

*The Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture  
Uppsala University  
Uppsala, Sweden*

*Preventing Conflicts, Building Durable Peace*

*by Jose Ramos-Horta (\*)*

*Uppsala, 3rd November 2015*

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to be on this rostrum following on the foot steps of greater luminaries who preceded me.

That you invited someone originating from a small village of a remote little country situated on the edge of the world to speak here in this August forum is an illustration of your generous heart more than it says about my possible worthiness.

***Dag Hammarskjöld*** - diplomat, economist, author and Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1953 - 1961 - perished on 18 September 1961, just past mid night, as his DC-6 plane crashed shortly before landing in Ndola, a dot on the map of Northern Rhodesia - now Zambia.

The cause of Hammarskjöld death remains shrouded in mystery just as the murder of US President John F. Kennedy two years later. There were enough people and interests who would want Dag Hammarskjöld dead as he searched for peace in the newly independent Congo, a private possession of King Leopold of Belgium till 1908.

It is fitting that I also pay homage to another great Swedish Nobleman who preceded Dag Hammarskjöld as a dedicated and courageous mediator - ***Folke Bernadotte, Count of Wisborg***, diplomat and nobleman, who was the first UN Envoy sent to the Middle East in 1948 to try to bring about an acceptable solution to all parties, Palestinians, Arabs and Jews.

As Head of the Swedish Red Cross Folke Bernadotte negotiated the release of 31,000 prisoners from German concentration camps, including 450 Danish Jews from the Theresienstadt camp.

Tragically Folke Bernadotte like many other great Men of Peace was murdered by extremist elements as he searched for a fair and just settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Jewish extremist elements assassinated Folke Bernadotte in 1948.

And long after the ultimate sacrifice of the two great Swedish Statesmen, Folke Bernadotte and Dag Hammarskjold, peace in the Middle East remains elusive and the UN is mired in Congo, one of the oldest and one of the most expensive United Nations Peace-Keeping Missions in Africa.

We react in horror to the ongoing barbarities perpetrated by extremist groups operating in Syria and Iraq; but we should remember that extremism and violence are not evils that are particular to a group of people or religion; they are not particular to Arabs, Muslims or Africans.

We are reminded of this as this year, across much of the world, the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII is celebrated; six million Jews, defenseless people, unprotected, unarmed were executed, starved and gassed. The Roma were equally singled out for extermination. More than 30 million Russians perished; an equal number of Chinese lost their lives during the period of Japanese occupation and aggression. These were not violence and wars waged by Arabs and Muslims.

More recent horrendous tragedies have faded in our collective memory; the 1965-66 killings in Indonesia; the 1971 Bangladesh-Pakistan war that devoured millions of people; the "killing fields" of Cambodia with an estimated 2-3 million perishing under the brutal and insane rule of the Khmer Rouge; and the even more recent Balkan wars of the 90's that happened in the heart of Europe.

And many more Muslims died in the last 10 years in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya slaughtered by fellow Muslims than fellow human beings of other religious confessions.

In Myanmar Buddhists supremacists are waging an ethnic and religious cleansing war on Burmese Rohingyas and other Muslims who inhabit Myanmar for generations.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your generous people and wise leaders contributed much towards world peace, freedom and dignity of many millions. In the '60s and '70s you protested the insane Vietnam war; in the 60's you were the only Western European country advocating and actively supporting the struggles for the emancipation and freedom of the enslaved millions on the African continent.

You sheltered countless political refugees and provided them with material support and a free public platform to publicise and advance their struggles.

You were the most generous of all in the provision of development assistance to the newly independent Asian and African nations, from Vietnam to Tanzania, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, to mention only a few.

I haven't been here in many years; but I recall that it was here in Uppsala that sometime in 1997, Swedish mediation experts managed to bring I and some Timorese compatriots for discreet talks with senior Indonesian officials as we began to explore the path of dialogue towards a resolution of the Timor-Leste conflict.

