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President: Mr. Ping (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 38 and 46

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/206)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/285)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General (A/59/261)

Members will recall that on Wednesday, 13 October 2004, in preparation for the consideration of item 38, "New Partnership for Africa's Development", the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, gave a briefing on this subject at the second informal meeting of the General Committee, which was open to all Member States.

I should now like to make a statement in the context of the joint debate.

The items under consideration in the present joint debate attest to the importance that the General Assembly attaches to the special needs of Africa, a matter which is one of the main priorities on the United Nations agenda. The reports of the Secretary-General provide a clear account of the situation prevailing today in Africa. They describe the progress achieved and set out the obstacles that remain with respect to the implementation of the commitments undertaken in favour of Africa, in particular in the Millennium Declaration and in the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Turning first to agenda item 38, on NEPAD, I welcome the fact that the Secretary-General has highlighted the progress achieved by African countries themselves in promoting peace and security and in implementing the priority programmes and projects of NEPAD at the socio-economic level. That progress attests to the determination of African leaders and African peoples to take charge of their destiny. At the continental, subregional and national levels, further evidence of that resolve is seen in the formulation of policies; the establishment within the African Union of appropriate institutional mechanisms such as the Peace and Security Council and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, as well as the African Peer Review Mechanism — to which 23 African countries have already voluntarily subscribed; the preparation of projects and programmes; and the promotion of good governance, human rights and democracy.

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It is particularly encouraging to note that today the combination of all of those efforts has begun to yield results by helping to bring about a significant reduction in the level of crises and armed conflicts that have been ravaging the continent. In that respect, cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and African subregional organizations, aimed at preventing and resolving conflict and at maintaining peace deserve to be welcomed.

There is, however, a need to step up our efforts in the area of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, particularly in the context of regional initiatives, which should always, whenever necessary, receive vital support from the international community in the context of the collective security prescribed by the Charter.

In the current context, the goodwill of Africa and the mobilization of its internal resources will not alone suffice to bring about the recovery of the continent that we all wish to see.

The pernicious effects of globalization; the brain drain; the persistence of AIDS, malaria and other endemic diseases; the technology gap; the debt burden; and the shortfall of official development assistance: those are all obstacles that remain to be overcome.

It is true that Africa is benefiting from the concern of the international community, in particular the United Nations system and its other multilateral and bilateral partners. Here, I would like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for having set up a high-level Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD; in that regard, I welcome the endeavours of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Africa. Nonetheless, it is generally accepted that meaningful improvement in the situation on the continent requires intensified mobilization at all levels, greater policy coherence, better coordination of activities and, above all, a substantial allocation of additional resources for the financing of Africa's development.

Africa, which has given so much to the rest of the world, now needs its support.

With regard to agenda item 46, the note by the Secretary-General entitled "2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa" (A/59/261) reminds us that many challenges remain to be overcome. The scourge of malaria today

threatens 40 per cent of the world's population and every year is responsible for approximately 3 million deaths around the world, 1 million of them in Africa. Efforts to curb that phenomenon absorb significant financial resources, and scientific advances in the search for an anti-malaria vaccine, although promising, remain slow.

The General Assembly has asked the international community to continue to support those organizations that are cooperating in the effort to roll back malaria. In that regard, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund are sources of major assistance in supplementing the efforts being made by the countries where malaria does so much harm.

The General Assembly has also urged the pharmaceutical industry to be aware of the growing demand for effective combination treatment for malaria, particularly in Africa, and to establish new alliances and partnerships so as to ensure that all people at risk have prompt access to effective, affordable and high-quality treatment. Programmes such as the "Roll Back Malaria" initiative, which took shape at the Summit of heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity held in Abuja in April 2000, also made it possible to move towards improved treatment and more effective malaria prevention in Africa. Significant progress has also been made with the adoption of national strategic plans by a number of African countries with a view to achieving the goals set at Abuja.

Since 2002, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has become a source of additional financing to combat the scourge of malaria. However, further efforts are needed in order to mobilize further necessary resources in that regard. The General Assembly must be ready to mobilize to ensure that all efforts to combat malaria can be successful. It will have to play its role as a global forum in the struggle against that pandemic — which forms part of our fight against poverty. It will continue to promote human development so as to ensure, to echo the objective of WHO, "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health".

Malaria and underdevelopment are not inevitable; we can and must overcome them.

