

Panel One: How can we address the root causes of large movements of refugees? Fifth thematic session, 15 November 2017
Statement by Ambassador Nicola Clase

PEACEBUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Thank you Chair,

I have been asked to speak about peacebuilding and development.

More than half of the world's extremely poor live in fragile and conflict affected countries.

Last year, 100,000 people died in state based conflicts across the globe.

More than 22 million people in today's world have abandoned their homes and fled across international borders because of conflict or persecution.

Many conflicts have happened – not because we failed to see them coming – but because we did not respond early enough or quickly enough.

We need to get better at addressing the root causes of violence and armed conflict to achieve necessary political solutions and peaceful settlement of disputes. And live up to our commitments in the New York-declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Just as protracted refugee situations require comprehensive responses, today's interconnected and complex crises increase the need for an **integrated approach** and **cross-system efforts** to build peace and to prevent, handle and resolve conflicts.

Sweden recently adopted a strategy for sustainable peace that will contribute to the prevention of armed conflict, and strengthen conflict management and peace-building.

The strategy takes a broad approach in order to enable relevant support.

Swedish government agencies have been tasked to implement the strategy and funding has been significantly increased within the area of sustainable peace.

The key points in the strategy are

- to strengthen global capacity to prevent armed conflict and support inclusive peace- and state-building processes,
- to strengthen the participation of women and youth in dialogue and peace processes,
- to strengthen capacity to promote human security in fragile and conflict affected states, particularly the security of women and children,

and

- to strengthen capacity to counter corruption and impunity in fragile and conflict-affected states

There are three areas where we believe we can work better together to prevent future violent conflicts.

- First, an 'integrated approach' acknowledges that the root causes of conflict and violence are multiple and complex.

In response, the entire system must work in a more integrated way to achieve sustainable peace and development.

This includes drawing connections between peace, security and development, and involves a close interplay between:

humanitarian aid,
long-term development cooperation,
political dialogue and
mediation.

- Second, a ‘sustainable approach’ where the 2030 Agenda is at the core. We need to make sure that its implementation is risk-informed and adaptive to enable sustainable development also in contexts with an emerging risk of violence.

Risk assessment, prevention of violent conflict and peacebuilding must be recurrent themes through all UN and World Bank work.

Activities – and this is very important - must be contextually relevant and provide support to national and locally owned and led peace processes. Activities should be implemented without unnecessary delay.

- Third, ‘inclusivity’: means that peace can only be sustained through inclusive processes.

As the international community, we must do all we can to reinforce the incentives that deliver peaceful and inclusive societies, not least including and supporting women and young people in peace processes.

Or let me put it like this: Everywhere in the world we need more women when we talk peace.

It is clear that exclusion from access to education, job market, health care and security creates fertile ground for violence mobilisation.

If we are to prevent societies from descending into violence and crisis we need to ensure they are made resilient through investment in inclusive and sustainable development.

This requires that faith in governance and rule of law is there or otherwise restored. Registration but also land and property rights are very important in this respect.

To achieve efficient peacebuilding, we have a shared responsibility to provide **financing**, including support to the UN, the World Bank and other international organisations, as well as to local actors to increase local participation in peace processes.

As a final remark, I would like to direct particular attention to the importance of education for sustainable peace.

UN research suggests that education helps build more equal societies and more resilient populations.

With higher secondary-school enrolment and literacy rates the possibility of civil war decreases.

For every year that a young adolescent man studies - the chances of getting involved in conflict decreases significantly.

If we don't pay enough attention to the critical need for education for children, we also lose capacity to rebuild war torn societies.

Despite this, global development financing for education has decreased. We must change this. One of the priorities for Sweden during in 2018 will be children's right to education.

Today a very small number of refugee youth attend higher education.

Refugees who succeed with their exams should have the possibility to reach higher education – for example through scholarships.

Guaranteeing the right to quality education for all children - including refugee children and children living in conflict affected areas - means laying the foundation for a sustainable and peaceful development in the future.

In a world of increasing humanitarian needs, working on root causes of humanitarian crises is critical, but we have to do it in a sustainable way that successfully contributes to the prevention of armed conflict.

Thank you!