Sweden has faded away as a development partner of Timor-Leste but you were with us in the first critical years, along with Norway and Finland, providing significant financial and technical assistance to our country.

Today my country is free, peaceful and on a relatively strong economic and development growth. The latest UN Human Development Index for Timor-Leste illustrates the progress we have made in less than 15 years.

On several social and economic indicators we are doing much better than Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal and all of sub-Sahara Africa with only two exceptions, Cape Verde and South Africa.

We in Timor-Leste do question the quality of past aid allocated to us by our friends but we are grateful for the genuine commitment shown by our many friends around the world.

Australia, Brazil, China, Cuba, EU, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, ROK, Spain, UK and USA are among our generous, steady partners.

Beginning with small steps in 2003-04, TL and Cuba developed a successful partnership in the health sector with the deployment of more than 200 Cuban doctors to TL; 700 Timorese medical students were sent to medical schools in Cuba; all have graduated.

The same time Cuba set up our first medical school ever in Dili where 400 students are being trained. By 2017 TL will have more doctors as percentage of population than any country in Asia.

Our other friends and neighbours, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand have provided technical assistance, training and scholarships assisting Timor-Leste in a critical area of State Building.

The United Nations system - Agencies, Funds and Programs - the World Bank and Asian Development, have been in Timor-Leste from day one and continue to assist in our peace consolidation and development efforts.

After 24 years of an often brutal conflict, Timor-Leste and Indonesia enjoy

an exemplary relationship at all levels; from day one of our independence our the leaders of our two nations wisely and pragmatically made a conscious and determined decision and opted to look forward and chose the path of reconciliation and friendship.

Our people, though still bearing in their bodies and soul fresh wounds of the conflict, endorsed the leaders wise decision to pursue a process of healing and reconciliation, rather than allowing ourselves to be hostages of the past; we resisted the temptation of revenge.

Indonesian people and leaders, deeply absorbed in their own complex democratic transition, following the dramatic events of 1998-1999, responded very positively to our approach; they met us half-way, accepted our hand of friendship and together we have built an exemplary relationship.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

As Europe face exceptional difficult times, I wish to express sympathy to all - sympathy to the policy makers and elected leaders who have to make difficult decisions in the midst of an unprecedented and prolonged severe economic downturn, financial precariousness, social stress and political polarisation.

I express my sincere admiration to those in Europe, particularly the average individual and families, and leaders who in spite of the difficulties nevertheless have shown heart warming compassion and welcomed hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the wars in the Middle East and extreme poverty in Africa.

The old Europe that colonised much of the world, that displaced the original peoples and created new countries, that invented the slave trade to serve the European settlers in these new countries, is changing. The Europe that in part built its prosperity on the backs, sweat and blood of the peoples it subjugated, is now a safe heaven for many that your ancestors conquered and subjugated.

A new Europe is emerging; and whether this new Europe will be peaceful and embracing of all, living in peace and harmony, and in continuing prosperity or not, depends on how Europeans of today, Europeans of different ethnic extractions and beliefs, want it to be, and whether, with vision and wisdom, they prepare the new Europe.

It will be a test of the quality of leadership, of political wisdom, a measure of the values of solidarity and justice that should be ingrained in European societies; it is a test for all in Europe, Christians and non-Christians, how they will jointly manage this fast changing demography, and on them all depends, a future new rejuvenated and vibrant Europe or an Europe mired in racial, religious, social and political sectarianism and hatred.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dag Hammarskjold was an Aristocrat. I am not. I come from a very different background; I grew up in places like Laklubar, Barike, Atsabe, Laga...as poor and as remote, forgotten, as any village anywhere in the world can be.

As a child I was mostly barefoot; I got my first pair of shoes for Christmas of 1957 and as I didn't want it to be worn out too quickly, I wore it only once for the midnight Christmas mass; after the mass I carefully put it away saving it for the next Christmas. Every once in a while I would pull out my cherished shoes, looked at them lovingly and day dream about next Christmas when I could proudly wear them again. And when the next Christmas did arrive...to my utter shock my feet no longer fit in those shoes; I was puzzled how those shoes had shrunk.