Mr. Esan (Nigeria): It is reassuring to see you, Sir, presiding over this debate on agenda items

relating, respectively, to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and causes of conflict in Africa and to the issue of malaria.

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the African Union on issues that are vital to us.

In his report contained in document A/59/285, the Secretary-General noted the decrease in the number of African countries that are in either armed conflict or political turmoil. That assessment is a true reflection of the tremendous efforts that African Governments have continued to make to promote peace and security on the continent. It is quite understandable that our leaders remain seized of that issue, as it is generally accepted that the greatest challenge facing Africa is that of maintaining peace and stability — or, rather, that of containing or resolving conflicts. That is one challenge that we are confronting with uncompromising resolve, because we can ill afford to waste scarce resources on conflicts.

Knowing that no meaningful development can take place without internal peace and security, African leaders have redoubled their efforts in that regard. It is gratifying that the report of the Secretary-General acknowledges that fact, depicting concretely the peace-building efforts being deployed at both the subregional and the continental levels. Prominent among those efforts was last May's launching of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which was a historic and auspicious development that the report of the Secretary-General rightly mentioned. Major operations have been launched since the establishment of the Council, notably the deployment of a peace operation in Burundi and an African observer mission in the Sudan.

It is also pertinent to refer to the wisdom of Security Council resolution 1564 (2004), of 18 September 2004, whereby the Council, *inter alia*, pledged support for the African Union in its resolve to enhance its presence in Darfur. We urge the United Nations and the international community as a whole to demonstrate their support in a concrete manner.

Africa wants the decreasing trend in the number of conflicts to be sustained, in order that we may focus on development challenges. It is for that reason that we condemn, in the strongest terms, the foiled mercenary plot to destabilize the Government of Equatorial Guinea. We hope that the General Assembly will

support the draft resolution that the African Group of States intends to introduce on the question of the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries.

We believe that finding a durable solution to conflicts in Africa demands appropriate support from the international community. In that regard, we are pleased to acknowledge the contributions being made by the United Nations and the international community as a whole. Indeed, an active and meaningful partnership between Africa and the international community for the promotion of peace and security is imperative. In that connection, we believe that the close cooperation among the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly demonstrated in their handling of the crisis in Guinea-Bissau and Burundi was splendid.

Given the paucity of resources in Africa, there is a justifiable need for increased external support, not only to complement and strengthen the continent's efforts to promote peace and security but also to preserve the considerable peace dividends that have already been gained. If Africa were therefore to strengthen peace and pursue the path of sustainable development, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union would need to be strengthened in order to fulfil its mandate. That would require substantial support from the United Nations, as well as institutional coherence between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union on issues of conflict in Africa. We therefore urge the General Assembly to take that into account during this session in its review of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the African Union. We welcome the indication given by the Secretary-General that he would instruct relevant agencies, departments and offices to look into new ways for the United Nations and the African Union to cooperate.

The significant gains made thus far in promoting peace and security in Africa must not be taken for granted. There is still an urgent need to take corresponding steps to promote the economic and social well-being of people, in order that conflicts do not feed further on the scourge of underdevelopment and poverty. In that connection, we reiterate that Africa has within its grasp a strategic blueprint that can enable it to restore peace and security, combat widespread poverty, accelerate growth and sustainable development and reverse its marginalization in a globalized world.

Designed to promote holistic and sustainable development, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is Africa's home-grown development framework; it is a little over three years old. Considering the potential of NEPAD in reshaping Africa's economic fortunes, it is imperative that we embrace any opportunity that presents itself to review the implementation of the initiative. We are therefore pleased to participate in this debate.

Indeed, it is also of interest to note that a NEPAD multi-stakeholder dialogue will take place in a few days' time in Johannesburg. The purpose of the dialogue is to enable African leaders, development partners, civil society organizations — including non-governmental organizations — and other stakeholders to review three years of NEPAD implementation and explore ways to mobilize domestic and external resources to expedite the implementation of NEPAD priority programmes and projects.

The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/59/206 is quite helpful in appreciating the progress that has been made in the implementation of NEPAD. It is indeed gratifying to note that the report acknowledges the efforts being made by African Governments and regional economic communities in that regard, particularly in terms of "developing sectoral policy frameworks, implementing specific programmes and projects and establishing targets for expenditure on selected NEPAD sectoral priorities." (*A/59/206, para. 3*)

The report highlights a number of flagship programmes and projects of significant interest to African countries. The infrastructure projects being proposed, largely having to do with transport and energy, are expected not only to enhance Africa's competitiveness but also to deepen its economic integration. Another example of a flagship programme is the NEPAD e-schools project, which has received the endorsement of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee on the basis of an appreciation of the need to ensure that Africa is not left behind in a global economy driven by information and communications technology. Similarly, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme enjoys support in the highest echelons of Government because it is predicated on the fact that within NEPAD agriculture is expected to spearhead economic growth in Africa's quest for a continent free

of conflict in which people can participate effectively in economic activity.

