What priorities should be addressed to strengthen the work of the United Nations on peacebuilding and sustaining peace?

## The 2020 Report of the Secretary-

S'2020/773) affirms that "Civil society engagement and participation is indispensable to peacebuilding As the UN faces new, complex conflict challenges, there is growing recognition that locally-led actors and actions are a critical, indispensable part of impactful, sustainable peacebuilding. Many entities are recognizing and - because they are proving more effective due to local knowledge of context, legitimacy, accountability, and their adherence to principles of inclusion, local agency, and rebalancing of power structures and decision-making toward those most impacted by conflict.

Though the discourse in the UN has improved, implementation has been meager and inconsistent. The UN needs to shift from the prevailing paradigm to recognize and utilize the vast potential of civil society to contribute to long-term peacebuilding by drawing on their cultural and historical knowledge, deep investment, and lived experience -- all absolute imperatives for sustaining peace. Two key modalities are proposed:

- deep, sustained, consistent and ongoing, committed, two-way, local-level community engagement, and,
- shift operations toward truly locally-led approaches to peacebuilding and development which

the full participation of local people in the peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and sustaining peace work that is often done unilaterally by the UN in their communities.

inexorably tied to

engagement with local communities and locally-led peacebuilding efforts. It would be an immense, practical and substantive step forward for the UN to reflect and advance this