I had never seen a car until one day by act of God a beaten truck arrived in our village bringing some supplies for the lonely Chinese shop owner; the arrival of the old truck was cause for celebration. Children and adults, we were all in awe.

Fast forward 20 years and I found myself in New York. Between 1975 and the late 80's, I lived in New York and to survive I did occasional menial work, including as a helper in a small Chinese take-away food business.

My first engagements with the UN began in December 1975 when at age 26 on the eve of the feared invasion of the country I was sent to NY to advocate and plead with the Secretary-General, General Assembly and Security Council to prevent the much anticipated and feared invasion.

On 7th December 1975 following a State Visit to Indonesia by President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Indonesian forces began what was to become a 24-year war and occupation of my country.

This was 1975, the height of the Cold War, and the immediate post-Vietnam war, a senseless war that ended with the mighty US being ignominiously defeated by an Asian peasant army.

Timor-Leste was a foot note of the Cold War, our people expendable and sacrificed in the name of God and anti-communism.

I have had about 30 years of engagement with the UN, primarily as an outsider, a victim, looking for help; I observed up close the paralysis and dis functionality in the Secretariat caused by poor leadership in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and at key Department where personal ambitions and agendas, provincial mindedness and turf

rivalries, exacerbated by the almost daily interference by Member States, hampered the entire system.

But I was also fortunate to have met exceptional UN staff who, in spite of relentless pressures by Member States and a Senior Management lacking in integrity and courage, truly embraced the ideals and principles embodied in the Charter.

While I witnessed and learned sad lessons of blatant double standards and hypocrisy on the part of many Member States, large and small, rich and poor, I was also fortunate in meeting diplomats who had a conscience.

Maybe because of this very unique life long experience, with 30 years of intimate, daily engagement with the UN, and having served for 10 years as Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and President, the esteemed UN Secretary-General invited me to be his Special Representative in Guinea-Bissau (2013-2014); and later he thought I would be the right person to chair the High Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations.

I was privileged to have served with 15 outstanding colleagues, with very rich, diverse backgrounds and supported by a team of the best people drawn from the UN Secretariat (\*\*).

We were tasked by the SG to review the UN Peace and Security Architecture, its strengths and weaknesses, building on the Brahimi Report and advise the SG and MSs on how to transform our Organisation to better address the new security challenges facing us all.

The challenges of the XXI Century are enormously complex and overwhelming in its intensity and spread.

We are facing implosions of fragile States like South Sudan and CAR, and attendant mass atrocities against civilian populations by all sides in the conflicts; we are facing a non-traditional insurgency in Mali where the UN has become the main target of attacks without the human and technical resources proportional to the mandate assigned to it by the SC.

The UN Peace and Security Architecture is under severe stress with more than 100,000 armed personnel deployed in 16 Peace-Keeping Missions and with more than 30 non-armed Special Political Missions across the globe.

From the very first mediations, dizzying shuttle diplomacy, cease-fires and observer missions undertaken by Folke Bernadotte and Dag Hammarskjold till our times, Peace-keeping has evolved into peace enforcement and robust protection of civilian in armed conflicts; from being mere unarmed or non-combatant forces, the UN and/or regional organisations, authorised by the SC, have been mandated to use robust force to challenge armed groups, as in Congo and Mali.

While the UN Peace-Keeping budget at over US\$9 billion for 2015 may seem very high, in reality, the costs of UN Peace-Keeping Operations are a minute fraction of US and NATO costs per soldier deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The overall UN core budget is modest by any standards of measurement; however, while there have been significant improvements and efficiency in management in the last 10 years, there is urgent need and room for further improvement to end duplication, waste and inefficiency.

I am often baffled at how some Western leaders protest over the core costs of the UN and its Peace Operations as excessive, but gingerly they find hundreds of billions of dollars to rescue mismanaged Banks, insurance and housing companies, failed auto industry companies.