The foregoing and other initiatives provide the basis for us to say that NEPAD has taken off. But we would like to emphasize that we are still at the beginning of a long journey. The international community should therefore not lose sight of the magnitude of development support and investment needed to put the continent on track to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, especially the goal of reducing poverty and hunger by half by the year 2015.

We appreciate the support rendered by various partners to African countries in the implementation of NEPAD, including that of the United Nations system. That is in keeping with the principle and spirit of partnership underlying the programme, of which the Group of Eight (G-8) Africa Action Plan, the Blair Commission for Africa, the Millennium Challenge Account and the African Partnership Forum are noteworthy examples. We also welcome the support that international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank and the World Bank, have given to NEPAD thus far. It is our hope that that support will be reinforced. It is also our hope that the dialogue between the G-8 and Africa, which has proved to be a useful mechanism for cooperation, will be sustained and will be translated into much-needed resource inflows for Africa's development.

Furthermore, we believe that the United Nations, including its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, is well placed to contribute to the accelerated implementation of NEPAD programmes. But the level of resources cited in the Secretary-General's report points to the need for the United Nations system to substantially increase its support, particularly in the area of capacity-building, in which African countries and regional economic communities suffer serious constraints. We look forward to seeing the various United Nations bodies not only aligning their programs with the priorities of NEPAD but also creating NEPAD desks for that purpose. We expect that the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development will address those issues, among other matters.

We would also like to acknowledge the role being played by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in advocating and coordinating international support

for Africa. It is essential that the Office be given the support that it needs to carry out its responsibilities.

In making the case for increased external assistance for NEPAD, we would especially like to mention certain major efforts by African Governments. For instance, a number of reforms aimed at transforming African economies have been embarked upon, with generally positive results. Those reforms include privatization, commercialization programmes, public service reforms, numerous initiatives to promote democracy, the rule of law, accountability and transparency and a vigorous campaign to combat corruption.

We would also like to draw attention to the satisfactory progress made in implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism. As a novel voluntary commitment, the Mechanism, in the words of its founding documents, is intended to foster

“the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated subregional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs of capacity-building”.

So popular has the Mechanism become that five more countries came on board last July, bringing to 23 the total number that have joined the Mechanism. As more countries sign on to the Mechanism, Africa will become the first region of the world to engage in self-evaluation on some basic tenets of governance. That Africa means business in that regard is obvious from the fact that the review process has commenced with approximately four countries.

I would also like to underline the significant effort of African Governments to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and to promote the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and the campaign to curb other killer diseases in Africa. To confront this disturbing situation, many Governments in Africa have made budgetary commitments to allocate 15 per cent of their national budgets to the health sector. In addition, the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in July 2004, adopted a decision on the implementation of the Abuja and Maputo Declarations on Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Disease.

Here, it is important to note the innovative recommendations contained in the report of the Special Session of the African Union Conference of African Ministers of Health, held in Geneva on 14 and 15 May 2004.

We call on the international community to support Africa's initiatives by making available increased and predictable resources for financing and upgrading Africa's health system. In particular, we advocate substantial support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and for the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. We also welcome the opportunity to gain access to funds through the proposed international finance facility and the European Development Fund to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases.

Against the background of those efforts by African Governments, there is clearly a need for the international community to demonstrate much greater support for NEPAD. In that regard, adequate financial resources are required in addition to capacity-building. Although the decision taken by the Group of Eight (G-8) at its Sea Island Summit last June to extend the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative until December 2006 is quite welcome, we would also like to state that we share the Secretary-General's view that that measure is far from sufficient to meet the objective of finding a more durable solution to the debt crisis. The debt situation of the low- and middle-income countries not covered by the HIPC initiative also needs to be addressed.

Moreover, we would like to see more coherence and consistency in global policies — particularly in the areas of trade and finance — as they affect Africa. For example, the Secretary-General's report draws attention to the correlation between net official development assistance and Africa's debt service. Trends indicate that capital inflows through official development assistance are almost equivalent to outflows in terms of debt servicing. That warrants greater coherence in global policies.

