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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement**

**by**

**His Excellency Dr. Suriya Chindawongse**

**Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand**

**to the United Nations**

**at the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on**

**Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace:**

**“Investment in people to enhance resilience against complex challenges”**

**New York, 26 January 2023**

Mr. President.

1. People are everything. They are the ultimate beneficiaries of our initiatives, the main *raison d'être* of our policies. It is people, their welfare and their future which are one of the reasons why we have the United Nations.

2. So that is why I wish to thank Your Excellency and Japan for putting the focus back on people again, here in the Security Council, with this Open Debate on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: "Investing in people to enhance resilience against complex challenges". Congratulations to Japan for its able leadership of the Council this month. And thank you to DSG Amina Mohammed, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the briefers for the valuable insights and suggestions.

Mr. President,

3. At a time when the global community continues to face multiple challenges with wide ranging and detrimental impacts on people's welfare, livelihoods and lives everywhere, it is important to give prominence to holistic, people-centred approaches in tackling such challenges.

4. Because such an approach underscores the interlinkages and reinforces the complementarities between three important goals: sustained peace, sustainable development and human security.

5. So as we seek to invest effectively in **putting people first** to strengthen the resilience of States and communities in facing humanity's complex challenges, there are four points to consider.

6. First, at the strategic level, addressing the root causes of conflict and violence invariably comes down to tackling issues affecting people, whether they be poverty, social strife or unmanaged political discord and dispute.

7. It is therefore important to promote policies that matter to people: closing income gaps, promoting Universal Health Coverage, implementing the SDGs, all things that matter to people. Because all these efforts at promoting human security and sustainable development, help increase the chances for peacebuilding and sustained peace.

8. And that is why, in the ongoing efforts to develop a New Agenda for Peace, concepts of human security, including the next generation of human security issues developed by the UNDP last year, should be incorporated. It is also important for efforts to rescue the SDGs to be factored in.

9. Second, at the tactical level, it is important to recognize and address quickly and effectively, pressing humanitarian concerns and alleviate human suffering immediately.

10. Because without overcoming this immediate, urgent challenge, it is almost impossible to generate sustained support from stakeholders, both within the affected country and from outside, for sustained peacebuilding efforts with the ultimate goal of sustainable peace. Respect for international humanitarian law should guide our humanitarian assistance efforts, which should itself not be subject to politicization.

11. Third, at the operational level, those engaged in peacekeeping should try to seek ways to perform the role of early peacebuilders. This may include working with host countries and local communities in the areas of local development, in accordance with their specific needs.

12. For example, in South Sudan, Thai peacekeepers in UNMISS established a Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Learning Centre in their camps to share Thailand's homegrown development approach on agriculture, on water and on land management with local communities in their areas of operations, so that their livelihoods could be improved.

13. And lastly fourth, at the local level, it is essential to ensure that national institutions are strong and effective, catering to the needs of people and national priorities. Putting people front and centre in policy-making will have long-term dividends: it strengthens the social contract between governments and various stakeholders in society, and it enhances a society's immunities to strife, thus giving sustainable peace a better chance.

14. To conclude: there will be other factors of course, from complex geo-political considerations to balancing interests amongst different stakeholders to unique socio-economic circumstances and political history of any conflict or conflict-prone area. These have a bearing on peacebuilding and efforts at sustaining peace.

15. But a people-centred approach to supporting peacebuilding and sustaining peace is certainly an important complementing tool to help address the complex challenges that are likely to persist in areas of conflict. It is our hope that the Council will attach importance to such an approach in its deliberations.

16. People-centred approaches matter, because people matter.

17. Thank you.

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