The Secretary-General and his Senior Management team expect the Security Council to give the financial means and tools commensurate with the mandate; but for the Organisation to meet the expectations of its Members and deliver peace and security it must also change the way it is managed and how it operates.

On 16th June, after months of intense listening to all stake-holders, MSs, UN Dept and Agencies, SRSGs and Envoys, Force Commanders serving in the field, regional organisations, academics, civil society advocates, community leaders, and after reading through the more than 80 written submissions our Panel received, my esteemed colleagues and I delivered to the Secretary-General our Report entitled:

### ***UNITING OUR STRENGTHS FOR PEACE: POLITICS, PARTNERSHIP AND PEOPLE***

Allow me now to share with you the key thoughts and recommendations contained in our 100 page Report.

#### ***Four essential shifts***

Four essential shifts must be embraced in the future design and delivery of UN peace operations if real progress is to be made and if UN peace operations are to realize their potential for better results in the field.

***First, politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations. Lasting peace is achieved not through military and technical engagements, but through political solutions.***

Political solutions should always guide the design and deployment of UN peace operations. When the momentum behind peace falters, the United Nations, and particularly Member States, must help to mobilize renewed political efforts to keep peace processes on track.

***Second, the full spectrum of UN peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground.***

The United Nations has a uniquely broad spectrum of peace operations that it can draw upon to deliver situation-specific responses. And yet, it often struggles to generate and rapidly deploy missions that are well-tailored to the context.

The sharp distinctions between *peacekeeping* operations and *special political missions* should give way to a continuum of response and smoother transitions between different phases of missions.

The United Nations should embrace the term *peace operations* to denote the full spectrum of responses required and invest in strengthening the underlying analysis, strategy and planning that leads to more successful design of missions.

Peace-keeping and Special Political Missions are artificially separated, managed by two Departments, leading to bureaucratic rivalry and infighting. Hence the Panel proposed the fusion of the two core UN Peace and Security functions into a single Peace Operations concept under a new Deputy Secretary-General charged with the Department of Peace Operations.

***Sequenced and prioritized mandates*** will allow missions to develop over time rather than trying to do everything at once, and failing.

***Third, a stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership is needed for the future.***

***A stronger global-regional peace and security partnership is needed to respond to the more challenging crises of tomorrow.***

Common purpose and resolve must be established from the outset of a new operation and must be maintained throughout through enhanced collaboration and consultation.

The UN System too must pull together in a more integrated manner in the service of conflict prevention and peace.

All of these partnerships must be underpinned by mutual respect and mutual responsibilities.

***Fourth, the UN Secretariat must become more field-focused and UN peace operations must be more people-centered.***

There must be an awakening of UN Headquarters to the distinct and important needs of field missions, and a renewed resolve on the part of UN peace operations personnel to engage with, serve and protect the people they have been mandated to assist.

New approaches to ensure that UN peace operations are able to reliably play their critical roles in the international peace and security firmament in the years to come, significant change is required across four of the most important areas of the work of UN peace operations and of the United Nations.

***Conflict prevention and mediation must be brought back to the fore. The prevention of armed conflict is perhaps the greatest responsibility of the international community and yet it has not been sufficiently invested in.***

A decade ago, the World Summit, held from 14 to 16 September at United Nations Headquarters in New York, brought together more than 170 Heads of State and Government. It was a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take bold decisions in the areas of development, security, human rights and reform of the United Nations.

The agenda was based on an achievable set of proposals outlined in March 2005 by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his report “In Larger Freedom”.

It called for collective Security Council action when national authorities are incapable or are unwilling to protect their own people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It then went on to set up two new bodies, a Peacebuilding Commission to help countries in transition from war to peace, and a strengthened Human Rights Council. Whether these two institutions have delivered on their promise is a whole different question.

***Member States have not sufficiently invested in addressing root causes of conflict nor has the United Nations generally been able to engage early enough in emerging crises.***

The UN must invest in its own capacities to undertake prevention and mediation and in its capacity to assist others, particularly at the national and regional level.

