Remarks by Tafadzwa Muvingi, HEAD OF Governance and Peace Building unit

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**Salutations**

* **(Acting Chairperson) Commissioner Chigwedere**
* **Representatives of Government and Government departments**
* **Commissioners of the NPRC here present**
* **Executive Secretary**
* **Directors and staff of the NPRC**
* **Directors Representatives of CSOs**
* **Director of ceremonies**
* **Distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen.**

**Introduction**

It is my great pleasure to contribute on behalf of UNDP a few perspectives to this great conversation today. I was requested to share thoughts on the topic ***Global Perspectives on Supporting Post- COVID-19 Responses while Promoting Unity, Sustainability and Equity***

**Distinguished guests’ ladies and gentlemen**

**I will start by sharing A few Facts on covid 19**

* Now, the COVID-19 pandemic is a governance crisis as well as a humanitarian and health crisis. Many times, we have profiled the impacts of COVID 19 as a public health crisis, the pandemic has tested the resilience of governance systems and public sector institutions to adapt, function, and innovate in the delivery of their public services.
* **The second fact is on Regression and set back in the achievement of SDGs** due to impacts on education, health, social protection systems. Clearly the statics at home have shown us in the education sector, The ZIMSTAT Rapid Poverty, Income, Consumption and Expenditure Surveys (PICES), Telephone Monitoring Survey report (2020) notes that “in rural areas, only one quarter of children engaged in distance learning, while in urban areas this proportion was 70 percent.” The number of rural children left behind is unimaginable.
* Globally, Vaccine inequity is a major concern: About 65% of the population in HICs have received at least one vaccine shot compared to less than 2% in LICs. Furthermore, Over 5.7 billion COVID19 vaccine doses have been administered globally, but only 2% were given in Africa (**Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director General at World Health Organization)**
* **High debt vulnerabilities and insufficiency of debt-relief** measures have plagues low to middle income countries thereby exacerbating socio-economic.
* **Demonstrations against COVID 19 measures** have been recorded across the globe. Enjoyment of human rights have clearly been limited be due to the pressure on the states on the need to balance individual rights against public good, thus setting the citizens on collision paths with their citizens.

**Distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen**

**To continue PAINTING THE picture of Global Developments DURING *NOT POST* COVID**

* In the nick of time when Africa was on the right path to turn its impressive economic performance into a sustainable level of economic and social development, the COVID-19 pandemic invaded the continent and quickly tilted it into a worst economic, social and humanitarian crisis. The pandemic is disrupting millions of livelihoods, affecting poor households, diverting government revenues, damaging the private sector, the informal economy and the entire production systems; and deteriorating international trade and financial flows to the continent. *Soci0-Economic Impact of COVID 19 on Africa September 2020 AU Department of Economic Affairs*
* The economic impacts noted around global recessions that have seen attrition in economic growth and low industrial performance have been likened to the Great Depression of the 1920s.

**Implications for People ESPECIALLY THOSE LEFT BEHIND HAVE BEEN ENOURNOUS**

* Most vulnerable hardest hit- Women Children Persons with disabilities have been hardest hit. I referred earlier to the disparities on children in terms of access to Education. Teenage pregnancies were reported, according to a news article published April 2021, Zimbabwe’s government says nearly 5,000 teenage girls became pregnant in January and February and about 1,800 entered early marriages during the same period.
* Systems vulnerabilities: During the peak of the pandemic, hospitals and hospital bed ran out and many families had to content with home-based care as the health system buckled under the pressure of COVID
* Large scale institutional interventions tested and many large-scale development interventions for the benefit of the community stopped or continued at a limited pace.

**Distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen**

**What does this MEAN FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND PEACE BUILING?**

* The noted trends are that COVID 19 has exacerbated the already existing fault lines and widened the trust deficit between citizens and their governments and larders. Some decisions for the common good are questioned sometimes with appeal to other bodies through litigations and or petitions.
* Violations of rights have need noted such as rights of women through increased gender-based violence, children through early marriages and even civil and political rights.
* Resultantly, this feeds into a fragile and fragmented communities where peace gains and dividends are lost.

**In building back better and Recovery, it would thus require having the following taken into consideration**

* Multidimensional view to address all dimensions of fragility governance, social and economic in order to build resilient systems that can withstand shocks
* There have been calls for new, stronger social contracts between citizens, the state and other sectors such as civil society and the private sector for a more inclusive state that can tap into the resources of its people for solutions and problem solving. Building blocks of social contract and citizens premium and involvement. Premised on equality and reduce vulnerabilities.
* Address corruption: this remains a key issue towards trust building. Recent Auditor General reports have noted issues of concern on public finance management. Addressing such issues retains confidence that resources for state building are channelled to the right development spaces.
* Provision and accessibility of basic services remains key towards social cohesion. Conflicts often arise form access or lack of it, quality and quantity. When vulnerable groups are facilitated access, then reducing inequalities becomes and reality and contributes to cohesive societies.
* Strong political systems: that can check a regulate other organs of state are important to increase accountability and transparency.
* Moreover, agile and innovations- that lead to digital governance are key, not just for the pandemic but for a future and these can include online Peace work to prevent violence and decrease tensions, Citizen Journalism and bloggers to build their capacity in social cohesion, peacebuilding and combating hate speech and audio-visual products created on Social Cohesion Activities
* Empowering local peace structures to respond to community needs during COVID-19 and implementing basic needs distribution campaigns,

**Distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen**

**In conclusion**

* International Day of Peace reminds us therefore to work on peace every day, peace to reduce inequality, to eliminate violence, to build strong and resilient communities that can live through shocks.

**Secretary General Antonio Guterres Message and I quote**

* Peace is the foundation of that recovery. The global vaccination effort cannot advance amidst armed conflict.
* Nor can we build a sustainable, resilient, peaceful world while we are at war with nature. Recovery efforts offer an opportunity to transform our relationship with our planet and our environment.
* The world cannot go back to what it was. As we celebrate to the International Day of Peace, I call on people everywhere to be part of a transformation for peace, by standing up against hatred and discrimination, by caring for the planet, and by showing the global solidarity that is so vital at this time.

**The call for international solidarity has never been much stronger!**

**Thank you.**

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