



The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya  
To the United Nations  
Security Council - 2021-2022

HIGH LEVEL OPEN DEBATE ON MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY:  
EXCLUSION, INEQUALITIES AND CONFLICT

TUESDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 (10:00AM)

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

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Thank you, Mr. President,

1. I congratulate you, Excellency, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, President of the United Mexican States on assuming the Presidency of the United Nations Security Council and for convening this important debate.
2. I also thank His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations and Ms. Lourdes Tiban Guala for their insightful briefings.
3. Mr President, today's topic is strongly linked to the debate on *Diversity, State Building and the Search for Peace* that was presided over by President Uhuru Kenyatta almost exactly a month ago. They have in common an urgency in calling the world's attention to the risks to peace and security that arise from the state's inability to prevent and address conflicts defined by race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender and other markers of identity before they escalate into violence.
4. We embrace your profound recognition of the disfiguring, demoralizing and destructive inequalities and exclusions in the global multilateral and

economic system. And agree with your insight that at its core, a globalized corruption is one of the greatest risks to peace and security.

5. Mr President, Kenya is convinced that a key competence of the state in its protection of national security is its legal, administrative and operational capacity in responding to underlying grievances on the basis of social and cultural differences.
6. This is a competence as important to the wealthiest and most established democracies as it is to countries in the active grip of war and terrorism.
7. In every part of the world, differences are being weaponised, whether in the context of elections or in demands for political or economic change. The result is a fundamental challenge to stability and the maintenance of peace and security.
8. This is becoming an underlying cause and driver of many protracted conflicts involving both state and non-state actors that have resulted in serious security and humanitarian consequences around the world.
9. This weaponisation of difference is the basis of radicalization conducive to terrorism. Everywhere it breaks into hate speech and incitement to violence, atrocities and war crimes are the result.
10. It is leading to the disruption of the civic peace. It is eroding trust in institutions and striking at the legitimacy that is a necessary component of effective governance.
11. Protecting international peace and security will require a Security Council, and a United Nations, and regional organisations, that actively encourage and enable the effective management of diversity in compliance to international human rights law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
12. Against this backdrop, I will suggest **four points** that should underpin efforts to address exclusion, inequality, and conflicts on the basis of race, ethnicity, religious affiliation and other differences.

13. **First:** Your Excellency, we embrace your powerful point on the need to challenge the corruption that is endemic in the international system. It is the effects of that corruption that lead to the poverty, inequalities and exclusions that then become weaponised and turned into the basis of violent conflict.
14. Indeed the major affliction with the international multilateral system is a symptom of this corruption that we see reflected in double standards, and ever moving goalposts, in the service of an unjust hierarchy established to maintain the most powerful and the wealthiest at the expense of the weakest and the most vulnerable.
15. **Second,** the Security Council can contribute to breaking the vicious cycle involving exclusion, inequality and conflict by embedding within the UN peacekeeping architecture, **capacity building mandates** that deliver state institutions that promote equality and harness diversity for sustained peace and development.
16. **Third:** The Security Council should make much greater use of the advisory role of the **Peacebuilding Commission**. The Commission, should, on its part should come to grips with the role of exclusion and the escalation of identity-based conflicts and grievances into violence.
17. **Fourth:** Civic and political speech is increasingly mediated by technology. Between the right to free speech of the speaker and the right of association of the listener is the social media algorithm built to profit from the effects of how it directs and ranks that speech. The result is a subtle but important challenge to free speech and freedom of association.
18. These precious values must now contend with echo chambers, and fake news, misinformation and disinformation at scale. The technology allows billions to be targeted as individuals. It is changing politics and will continue to do so. In positive ways and extremely destructive ones.
19. There are important conversations going on, particularly in the Global North on regulation of these technologies. But they are not inclusive enough of the Global South. We must increase the engagement between

states, technology companies and the United Nations. A positive collaboration will enable the development and deployment of early warning tools to be used within peace operations and country teams, to detect escalation trends and facilitate pre-emptive measures.

20. **In conclusion, Mr President,** Kenya looks forward to a continued conversation on how the Security Council can help insert capabilities and tools that allow states and the international community to be better protected against conflicts driven by the politicization of racial, ethnic, religious and other social and cultural differences, plus the economic differences that emerge from the said globalized corruption, and that most directly impact international peace and security.

**I thank you for your kind attention**