***The Security Council, supported by the Secretariat, should seek to play an earlier role in addressing emerging conflicts and must do so with impartiality.***

At the global level, the United Nations must mobilise a new international commitment to preventing conflict and mobilising partnerships to support political solutions.

***It must find ways to draw on the knowledge and resources of others beyond the UN System through civil society – community, religious, youth and women groups – and the global business community.***

***Protection of civilians is a core obligation of the United Nations, but expectations and capability must converge.***

Significant progress has been made in promoting norms and frameworks for

the protection of civilians. And yet, on the ground, the results are mixed and the gap between what is asked and what peace operations can deliver has widened in more difficult environments.

***The protection of civilians is a national responsibility and UN peace operations can play an important role in supporting governments to execute that responsibility.***

UN missions and non-governmental actors have important unarmed and civilian tools for protecting civilians, working with communities.

***The United Nations must rise to the challenge of protecting civilians in the face of imminent threat, and must do so proactively and effectively, but also with recognition of its limits. Protection mandates must be realistic and linked to a wider political approach.***

Closing the gap between what is asked of missions to protect civilians and what they can provide demands improvements across several dimensions:

***assessments and planning capabilities,  
timely information and communication,  
leadership and training  
as well as more focused mandates.***

**The Secretariat must be frank in its assessments to the Security Council about what is required to respond to threats to civilians.**

***In turn, Member States should provide the necessary resources and lend their influence and leverage to respond to threats against civilians. When a protection crisis occurs, UN personnel cannot stand by as civilians are threatened or killed. They must use every tool available to them to protect civilians under imminent threat. Each and every peacekeeper – military, police and civilian – must pass this test when crisis presents itself.***

***Clarity is needed on the use of force and in the role of UN peace operations and others in managing armed conflict.***

While some missions are working to implement ceasefires or implement peace agreements, others are operating in environments with no peace to keep. They are struggling to contain or manage conflict and to keep alive the prospects for a resumption of a peace process.

The Panel believes that the United Nations may see more, not less, of these situations in the future. Its existing concepts, tools and capabilities for peace implementation do not always serve these missions well. For such situations there must be a new approach to mandating and resourcing missions, while also setting out the limits of ambition of what the UN can achieve in such settings. Every effort must be made to establish minimum

conditions to ensure a mission's viability and to define 'success' more realistically in such settings.

Where armed conflict is ongoing, missions will struggle to establish themselves, particularly if they are not perceived to be impartial. Although efforts are underway to strengthen capabilities, UN peacekeeping operations are often poorly suited to these operating environments, and others must come forward to respond.

The Panel believes that there are outer limits for UN peacekeeping operations defined by their composition, character and inherent capability limitations. Peacekeeping operations are but one tool at the disposal of the Security Council and they should perform a circumscribed set of roles.

***In this regard, the Panel believes that UN troops should not undertake military counter-terrorism operations. Extreme caution should guide the mandating of enforcement tasks to degrade, neutralize or defeat a designated enemy. Such operations should be exceptional, time-limited and undertaken with full awareness of the risks and responsibilities for the UN mission as a whole.***

Where a parallel force is engaged in offensive combat operations it is important for UN peacekeeping operations to maintain a clear division of labour and distinction of roles.

The Panel has heard many views on the core principles of UN peacekeeping. The Panel is convinced of their importance in guiding successful UN peacekeeping operations. Yet, these principles must be interpreted progressively and with flexibility in the face of new challenges, and they should never be an excuse for failure to protect civilians or to defend the mission proactively.

To sustain peace, political vigilance is needed. ***Peace processes do not end when a peace agreement has been signed or an election held. The international community must sustain high-level political engagement in support of national efforts to deepen and broaden processes of inclusion and reconciliation, as well as address the underlying causes of conflict.***

Peace operations, like other actors, must work to overcome deficits in supporting conflict-affected countries in sustaining peace, including supply-driven templates and an overly technocratic focus on capitals and elites, and the risk of unintentionally exacerbating divisions.

