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Security Council Open Debate on 'Promoting conflict prevention – empowering all actors including women and youth', 13 March 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I begin by thanking Japan for organising this important meeting and for bringing a focus on women, peace and security. I also extend my thanks to the briefers for sharing their important and valuable insights with us.

President

Facing an increasing number of crises, the multilateral system must adopt a proactive role in preventing conflict and tackle the root causes of conflicts. These root causes include the climate crisis, structural discrimination, and gender inequalities.



Militarization and the proliferation of illicit arms continues to escalate. Shrinking civic space and weakened rule of law exacerbate worsening humanitarian crises and economic shocks. In these contexts, effective prevention requires an understanding of the gendered dynamics of the causes and consequences of conflicts.

Malta supports a holistic approach to prevention and peacebuilding, in which security, sustainable development, human rights, and gender equality are mutually reinforcing.

Investing in people through quality education and lifelong learning and literacy skills, can be transformative in building more peaceful, just, inclusive, and sustainable societies.

The empowerment of women and girls and gender equality must be central to conflict prevention approaches. A society cannot have peace without incorporating the well-being, inclusivity, and protection of the fundamental human rights of women and young persons.



In line with the Secretary-General's recommendations in the New Agenda for Peace, we support concrete actions to ensure women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation at all stages and levels of peacebuilding and conflict-prevention. By investing in gender responsive constitutional, judicial, legislative, and electoral reforms, we can help overcome obstacles to women's participation and other structural gender inequalities.

We further support the Agenda's call for developing national prevention strategies that provide predictable financing for women's peacebuilding organisations, and give priority to sexual and gender-based violence prevention.

President

Malta consistently calls for a whole-of-system approach to bolster such Peacebuilding efforts. We welcome the Peacebuilding Commission's role in cross-cutting areas, including on human rights, the Women, Peace and Security, and Youth, Peace and Security Agendas.



When young persons are involved in peacebuilding efforts, peace processes are more durable. We also advocate for increased investment in youth-led peacebuilding and the institutionalisation of youth participation in the Peacebuilding Commission. We support strengthening synergies between the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council, and other UN bodies. We have opportunities to enhance this cooperation further in the Summit for the Future and the 2025 Peacebuilding Architecture Review.

The PBC is well placed through their cooperation with regional and sub-regional organisations to spot emerging threats and early warning signs that they can convey to the Council.

This enhanced coordination will better empower us with the ability to identify root causes of conflict and to empower communities with the tools to mitigate threats.



We must also ensure that the Commission engages systemically with civil society, including women's rights organisations and young persons. This should be matched with a genuine commitment to ensuring peacebuilding activities are adequately supported and sustainably financed. In this context, we recall General Assembly's resolution 76/305 on 'Financing for peacebuilding' which recognises the crucial need of sustained financing for peacebuilding efforts in an adequate and predictable manner.

These investments are especially critical in the context of mission withdrawals and transitions. Attention to women's protection and youth engagement with respect to staffing, financing, security, and operational priorities must be given priority. The cost of conflict far outweighs investments in preventative measures and peacebuilding.

I thank you.