF's robust collabora5on strategy lies at the heart of its approach to forging sustainable peace. By partnering with interna5onal ins5tu5ons, regional bodies, development agencies, civil society, and the private sector, WPF leverages complementary strengths and aligns with broader peacebuilding efforts.

- **United Nations and Multilateral Bodies:** Deepen 5es with the United Na5ons and its agencies– including the UN Peacebuilding Commission, UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP (for climate-conflict linkages), and UNCTAD (for trade integra5on in fragile states). WPF will co-host interna5onal dialogues such as a Red Sea peace conference and contribute to global forums like the UN General Assembly or the Paris Peace Forum. This collabora5on ensures that WPF's ini5a5ves complement UN-led nego5a5ons while tapping into essen5al logis5cal and technical support

- **Regional Organizations:** Forge strong partnerships with regional en55es such as IGAD for Horn of Africa ini5a5ves and the GCC for Yemen-focused projects. WPF will engage influen5al mediators like Turkey and Qatar, and align with groups such as the African Union, Arab League, and Gulf Coopera5on Council. These partnerships provide local insight and poli5cal legi5macy, facilita5ng coordinated ini5a5ves on trade integra5on, infrastructure development, and collec5ve security to foster regional stability.

- **Development Agencies:** Collaborate with ins5tu5ons such as the African Development Bank, World Bank, and even align with ini5a5ves like China's Belt and Road for non-poli5cized infrastructure projects. This engagement ensures that investments in conflict regions support both sustainable development and peacebuilding–for example, financing cross-border trade infrastructure or joint resource-sharing agreements that cement peace deals.

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- **Civil Society and NGOs:** Partner with grassroots organiza5ons, women-led NGOs, youth networks, and academic ins5tu5ons to promote peace educa5on, trauma healing, and economic empowerment. By building networks such as a Consor5um of Peace Universi5es and engaging community organiza5ons with deep local trust, WPF ensures accountability and incorporates real-world social cohesion into its ini5a5ves.

- **Private Sector:** Engage key private sector stakeholders—including tech firms like IBM for geospa5al and AI solu5ons, shipping companies like Maersk for trade security, and chambers of commerce in conflict regions. Ini5a5ves such as a "Peace Commodity Exchange" will cer5fy conflict-free products (for example, "Peace Coffee" from Yemen), unlocking addi5onal resources and fostering innova5on through stakeholder capitalism.

Addressing Regional Challenges

Middle East: Neutral media5on is cri5cal for issues like the Israel-Hamas conflict and Iran's regional influence. WPF will focus on economic incen5ves—such as joint tech hubs in Gaza and the West Bank—and address disrup5ons in the Red Sea through mari5me security platforms involving Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Horn of Africa: In regions marked by Sudan's civil conflict and Ethiopia–Somalia trade tensions, WPF will priori5ze equitable resource-sharing solu5ons. Leveraging geospa5al data, the Forum will help map water and land agreements that foster regional stability.

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Red Sea and Gulf of Aden: With global trade at stake, safeguarding mari5me routes is essen5al. WPF will broker regional pacts—drawing on support from en55es such as the IMO and WTO—with partners including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Djibou5.

By ac5ng as both convener and catalyst, the World Peace Forum facilitates roundtables, maintains ac5ve communica5on channels, and ensures coordinated stakeholder efforts. This networked, mul5-level collabora5on harnesses diverse exper5se to create transforma5ve and sustainable peace through innova5ve strategies and ac5onable development.

Conclusion

Through its visionary yet pragma5c agenda, the World Peace Forum is set to translate global aspira5ons for peace into tangible strategies and ac5ons. By bridging economic opportunity with diploma5c dialogue—and by integrating climate resilience, cutting-edge technology, and regional exper5se—the WPF offers a transforma5ve model for conflict resolu5on. In the Middle East and Horn of Africa, it will demonstrate that inclusive trade, equitable development, and neutral media5on can turn conflict zones into beacons of stability and prosperity. Drawing inspira5on from successful mul5-stakeholder ini5a5ves and leveraging strategic advantages such as Hong Kong's neutrality, the WPF is set to prove that world peace is attainable when global stakeholders invest in it together, both strategically and inclusively.