***Strong support for reconciliation and healing is also critical to prevent relapse into conflict.***

Peace operations have a key role to play in mobilising political support for reforms and resources for critical gaps in state capacity, as well as supporting others to revitalise livelihoods in conflict-affected economies. Engagement with affected communities

should help build confidence in political processes and responsible state structures.

***Missions must focus first and foremost on creating political commitment and the space for others to address important elements in sustaining peace. The security sector must be a particular focus owing to its potential to disrupt peace in many countries, with the UN in a convening and coordinating role, if requested.***

A significant change in policing approaches is needed to better support national police development and reform. These efforts should be linked to the whole ‘justice chain’, ensuring an integrated approach between human rights and rule of law capacities.

In sustaining peace, the UN System must overcome structural and other impediments to working together, including through more innovative resourcing options.

***Missions must work closely with their national counterparts and UN and regional partners to ensure that the least disruption is caused when they transition and depart.***

These are the four core shifts in mindset and policies my colleagues and I have recommended to all stakeholders of our common effort to render our Organisation more reliable and efficient in the fight for peace.

I also want to mention that in carrying out our work the panel was mindful that the Review of UN Peace Operations was taking place in parallel to two other important reviews related to the peace and security pillar of the UN’s work – the review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Support Office and Peacebuilding Fund) and the Global Study on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security. In that regard we consulted with the panels working on the other reviews and have advocated that changes and reforms that result from these processes must be coherent and not further contribute to fragmentation in the system.

In particular I want to mention a common finding in all three reviews: that the UN is not doing enough to implement what has become known as the women, peace and security agenda. Gender equality and women’s empowerment on issues of peace and security must be made central to the UN’s work in promoting peace as women’s participation is key to sustainable peace.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased that our Report has received widespread support from all our partners. We are nevertheless concerned that the Secretary-General, in his own report to the GA

on 12th October, failed to strongly advocate for the full implementation of our core recommendations. One seasoned UN diplomat eloquently described the Secretary-General report to the GA as a "decaffeinated" version of the Report of HLIPPO.

The systemic weaknesses in the UN Secretariat, characterised by turf tensions and rivalries, are already emerging and threaten to undermine some of our key recommendations, namely in regards mindset changing in the Secretariat, entrenched HQs ossified bureaucracy to be respectful and supportive of those operating in the field.

The Panel called for several foundational changes in how the UN works in countries shattered by conflict. One important set of recommendations that I fear has not received the attention from member states that it deserves is related to bureaucratic reform.

We called for a decisive move away from the mindsets of a Headquarters bureaucracy not attuned to the needs of field operations.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Is real, lasting peace possible in our life time? For idealists, the answer is yes. Though I am a believer in the fundamental good of human being, I also fear the human capacity for extreme inhumanity.

From the time of our ancestors many thousands of years ago till present times human beings have each passing century perfected the art and science of war and killing.

Can we prevent social and political tensions from escalating into violent conflicts? Can we do better in bringing parties in a conflict to the table and restore peace? And how can we build durable peace?

In some cases neutral and credible national and/or external actors may be able to discretely or openly influence behavioral change and policies among competing actors, when those involved are committed to prevent escalating of the political conflict and welcome advice. But too often, individual pride and egos bloc friendly, neutral help, domestic or external.

Too often those in power do not have the wisdom and humility of the truly great in embracing the other half who disagree with them. And the opposition overestimates its own power, so it underestimates the adversary and miscalculates, making excessive demands amounting to ultimatum for surrender.

My humble advice: when you are at the top of the mountain, embrace those on the fringes of power and privileges; in victory be magnanimous, embrace the vanquished adversaries; if they are on their knees, help them to their feet, invite them to join in the

new enterprise of peace.

To those in the opposition my advice is, never surrender to violence and hatred; seize every opportunity to enter the political process, advance your interests with patience, through dialogue and persuasion.

