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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the latter's electronic mail dated 28 May 2020 inviting the Member States to submit their written statements for a consultation on institution building and system-wide engagement for peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

In this regard, the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand has further the honour to inform the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations that the Royal Thai Government recognizes the importance of the 2020 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. The outreach to the Member States on this matter is therefore most appreciated.

Please find enclosed herewith "Thailand's views on institution building and system-wide engagement for peacebuilding and sustaining peace", which Thailand hopes will contribute to the above-mentioned review process.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand
to the United Nations, New York.

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Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations,
NEW YORK.

Thailand's views on institution building and system-wide engagement for peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Thailand is of the view that sustaining peace can only be achieved by all parties taking coherent and comprehensive approaches throughout the process, from conflict prevention, peacekeeping operation, peacebuilding process to post-conflict management. Achieving the goal of sustaining peace is therefore a long-term process requiring a comprehensive approach that covers the periods before, during and after the conflict. Thus, sustaining peace is both an enabler and an outcome of sustainable development. Inevitably, the system-wide engagement and partnership are key to strengthen conflict-affected societies and areas with situations of transition.

We also believe that sustainable development can thwart conflict, address its root causes and prepare the conflict-affected areas towards a path of sustaining peace. Similarly, effective, accountable, inclusive, and responsive public sector institutions are the essential tool for stakeholders to efficiently implement these approaches to achieve sustainable outcomes.

As we continue our efforts to strengthen national and local institutional capacities in conflict-affected areas, the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown a curveball to our peacebuilding efforts. Hence, there is no better time than now to enhance institutional strengthening and system-wide engagement initiatives to mitigate socio-economic impacts from the pandemic. Therefore, Thailand would like to express our support for peacebuilding works that promote UN operational and policy coherence, create partnership across all sectors, and embrace sustainable development approaches.

First, in Conflict Prevention, the UN's role and presence at the national level is crucial. It is imperative that the UNRC works with the host country in supporting the latter's efforts to ensure sustainable development, which is a prerequisite for sustaining peace and conflict prevention in the country.

Thailand sees a strong linkage between Peace and Security reform, Peacebuilding Architecture review and the reform of the UN Development System. The current repositioning of the UNDS to deliver the 2030 Agenda not only enhances the development-peace nexus, but also contributes to conflict prevention and sustaining peace. The new UNRC system enhances the capacity of the UNRC to lead the UNCT, with clear division of labour between agencies, funds, and programmes. A stronger and more coherent UNCT would be expected to act more efficiently in supporting countries to accelerate SDGs implementation, thereby leading communities to become more sustainable and resilient, which will contribute to a more peaceful society.

Second, in Peacekeeping Operations, it is of utmost importance for United Nations Peacekeeping Forces to continue to enhance operational and policy coherence. Both the policy level and the operations team on the ground must work in an integrated manner. In peacekeeping operations, relevant agencies have to address the interlinked and often persistent drivers of conflict: discrimination, violations of human rights, exclusion, inequality, poverty, climate change and the movement of people.

Peace and security cannot be seen in isolation but are intricately connected to socio-economic factors. Without addressing the root cause of conflict through development and

equal participation, peace and security cannot be sustained. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustaining Peace resolutions offer the frameworks for long-term approaches to building societal resilience and tackling root causes of conflict. We must move away from the sequential approach to conflict that often results in silos of conflict prevention, humanitarian action, human rights, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, rule of law, and development, including the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and accept them as universally integrated if sustained peace is to be achieved.

For our part, Thailand peacekeepers deployed in the UN peacekeeping missions have conducted “early-peacebuilder” tasks in addition to their assignment. The Thai Horizontal Military Engineering Company (HMEC), currently deployed as part of the United Nations Missions in South Sudan (UNMISS), has worked to establish the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) learning center to exhibit Thailand’s best practices and to exchange such development approach with the locals. The initiatives serve as a tool to foster post-conflict peacebuilding, prevention of relapse into armed conflict and progress towards sustaining peace, which complement the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). This approach has also been introduced by Thai peacekeepers in the previous UN peacekeeping missions in Timor-Leste and Darfur.