We also believe that market access for African goods and services and the removal of agricultural subsidies and other harmful barriers are areas in which action could be taken to assist Africa. Increased official development assistance and foreign direct investment would also provide much-needed resources to fill existing resource gaps in African countries, the

majority of which are least developed countries. We wish to reiterate the call on the developed countries in particular to deliver on their official development assistance commitments, which they reaffirmed at the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg.

Above all, we believe that it is appropriate for our development partners to take stock of their performance in fulfilling their commitments to Africa under NEPAD. In particular, we call on the G-8 countries to give practical effect to the Kananaskis Africa Action Plan. It is time that our development partners moved the focus of their support from studies and conferences to the actual implementation of programmes and backed their promises of resource support with concrete action.

Finally, a positive impact on African economies could be made through strong support for our Governments' efforts to fight against corruption. We believe that the United Nations Convention against Corruption provides a basis for national and international financial institutions to deny safe haven to funds looted from Africa and to cooperate fully in repatriating such funds and assets as a contribution to the continent's accelerated growth and sustainable development. African Governments are resolutely committed to giving NEPAD their best shot. All they are asking for is a commensurate contribution to complement those efforts in the true spirit of partnership and mutual interdependence.

Mr. van den Berg (Netherlands): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement. I will not read out the statement in its entirety, but the full text will be made available to delegations.

The European Union welcomes the fact that, for the second time, the sub-items "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support" and "Causes of conflict and the

promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" are being addressed together. That highlights once again the fact that peace, security and stability, as well as political and economic good governance and respect for human rights, are closely interrelated with development.

It is precisely because of those linkages that the European Union is of the opinion that the 2005 high-level event should address all aspects of the Millennium Declaration — that is, development and non-development issues, as well as reform — in a comprehensive and balanced manner. The European Union views our debate here today as a step in that direction.

From the start, the European Union has strongly supported the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and it will continue to do so. We fully endorse the vision on which NEPAD is based: a partnership between developed countries and African nations, based on African ownership and leadership. The European Union recognizes the need for a focus on coherence and development in our overall policies. Acting together in the spirit of NEPAD, we can jointly contribute to progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

Africa is at the heart of the European Union's development policy, and rightly so. Africa has great potential, as reflected in its people and culture and in the economic and political successes of the past decade. But Africa also has its continuing problems. Half the population lives on less than \$1 a day. The proliferation of armed conflicts, corruption, failing States, a lack of economic development, inadequate social infrastructure, poor educational standards, environmental degradation and the HIV/AIDS pandemic are lowering the standard of living in that part of the world.

The European Union, the largest provider of official development assistance (ODA) and the single biggest investor in developing countries, is fully aware that development policies will not be sustainable if developing economies are not part of the world economy. We therefore decided in 2001 to introduce the Everything but Arms initiative amending the Generalized System of Preferences, which provides exporters from the least developed countries with free market access for all their products. By 2008, Regional Economic Partnership Agreements with four African,

Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) regions in Africa will enter into force, promoting regional integration and a comprehensive approach to tackling barriers to trade and attracting investors. Together with our financial assistance, we strongly believe that this will contribute to an enabling environment for economic growth.

The EU will continue to make constructive efforts to ensure the implementation of the Doha Development Agenda, which places the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of trade negotiations. The deadlock since the failure of the Cancún Conference in 2003 has been broken, and the negotiations are back on track. We hope that this round can be successfully concluded, now that a formal framework for reform has been established. In July, agreement was also reached regarding the cotton sector, which is crucial for several African countries. Cotton will become part of the agriculture negotiations. The EU, for its part, has already abolished all export subsidies and tariffs and has undertaken a fundamental reform of its cotton subsidies, eliminating the support that most distorts trade.

International and national efforts to create an enabling environment for an equitable and sustainable development must go hand in hand. We also realize that economic growth, although a prerequisite for poverty reduction, is not enough in itself. The primary responsibility for poverty reduction lies with the developing countries themselves. At the national level, good governance, policy reform, prioritizing social needs and prevention of conflicts are essential. In the spirit of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the eradication of extreme poverty will be impossible, unless it is coupled with a stronger commitment to building and strengthening democratic institutions, respect and promotion of human rights and the rule of law, and effective and equitable delivery of public services.

