

**Remarks of HE Pascale Baeriswyl,
Secretary of State**

**“Sustaining Peace in Action – Windows of
Opportunity to Build more Peaceful, Just and
Inclusive Societies”**

**“For hundreds of millions of people,
violence, injustice and exclusion is
hindering Sustainable Development”**

Side event to the High-Level Meeting on Sustaining Peace

**25 April 2018, 4.30 h - 6.00 p.m.
Conference Room 12, UNHQ, New York**

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and Economic Community of West African States**

In association with CIC and the Institute for Security Studies

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Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a great pleasure to be here again. When we launched the “**Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies**” in September last year, I compared the journey that we are undertaking to the ascent of the Matterhorn, Switzerland's legendary and famous peak. Just like the first successful climbing of that Mountain in 1865, our ambitious require teamwork, good preparation, patience and endurance.

We definitely have left the first Basecamp and today's meeting is a milestone along this journey when we take stock of what is needed from all of us to move from commitments to concrete actions:

In that regard, I would like to raise **two points**:

1. The **windows of opportunity** we have for more peaceful, just and inclusive societies
2. The **case for investment** in upstream prevention

First, opportunities at the global level. For Switzerland, the Sustaining Peace Resolutions and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are two sides of the same coin.

In fact, both give us a very strong **mandate** for a more integrated approach to Prevention. This strong global mandate is *already* an opportunity by itself.

Another opportunity is our increasing understanding of **what works** in the prevention of violent conflict. This is illustrated by the recent “Pathways for Peace” study of the UN and the World Bank. It shows that **addressing grievances early** must be at the heart of development efforts for prevention.

Which brings me to what is maybe one of the biggest opportunities today: The **2030 Agenda**.

Switzerland is very active on Sustainable Development Goal 16 as well as on the other 24 targets in the Agenda pertaining to peaceful, just and inclusive societies, increasingly called “SDG 16 Plus”.

Unfortunately, for **hundreds of millions** of people, **violence, injustice and exclusion** are standing in the way of achieving SDG 16 Plus by 2030.

This is why Switzerland - together with Brazil and Sierra Leone - has launched the “**Pathfinders** for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies”. The Pathfinders are an informal group of member states, international organizations, partnerships and civil society. Our common purpose is to accelerate the implementation of SDG 16 Plus and our guide on this journey is the “Roadmap for Just, Inclusive and Peaceful Societies”, which we launched at the High-Level Week last September.

In **summary**: The **mandate** for prevention as well as the **evidence** of what works have never been stronger, yet **more political will** and **more action** are needed.

This brings me to **my second point: the case for investment in upstream prevention**. The “Pathways for Peace” report states that for every Dollar spent on Prevention, an average of 16 Dollars is saved elsewhere.

However, all too often, we are only mobilizing resources when crisis are already unfolding. Then we spend billions on badly needed peacekeeping, humanitarian aid and reconstruction. But by then, the world’s worst epidemic - which is violence - has already spread. We have to **refocus on targeted prevention** for those at biggest risk of being left behind by 2030. This is one of the catalytic actions identified in the “Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies”.

Fortunately, there are very **promising initiatives** mentioned by the Secretary General in his Report on Sustaining Peace. These include, for example the "Joint UNDP - DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention" or the "Global Focal Point on Police, Justice and Corrections" which were supported by Switzerland from the outset. Just like the Secretary General, Switzerland believes such cross-pillar initiatives can serve as best practice on how to mobilize best the resources of the entire UN system.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Next year’s High-Level Political Forum in 2019 will be our second basecamp when we will review SDG 16 for the first time. It is high time that we treat **Prevention and Sustaining Peace** as a matter of **utmost**

urgency. Switzerland is committed to working with all of you so that together we can reach the mountain top by 2030.

Thank you very much.