Moreover, Thailand is a country where women have long played a role in peace, security and development. Thailand currently deploys 14 female peacekeepers in three peacekeeping operations (UNAMID, UNMOGIP and UNMISS). Thailand fully commits to UNSC resolution 1325 (2000) and makes every efforts to expand the role and contribution of women in the UN peace keeping operations, From our first-hand experiences, these female officers can leverage on their capacity to reach out to local vulnerable groups, especially women and children, in order to build trust and improve civilian protection, especially to those belong to the vulnerable groups.

Third, during the Peacebuilding Process and Post-Conflict Development, all stakeholders should make efforts to encourage overall constructive changes, including economic development, social justice, reconciliation, empowerment of disadvantaged groups and humanitarian support. Thailand believes that peacebuilding and sustaining peace should be integrated through all pillars of the United Nations’ engagement at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions. It should be universally understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of sustained peace, which has always been the core principle of Thailand’s endeavor to promote international peace and security. In this connection, the UNRC, again, can play a productive role in enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation, both within and outside the UN system. Particularly, Thailand is of the view that Human Rights Council and United Nations Economic and Social Council can play a crucial role and contribute in a meaningful manner to peacebuilding efforts.

Civil society, including women and youth, are often important peacebuilding agents, playing a key role in conflict-affected societies, promoting confidence and trust as well as encouraging cooperation among communities. Their perspectives should be included in analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of approaches and activities needed for preventing the outbreak, escalation, or recurrence of conflict. Such institutionalized engagement will support and strengthen the capacities of governments and all other national stakeholders, as well as intergovernmental bodies to sustain peacebuilding activities in the long-term.

Furthermore, international technical cooperation is an effective instrument to promote sustaining peace, offering opportunities for post-conflict societies to learn from best practices and proven experiences. To support this notion, Thailand has consistently promoted the “Sufficiency Economy Philosophy”, or “SEP”, as a home-grown, people-centered development pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This has been conducted through the SEP for SDGs Partnership, which aims to share Thailand’s experience, knowledge, and technology in applying SEP to further sustainable development in over 20 countries through South-South Cooperation. As part of the initiative, 15 SEP Learning Centers and 28 SEP Model Communities have been set up throughout Southeast Asia and Africa to share Thailand’s best practice and lessons learned in community development to achieve sustainable development. Crucially, this partnership has been regularly promoted at various intergovernmental and regional fora, such as the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), and the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD).

Finally, successful implementation of peacebuilding and sustaining peace must be reinforced by strong multilateral platform and long-term and flexible funding. Thailand believes that all stakeholders should effectively utilize multilateral platforms, including but not limited to, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), to ensure cross-learning and collective action on progress and challenges in the development and implementation of measures to advance peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Thailand stands ready to take part in the PBC and engage in discussion on peacebuilding efforts and other related issues across the peace continuum.

Securing sustained and predictable resources, particularly for the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), is one of the biggest challenges for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, especially in the fragile contexts or during times of crisis, such as the ongoing global health pandemic. Thailand believes that all stakeholders should take necessary steps to explore innovative proposals to diversify the breadth of funding opportunities and modalities available for the implementation of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We also believe that United Nations funds and programmes and the donor community should make a consolidated effort to sustain and increase their financial contributions to existing funding modalities that support peacebuilding programming and organizations, including the Peacebuilding Fund.

Thailand also takes this opportunity to call on all Member States to support the agenda by fulfilling mandated financial contributions to ensure financing predictability for the whole system of the United Nations and avoid painstaking budget cuts on one agenda to finance another.

Way Forward

To ensure that the review of the peacebuilding architecture will lead to full deliberation, we must continue to strengthen our focus to overcome existing and deeply rooted fragmentation. This also requires a change in the working methods and culture of the United Nations and its membership, as well as the broader peacebuilding community of practice. Thailand therefore believes that the Commission’s final report should contain a clear proposal on the follow-up process.

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