In this regard, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is an extremely powerful and positive tool for improving governance in Africa. The EU commends the 23 countries that have so far agreed to join the APRM and those four countries in which the review process has already been launched. The EU encourages other African countries to join the APRM. We are committed to supporting the APRM in the spirit

of partnership and with full respect for African ownership of the process.

Civil society organizations can also play an important role in articulating citizens' interests and defending their rights, mediating between citizen and the State, and mobilizing communities and grassroots organizations. It is also important to increase the participation of women in political life.

Participation of the private sector is also crucial to making the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) a success. A flourishing private sector is crucial to bringing about economic, social and environmental prosperity for Africa. The EU therefore believes that proper institutions and regulations, a different trade regime, improved infrastructure and a better banking system could boost the investment climate in African countries.

The EU stands ready to assist with its commitment to ODA and debt relief. Resolving Africa's external debt problem is critical for the sustainable development of the African countries. In the framework of the extended Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, the EU remains committed to ensuring that eligible countries can reach and maintain a sustainable level of debt, which helps them reinforce their efforts to reduce poverty and promote growth. We welcome the extension of the sunset clause of the HIPC Initiative through the end of 2006, basing eligibility on the data from the end of 2004.

As far as ODA is concerned, the European Council reiterated, in Brussels, in June 2004, that the EU would intensify its efforts to fulfil the commitments undertaken in Monterrey, including through the exploration of innovative sources of financing. The EU is very much on track in increasing its ODA to 0.39 per cent of gross national incomes (GNI) in 2006, as part of longer-term efforts to raise ODA contributions to 0.7 per cent of GNIs. The EU and its member States are already providing almost half of all current development assistance to Africa.

The EU has also significantly increased funds to fight malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis over the past few years. These diseases take a heavy toll in Africa, causing a tremendous loss in economic production and growth, having a strong negative influence on foreign investors and causing problems among regional peacekeeping forces. We remain concerned about the

disastrous consequences of malaria in developing countries, where prevention and better access to treatments for vulnerable populations could bring significant results, and we follow with interest the progress recently made in clinical trials of a malaria vaccine. The international community needs to increase efforts to tackle infectious diseases. One way to fight these pandemics might be to work to strengthen national health systems overall. We would also like to welcome the efforts made by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the fight against these diseases. The EU accounts for 55 per cent of all resources pledged to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and 65 per cent of the world's assistance to health and population in developing countries. The EU is also the biggest donor to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) voluntary contributions.

The EU notes the support of the United Nations system to NEPAD and would like to stress the importance of linking the operational activities of United Nations agencies with NEPAD priorities. We welcome the steps that have already been taken for better collaboration within the United Nations system in order to support NEPAD and its goals.

This debate is also devoted to the promotion of lasting peace in Africa. The major progress that Africa has made in addressing conflicts on the continent and developing an institutional capacity to deal with conflict prevention and resolution has been impressive. The African Union (AU) has set itself an ambitious agenda in the area of peace and security. With the AU in the driver's seat, Africa has demonstrated strong resolve, and its security agenda is quickly becoming a reality.

The EU welcomes the progress made by the AU in establishing its continental architecture for peace and security, in particular the launch of the Peace and Security Council. The EU stands ready to work with Africa in supporting the Peace and Security Council and in helping build African capabilities for addressing and resolving conflicts, including through deployment of African peacekeeping missions. In this respect, we also welcome the progress made with regard to the establishment of the African standby force.

The European Union's African Peace Facility is the main financial instrument for developing and strengthening the already strong practical cooperation

between the EU and Africa in the crucial task of preventing and responding to conflict on the continent. €250 million have been earmarked to promote African peacekeeping in Africa and to support the African institutional capacity-building process. The African Peace Facility is now being used for the first time to support the AU-led monitoring mission in Darfur.

In addition, the EU is currently further developing other instruments at its disposal, predominantly in the field of the European Security and Defence Policy, in order to further expand EU support for African initiatives to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts on the continent. The European Union welcomes the commitment by the Group of Eight to support efforts to enhance the African capacity to engage more effectively in conflict management and resolution. It also acknowledges the valuable assistance of the United Nations in this area. The effectiveness of the various activities should be strengthened by further efforts of coordination. We encourage the African Union to take up that task.

