

Statement by

Mr. Tim Mawe

Deputy Permanent Representative

at the

Open Debate of the Security Council

“Inclusive development for the maintenance of international peace and security”

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Madam President,

Ireland commends you for your initiative in scheduling today's debate and we welcome the adoption of the Presidential Statement. We thank the Secretary-General, Ambassador Patriota of Brazil and Nobel Laureate Ms. Leymah Gbowee for their insightful briefings on this topic. Ireland associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and the Human Security Network.

Madam President,

The UN Charter defines in its preamble that the purpose of this organisation is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". With the UN and its humanitarian partners responding to four severe, large-scale humanitarian crises - in Iraq, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Syria – all of them the result of conflict - and with the highest number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons since the end of the Second World War, the most charitable verdict is that our record in this respect has been mixed.

While each of these conflicts have unique features, reflecting the diversity and complexity of each country, there is one common feature - each has, at its core, tensions which are as a result of sectarian, ethnic, socio-economic or ideological differences. Time and again we see how conflict erupts where people are excluded, marginalised and denied meaningful participation in the political, economic and social life of their countries. We need a better approach to counter this.

With the adoption in August 2014 of Security Council resolution 2171 this Council recognised the interconnectedness of the three pillars of the UN system and the need to comprehensively address the underlying causes of conflict.

In taking this forward, there are of course limitations on the level of engagement that is possible by the Security Council and the degree of welcome there would be by member states. However the Council has a clear responsibility to prevent situations from developing into full-blown crises and must do more to enhance its preventive capacities.

Madam President,

Let me touch upon three key aspects which are central to the theme of today's debate.

First, institution-building. The links between political settlements and having strong and trusted state institutions in ensuring lasting peace is well understood. We know that 90 per cent of all civil wars in the past 15 years occurred in countries that had also experienced a civil war in the previous 30 years. The crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan are painful reminders of the fragility of peace and the need to promote effective transitions from conflict and fragility towards peaceful and resilient states and societies.

Ensuring strong institutions requires national ownership, leadership and political will. On the island of Ireland we have experienced this at first hand. In 1998, a comprehensive political framework for the settlement of the Northern Ireland situation, the so-called Good Friday Agreement, was agreed in a negotiation process which involved not just the Irish and British Governments but the political representatives of all of Northern Ireland's communities. This was a watershed moment in that it set out a roadmap for new political institutions and structures based on an approach of inclusion and trust. The example of South Africa where the political opening in 1994 created an enabling environment for a new national identity to take shape is also noteworthy.

The establishment of a new and comprehensive post-2015 development framework is also of vital importance. Including goals and targets on peace in the framework presents an opportunity to enable peaceful and inclusive societies to be built and to address the dynamics of conflict, violence, exclusion, and instability.

The second aspect is inclusivity and the critical role which women play in these efforts is another crucial aspect for sustaining peace. As the former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, put it:

*“Women’s participation in the prevention and resolution of conflict is critical to building sustainable peace because no society can develop –economically, politically or socially – when half of its population is marginalised”.*

Women are often powerful and capable actors in their communities and the knowledge, information and insight provided by women's groups can be valuable in detecting and understanding tensions. We welcome the increasing attention to supporting women's participation and leadership in peace-related, political, development and economic decision-making at the international level but we must do more to create opportunities, particularly for women and other marginalised groups at regional, national and local levels.

In order to set out a transformative Women, Peace and Security agenda for the years ahead, we must fully grasp the opportunities which the High Level Review and the Global Study on UN Security Council resolution 1325 present. Last Wednesday, Ireland launched its second National Action Plan on resolution 1325. It aims to strengthen women's leadership and participation in decision-making in conflict and post-conflict situations and it aims to ensure a gender perspective is incorporated into all aspects of Ireland's foreign policy engagement through a whole-of-government approach.

Madam President,

The third aspect which I want to highlight today is the correlation between severe human rights violations and threats to international peace and security. The Secretary-General's "Human Rights up Front" Action Plan portrays with great clarity what is at stake in situations of massive violations of human rights. With its key mechanisms, the Regional Quarterly Review and the Senior Action Group now established, we encourage the UN system to build on these efforts in ensuring swift and timely responses to early warning signs of conflict.

Madam President,

As has already been said many times today, 2015 is a crucial year for the UN system. In shaping a more effective and impactful UN, we must seize the opportunities which the post-2015 development framework, the review of UN Peace Operations, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture and the High Level Review of UN Security Council resolution 1325 present us.

Ireland joins many others here today in calling for positive synergies with these initiatives and looks forward to actively contributing to them.

Thank you.