

The Deputy Secretary-General: I thank the Security Council and the Egyptian presidency for this timely reflection on the contribution of United Nations peacekeeping operations to global efforts to sustain peace.

The nature of today's challenges requires us to connect all our efforts for peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. Member States have explicitly acknowledged this interlinkage, most recently in the twin resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture (Security Council 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262).

The universality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its pledge to leave no one behind has put sustainable development at the core of the sustaining peace agenda. Sustainable development cannot be achieved in the absence of the conditions for peace, and implementing all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will make an enormous contribution to the sustaining peace agenda. The links between both agendas are found not only in Goal 16, on strong institutions and inclusive societies, but across all 17 Goals. Sustaining peace, understood as a process and a goal to build a common vision of a society, underlines the comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred approach of the 2030 Agenda.

Implementing the sustaining peace agenda requires an inclusive strategy that supports the diverse range of our missions and takes account of the entire peace continuum, from prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping to peacebuilding and long-term development. The resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture outline the importance of strong coordination, coherence and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations. The Council has a vital role to play.

Peacekeeping operations need clear, realistic and up-to-date mandates with well-identified priorities, adequate sequencing and the flexibility to evolve over time. Coherence, complementarity and collaboration between the United Nations peace and security efforts and its development and humanitarian work are also essential to preventing conflict and mitigating risks, fostering more sustainable outcomes and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Looking ahead, we must work together to ensure that peacekeeping lives up to its full potential as an essential tool for sustaining peace — not in isolation but as part of our new, integrated approach. Peacekeeping missions operate with strong links with the United Nations development system and the humanitarian community to facilitate a more integrated approach to peacebuilding initiatives, exit strategies and transition plans, as we have seen in the cases of Liberia and Haiti.

Sustaining peace is an inherently inclusive political process that spans development activities, preventive measures, mediation, conflict management and conflict resolution. Implementing the sustaining peace agenda means putting Member States and their populations in the lead, prioritizing political solutions, making prevention the priority, and leveraging the United Nations three pillars — human rights, peace and security, and development — in a mutually reinforcing way.

The Secretary-General's vision of prevention goes beyond averting crisis and violent conflict and takes account of the changing nature of crises in today's unpredictable world. It requires a broad, whole-of United Nations approach, as well as greater synergies for more effective delivery and impact. We need to enhance our support by drawing on the United Nations early warning capacity, mediation, preventive diplomacy and programmes and activities in the field.

In line with this vision, the Secretary-General has committed to a surge in diplomacy for peace, in partnership with a wide range of actors. Prevention measures and peace processes must be driven by national leadership and inclusive ownership that recognize the needs and contributions of all segments of society, especially women and young people as our agents of development and peace.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community acknowledged the role of young men and women as critical agents of change. They will find in the SDGs a platform to channel their capacities for peace into the creation of a better world. The future of humankind lies in their hands, and they will pass the torch to future generations. Empowering them and building a sustainable future requires stronger institutions and better governance. That is why we must invest more in development and mobilize our efforts towards fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies that are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development, and there can be neither without human rights.

In order to achieve sustaining peace and sustainable development we need to engage in strong collective action and enhanced collaboration and partnerships, including with the business community, financial institutions, civil society, and regional and subregional organizations. We need to deepen ties with regional and subregional partners, the World Bank, which is drastically increasing its involvement in conflict-affected countries, and the International Monetary Fund, which is seeking to reduce the destabilizing influence of corruption so as to ensure better investment in peace.

At the African Union summit in July, I committed the Organization to strengthening our partnership on political issues and peace operations, with stronger mutual support and continued capacity-building through the joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. The Peacebuilding Commission occupies a unique role in bringing all those partners together. I invite the Security Council to engage more actively with the Commission. Those partnerships must also be based on solid and predictable funding, including for prevention, in line with the sustaining peace agenda. I hope a united Council will consider supporting missions backed by a Council resolution and implemented by our partners, either with assessed contributions or by promoting other predictable financing mechanisms.