The number of African countries in conflict is falling, which is also due to the efforts of the African Union and African subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community, aimed at restoring peace on the continent. But instability continues in many countries and regions. The continued instability in Africa is in part responsible for the surge in United Nations peacekeeping. It is therefore all the more encouraging that United Nations activities are increasingly preceded by or coordinated with peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts by African organizations, most notably in Burundi, Darfur and Somalia. The European Union warmly welcomes and fully respects this clear demonstration of African leadership and ownership, and would like to use this opportunity to reiterate its readiness to support the African Union in its efforts to stabilize the security situation in Darfur and to act as a mediator in the Abuja talks.

The European Union is also further developing its cooperation with the United Nations in the field of crisis management. Building on the experience of Operation Artemis in Bunia in June 2003, the European Union is currently developing its rapid reaction capabilities in the form of so-called battlegroups, which will enhance the European Union's ability to

respond to United Nations requests in short-term crisis management situations. In addition, the European Union is working on enhancing European Union-United Nations cooperation in civilian crisis management operations.

In crisis regions in Africa, “after the conflict” unfortunately often means “before the conflict”, as all too often conflicts recur. Sustained post-conflict peacebuilding efforts are required. We must show long-term engagement and accept the resource implications thereof. Too often, financing for crucial activities, such as the reintegration of ex-combatants, is underfunded. The international community must find ways of ensuring that funding for peacebuilding activities reaches post-conflict situations earlier and more predictably. In this regard, the balance of assessed and voluntary contributions should be examined.

African countries emerging from conflict should be the highest priority of the United Nations system and the international community as a whole. The European Union welcomes the establishment of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi as a valuable first step in a more holistic and coordinated approach towards longer term stability and societal well-being in those countries. Those experiences should be fed into ongoing discussions within the United Nations intergovernmental machinery on promoting an international coherent response to countries in crisis.

Conflicts in Africa cause immense human suffering and have huge economic costs. Much more should therefore be done in order to move from a culture of “putting out fires” and conflict management to a culture of conflict prevention. To shift from crisis management to conflict prevention requires an integrated approach. Such an approach should be built on the principle that the primary responsibility for the prevention of conflict rests with Member States. However, a true international partnership is needed to assist affected Member States in turning the tide.

Africa’s problems are also the problems of the international community. Ensuring Africa’s inclusion in world advancement is our key priority. Without any doubt, the battle against poverty has to be fought on that continent. Only if we win that battle can we lay the foundation for lasting peace and stability on the continent. We believe that, with all the necessary efforts and commitment and with political leadership

and will, we can win this battle. To quote the famous rock star Bono in this regard: “It is not about charity, it’s about justice.”

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this important subject.

The Group of 77 is pleased to participate in the debate on this important agenda item at this session of the General Assembly. We do so against the backdrop of two reports of the Secretary-General: the consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)(A/59/206) and the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/59/285).

These reports have provided detailed and rich insights into the progress made, as well as the challenges and constraints encountered in the past year in the implementation of NEPAD and in managing and resolving conflicts in Africa. The two reports complement each other and offer a balanced perspective on the efforts of African countries and the support by the international community aimed at the economic and political development of Africa.

The Group is pleased to learn that African countries have made much progress in such priority areas of NEPAD as agriculture, infrastructure, environment, tourism, education, health, industrialization, science and technology. These areas are important for the growth and sustainable development of Africa. In particular, we note that African countries have demonstrated their determination to advance the implementation of NEPAD by developing sectoral policy frameworks, by promoting specific programmes and projects and by establishing targets for expenditure on selected NEPAD priorities. It is significant that the sectors where expenditure targets have been determined include agriculture, health, water and sanitation, and science and technology. All these are of critical importance for Africa’s development.

The Group of 77 also applauds the progress that African countries have made in the past year in developing the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Step-by-step, the institutional arrangements

of the APRM have been put in place. The APRM mechanism is unique in that it shows Africa's commitment to improve and strengthen all aspects of its governance through mutual learning and sharing of experiences. Even so, a well functioning APRM is a badge of honour that Africa has conferred upon itself — not a prize given to it by its partners, nor, even worse, a transformation of this mechanism into a constraint, into a form of conditionality for supporting NEPAD.

NEPAD is based on the dual principles of ownership and partnership. Africa owns, leads and manages the process. Nonetheless, African leaders recognized the importance of international support as critical to NEPAD. The international community has pledged that support in various forums, and most notably in this Assembly, when it adopted the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development in Assembly resolution 57/2 and other subsequent resolutions.

