

# Addressing systemic inequality and exclusion is critical for building sustainable peace

Thank you Mr. President – President Obrador – for bringing this discussion to this Council. And thank the Secretary-General and Ms Tiban Guala for the briefing.

Systemic inequality and exclusion are often significant drivers of insecurity and protracted internal conflicts. Addressing these is critical for building sustainable peace.

The crisis in Ethiopia will only be resolved through an inclusive dialogue. True stability in Afghanistan will only be possible with the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and girls.

As the Secretary-General has said, development is the best form of prevention. But development done poorly is not the key to unlocking all problems. To be effective and sustainable it needs simultaneously to address root causes of conflict – including social, economic, and political exclusions.

Inclusive governance through democratic elections is critical in allowing societies to manage challenges peacefully. Human rights play a key role in creating resilient societies. Human rights violations alert us to rising conflict and atrocity risks.

Mr President, I will make three brief particularly relevant to this Council:

First, we can do more to promote coherent international assistance that better protects and reinforces peace, development and human rights gains. Peace needs to be nationally-owned and nurtured. States have a responsibility under the UN Charter to meet their commitments and demonstrate the political will to resolve threats to peace. But the Council can work more actively to break down the silos that impede prevention efforts. This means advocating for more coordinated and conflict-sensitive UN assistance and supporting better analysis and early warning so that risks can be addressed before this Council is compelled to take action. The United Kingdom supports the flexible deployment of tools available to the UN to assist countries with nationally driven solutions to their peacebuilding challenges, including the use of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Second, Mr President in Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions, the Council should ensure that UN Peace Operations have a more holistic understanding of the drivers of conflict, and that they better coordinate with local, national, regional and international peacebuilding actors. The voices of civil society can lend critical insights for the Council's consideration, as demonstrated by Ms Tiban Guala's testimony today.

Third and lastly, Mr President, when conflicts escalate, this Council should not side-step its responsibility. When inequality and exclusion transform into atrocities that breach agreed international norms and threaten international peace and security, we have an obligation to act and prevent further humanitarian crises.

Mr President, it is in all our interests that countries and their people are empowered to foster equitable, inclusive and open societies. Thank you.