

**Written statement submitted by Pakistan for the  
United Nations Security Council Open Debate on:  
“Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Diversity,  
state building and the search for peace**

(12 October 2021)

**Mr. President,**

I extend my special thanks to you for convening today’s open debate on an innovative topic which has considerable relevance for international peace, stability and development.

2. Ethnic, cultural and religious diversity within States is an expanding reality. The desire of some to build homogenous societies has become unrealistic with the rise of globalization, migration and multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. Despite these new trends, or perhaps because of them, the moves to build pluralistic societies has encountered serious setbacks in recent years. The rise to power of right-wing and neo-fascist groups through electoral processes in certain countries is a disturbing phenomenon if one recalls the history of the last century.

3. In South Asia, we witness the rule by a populist, supremacist government, elected on the basis of an agenda of religious exclusivity and hatred for other religious and caste communities. It brands the Muslim minority and certain “castes” as racially inferior and even as “untouchables”. This is contrary to every principle of equality and human rights. The campaign to extinguish the freedom sought by the Muslim majority in occupied Jammu and Kashmir is ominously termed as the “Final Solution”.

4. Alarming, these extremist ideologies also seek to destabilize neighboring countries through a concerted campaign of disinformation and fake news as a weapon of foreign policy. The international community must recognize the scale of the threat that 'Global Hindutva' poses to the ideals of democracy, peace, diversity and state building in the region and beyond.

5. Resolution 2282 of the Security Council very aptly underlines the vital importance of 'inclusion' in State building. This relationship has become more relevant in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus has exacerbated social and economic inequalities which threaten the very fabric of national cohesion in several countries around the world.

6. In these difficult times, vaccine equity is the first and foremost pre-requisite for advancing inclusivity, especially in conflict affected countries. In responding to the vaccine needs of developing countries, the world must act in a way that is responsive, emphatic and effective.

7. Secondly, fragile countries require consistent substantial engagement and development support to meet the basic needs of their people and prevent a reversion to social turmoil and conflict. They require adequate financing to generate economic activity and overcome liquidity constraints. Member States and multilateral institutions should support these endeavors through such means as comprehensive debt restructuring, expanded ODA and reallocation of a larger proportion of unutilized SDR's to these countries. The freezing of the resources of countries coming out of conflict is particularly deplorable. It is a recipe for chaos and renewed conflict.

8. Thirdly, physical infrastructure, such as transportation, energy, water and sanitation facilities, are integral to promoting stability and state building. It is critically vital to encourage regional and international infrastructure investments to rebuild conflict affected countries. Neighbors should be important partners in a country's transition from conflict to peace and then to stability and prosperity. Regional partnerships can play a key role toward this end.

9. There is also empirical evidence to show that investments in 'social infrastructure projects' such as rule of law, health and education could promote sustainable economic growth in fragile countries. The 2030 agenda also endorses this view.

10. In a diverse society, education is the common thread that can unite people. It could help in developing common values and shared interests, transforming a diverse group of people into a nation. Pakistan has recently taken a landmark decision to introduce a single

national curriculum across all elementary, primary and secondary schools in the country. It outlines a single system of education for everyone in terms of curriculum, medium of instruction and mode of evaluation. Now the elite and the poor, those enrolled in private schools and those in state run education centers, have an equal chance of gaining quality education. The initiative aims to strengthen national unity, assimilation and build a common set of core values. More importantly, it sends across a message of State's empathy toward the less privileged segments of society.

11. It is in the same vein that Government of Pakistan has initiated several social protection and poverty alleviation programs such as 'Ehsaas' (empathy) and Kamyab Jawan (accomplished youth), under which the Government provides stipends and interest free loans to citizens from low-income backgrounds. Pulling people out of poverty is at the heart of Government's efforts to build a stable, strong and prosperous Pakistan.

**Mr. President,**

12. States facing internal dissent can take practical steps toward sustainable peace and stability by promoting national dialogue and reconciliation. Such processes should aspire to strengthen the link between State and the citizen. The State must act as a guardian and provider of social services to every citizen. It must also offer all citizens a stake in the political and economic architecture of the country. For example, several conflict-affected countries are rich in natural resources. By distributing the benefits of these resources equitably, these States could incentivize marginalized groups to renounce violence and contribute to the state-building process. Building peace is more than just ending conflict. It is about building trust and harmony and strengthening the social contract between the state and its people – by providing them security, rule of law and the opportunity for sustainable growth. The UN, through its peacekeeping and special political missions as well as country teams, can support state authorities in fulfilling this “social contract”.

**Excellency,**

13. The UN's peace & security and development pillars should continue to work in tandem to help countries in security sector

reform, transitional justice, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) efforts and extension of State authority. The role of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is vitally important in financing these activities. There is a dire need to enhance the investment capacity of the Fund by increasing its donor base and promoting the concept of blended finance. The PBF can make a long-term impact on national peace and stability if its investments are supported by larger funding from institutional investors, notably multilateral banks, private equity firms, foundations and charitable organizations.

**Mr. President,**

14. Implementation of SDG 16 is extremely relevant in promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies around the world. It is also vital to ensure that the national wealth of developing countries stays within their borders. Capital outflows deplete the meager resources of low-income countries and perpetuate the bitter struggle for subsistence among their masses. The international financial architecture should be restructured to ensure that it can support developing economies in retaining national wealth and promoting local investments. This is key to generating employment, promoting social order and building responsive institutions in these countries.

15. Currently, \$ 1 trillion flows out annually from developing countries and \$ 7 trillion is parked in tax havens in advanced economies. We must end illicit financial flows from developing countries and ensure the return of stolen assets. These laundered assets, if returned to the developing countries, could be channeled toward the cash starved state building needs of these countries.

16. The Prime Minister Imran Khan has consistently urged the international community to take a 'decisive action' on capital repatriation of stolen and illegal transfer assets of developing countries. He has warned that inaction could lead to mass migration from the poor to the rich countries.

**I thank you!**