There are many simple ways to prevent conflicts and some old tested methods are - genuine, patient dialogue, consultation and empowerment of all, making all feel part of the nation. All it actually requires is serious investment in mechanisms of dialogue; and dialogue means listening attentively and respectfully to the other side, accommodating their views as much as you can.

Leaders, supported by the international development partners must carefully study and address the many obvious causes of tensions, namely, abject poverty of the majority in contrast with opulence and ostentation of few; real or perceived discrimination and exclusion; they must engage community and religious leaders in developing strategies and inclusive policies that leave no one behind.

Corruption and ostentation are causes of inequality and tension; the more a country is free from corruption, the more leaders show humility and integrity, the more they are respected and are followed, the better the chances for peace to gain roots.

In too many countries, rather than embracing ethnic, cultural and religious diversity as a blessing, leaders try to suppress particular ethnic groups, their language and religion, in the name of an artificial national unity - unity of the majority ethnic group - Cases of Sri Lanka, Turkey, Spain under Franco, Myanmar.

When a particular ethnic/religious minority manages to achieve power (the case of the Alawites in Syria) it builds a powerful minority army and intelligence apparatus to protect its community from the majority.

There are no short-cuts to peace, sustainable and equitable development; peace has to be built bloc by bloc; extreme poverty eradication is a moral imperative for all and is a *sine quo non* condition for the attainment of durable peace.

Your Royal Highness,  
Rector Magnifica,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

ODA has been for decades the prime tool employed to assist poorer countries in freeing themselves from chronic poverty and instability. Tragically and unwisely, in a simplistic and knee-jerk reaction to the economic and financial downturn that began in 2008, almost all OECD countries, exceptions being the U. K. and Nordic countries, opted to impose draconian cuts in ODA budgets.

The UK under Prime Minister David Cameron made the courageous and wise decision in increasing UK's ODA budget to 0,7% of its GDP, thus becoming the only G7 country to do so; and PM Cameron's decision is the more commendable as this is done in the midst of the ongoing financial crisis.

As we have learned over several decades, there are no short cuts to peace; there are no magic bullets that cure long festering wounds and poverty. Both require long-term commitment and investment, and accepting that there have been and there will be relapses in the peace building process and with it set backs in the road to economic recovery.

Human beings (usually men) are the authors of conflicts and wars; and human beings are the only ones who can prevent the outbreak of violent conflicts, negotiate the end of wars and build peace.

Peoples are the makers of history but peoples need leaders; when they are inspired by their leaders, leaders they trust, leaders who preach compassion and reconciliation, people follow, and peace grows.

To prevent conflicts, end wars, heal wounds, reconcile communities and nations, build durable peace, we require leaders with vision, courage, determination, humility and compassion.

Our collectivity called the United Nations is made up of its many parts, and the parts are we the peoples of the world.

The UN of *Dag Hammarskjöld*, *a UN fit for purpose, to serve the cause of peace, a UN of the people, is under severe stress and is challenged in many fronts.*

I dedicated the Panel Report to my hero, a 3-year old girl from South Sudan – Nyakhat Pal. In April 2014 Nyakhat Pal walked for four long hours through treacherous treks, guiding her blind father, in search of a UN civilian protection centre. They did reach the UN facility, was duly registered, interviewed and assisted.

Her story, a story of resilience and survival, is also an indictment of the collective failure of the UN and its regional partners and neighbours of South Sudan for their inability to prevent the implosion of the country and the ensuing war; however, Nyakhat story also underlines the indispensability of the UN; for all its weaknesses and limitations, the UN is in these conflict regions, its dedicated personnel facing extreme hardships and risks to their own well-being and life, and working long hours they feed, shelter and save lives. We can do more, we can do better, we can prevail over hatred and extremism. Peace will prevail.

Your Royal Highness, I pray to God, the Almighty and the Merciful, to continue to bestow on the Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden, and their much esteemed Royal

Family, and the people of Sweden, bountiful health and endless happiness.

END

(\*) *President of Timor-Leste 2007-2012; Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, 2006-2007; Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, 2001-2006.*

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