Let me now turn to the subject of reform. We need to improve how we review peacekeeping operations, in consultation with our development and humanitarian partners, and to ensure a strong human rights and gender focus. Women are the first to bear the brunt of conflict and endure the post-conflict transition, they are also expected to lay a foundation for peace. In all fields of peacekeeping, women peacekeepers have proven that they can perform the same roles to the same standards and under the same difficult conditions as their male counterparts. It is an operational imperative that we recruit and retain female peacekeepers and police. Not only because gender parity is essential for its own sake, but because the involvement of women increases the chances of sustained peace and reduces incidences of sexual abuse and exploitation.

We must work together across our silos and address the humanitarian/development/peace nexus, as well as the root causes of violence and conflict. Sustaining peace can be achieved only through a broader vision of prevention. Humanitarian and development actors need to work together to bridge the gap between relief efforts and development aid, and enable Governments and communities to build and strengthen their capacities for resilience, disaster risk reduction and mitigation, and conflict prevention, in particular in developing countries.

It is our duty to support the people of the world and provide them with effective and timely humanitarian assistance and development programmes simultaneously, through a coherent whole-of-system approach. Guided by the Secretary-General's ambition to overcome fragmentation and make prevention the priority of the United Nations, we have taken important steps to outline a comprehensive and bold agenda so as to improve how the United Nations delivers to the people it serves. It is crucial to recognize that development is an end in itself and a central part of our work.

The Secretary-General's repositioning of the United Nations development system and the reform of the peacebuilding architecture reflect the instrumental role of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a road map for sustainable development and sustaining peace. The Sustainable Development Goals are key tools for preventing crises and achieving sustained peace. The reform of the United Nations system has been designed to reinforce the interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace agenda, as outlined in the presentation on the Secretary General's report on the United Nations development system (E/20183) to the Economic and Social Council in July. Among other steps, the Secretary-General's recommendation calls for strengthening the leadership of Resident Coordinators and establishing a direct line from them to the Secretary-General, thereby ensuring more responsive accountability, coordination and efficiency on issues that are related to prevention, sustaining development and sustaining peace.

In order to effectively implement such reforms and sustain peace we must build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. Each mission and peacekeeping operation must be considered in its unique political and development context. In many ways, one of peacekeeping's most important contributions to peace is the preparation for a smooth and effective peacekeeping mission drawdown and hand-over to the United Nations Country Team.

We have recently seen successful examples of that process in Côte d'Ivoire and soon in Liberia. In Haiti and Darfur, community-violence reduction programmes are impeding the recruitment of at-risk youth by armed criminal groups, thereby contributing to stability and social cohesion. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali mainstreams the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security-sector reform processes. In order to deepen those successes we must work together for gender parity, particularly in missions that are moving from military to police and civilian components. For example, we must use the window of opportunity that is emerging from the drawdown of the military component of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti to engage more women in police and civilian operations.

Peace processes are rarely short or straightforward. The complexity of current conflicts requires a multidimensional approach that prioritizes a range of initiatives. They include providing crucial protection for civilians under threat and strengthening institutions, as well as the rule of law, so as to bolster respect for human rights at all levels. They require the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups, and they entail a focus on justice and reconciliation, proven credible elections and the extension of legitimate and accountable State authority.

For many people suffering in conflict-affected countries United Nations peacekeeping missions are a rare source of hope for the return of peace. Their success is a source of great pride for us all. I would like to pay tribute to the brave men and women of United Nations peacekeeping missions, whether civilian, military or police, and take the opportunity to encourage more women

to join our missions. I would particularly like to honour the sacrifices of those who have lost their lives while providing an indispensable service.

In order to ensure that we are on the right peacebuilding track, we must get the politics right. Peacekeeping operations are political instruments that ideally accompany a locally-owned peace process. To that end, missions provide good offices and work closely with the various parties and communities to achieve and implement peace agreements. In considering all those areas, a broader and more sustained level of engagement by members of a united and strong Security Council, individually or collectively, is essential in order to ensure that member States, the United Nations system and all our partners are aligned behind a common purpose and a common vision for action that integrates all pillars of the United Nations and brings all its activities together in a truly integrated fashion.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace resolutions, we have mapped the road to a safer, more resilient and sustainable world. The challenge now is how to ensure that the journey is successful and that its gains are truly irreversible. I look forward to the support of the Security Council in orienting efforts and resources towards our ultimate goal of achieving sustainable development and sustaining peace.