Africa's development partners play an important role in fulfilling NEPAD's spirit of partnership. As the report on NEPAD makes clear, Africa's development partners have taken a series of measures at the international level that will potentially benefit the implementation of that programme. We note in particular the various initiatives and actions taken to that end by the developed countries — through debt relief, trade, official development assistance, and public policies to support foreign direct investment in Africa.

Yet, the Secretary-General's report notes that a fundamental policy challenge in international support for NEPAD is achieving coherence of policy actions in favour of Africa. That lack of coherence in the areas of trade, debt relief and aid flow to Africa is hindering international support for Africa. Therefore, we fully endorse the recommendation that Africa's development partners ensure policy coherence in actions to support Africa and undertake concrete measures to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD by committing financial resources to be used in NEPAD priority areas.

Of equal importance is the Group's appreciation of the support that some of its members have extended to Africa through a variety of South-South cooperation programmes, in keeping with the consensus resolutions that the Assembly has adopted in the past two years. With respect to the special report on the causes of

conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, we note that progress is being made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report, although, as we will see later in more detail, greater progress was made in some areas than in others.

As a result of the implementation of some of those recommendations, Africa is now experiencing fewer conflicts than in 1998, at the time of the issuance of the original report, when 14 States were involved in armed conflict and 11 were experiencing political turmoil.

The report recognizes that the international community, African countries and regional organizations have made serious efforts to deal with the scourge of conflicts in Africa. The Secretary-General further notes that, while steady progress has been noted in areas such as peacemaking and peacekeeping, the progress made in poverty reduction has been modest and slow, despite the considerable efforts made by African countries to implement NEPAD and to create an enabling environment suitable for economic growth.

In conclusion, we wish to thank the Secretary-General for his support for the development efforts of African countries. We urge the international community, particularly the donor States and financial institutions, as well as the private sector and the international community, to provide generous support in the context of this new political framework.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): First of all, on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), allow me to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/59/206) on the progress of implementation of resolution 58/233 on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

We are pleased that several actions to support the implementation of NEPAD have been undertaken by the world community and international organizations. In that regard, ASEAN supports further international action and, in particular, welcomes initiatives to strengthen partnerships.

The partnership between Asia and Africa is a long-standing one. The first historical encounter was in 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia, at the Asia-Africa Conference. At that time, the nations of both continents

faced the common struggle of freeing themselves from the chains of colonialization.

Today, there is a different challenge to overcome: to combat the malaise of poverty that manifests itself in most of Africa and in some countries of Asia. There is also the common struggle to better integrate into the globalized economy and to achieve sustainable development through the attainment of the targets set out in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Such commonality has spurred developing countries to consolidate their concerns through a concerted voice. In the case of Asia and Africa, we have strengthened our resolve through, among others, the optimal utilization of the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation and several programmes in the framework of technical cooperation among developing countries. We, the member countries of ASEAN, are resolved to maintain a close partnership with Africa for our mutual benefit, and we are very proud to be part of these processes.

Furthermore, ASEAN and NEPAD can also be important links in building a bridge that spans the Indian Ocean, connecting our two continents in the context of a new strategic partnership. Both continents must take advantage of every opportunity for mutually beneficial collaboration, including through ASEAN and NEPAD.

The historic Asian-African Conference 50 years ago gave rise to a unique spirit of kinship and solidarity among the nations of the two regions known as the "Bandung Spirit", which still resonates today in both regions. The Bandung Spirit's principles of solidarity, friendship and cooperation have served as an inspiration for developing countries, especially ASEAN ones.

ASEAN itself has been reaching out to other subregional organizations. In East Asia, we have been working towards closer interaction with China, Japan and South Korea through the ASEAN+3 process. Similarly, we have been active in promoting dialogue with Latin American countries through the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation, and in Europe through the Asia-Europe Meetings. ASEAN now seeks to promote dialogue and cooperation with Africa in order to chart a possible course for more concrete

action. Such a dialogue has been started, inter alia, by Japan, through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, and by Indonesia and South Africa, through their initiative to convene the Asian-African Sub-Regional Organizations Conference (AASROC).

During the Eighth ASEAN Summit, held in Cambodia in 2002, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, in his capacity as Chair of the African Union, called on ASEAN leaders to cooperate with Africa on NEPAD and on matters of common interest. In response, President Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia offered to co-host the first Asian-African Sub-Regional Organization Conference.

The first Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia, on 29 and 30 July 2003, was a vital catalyst in inspiring both Asia and Africa to reinvigorate the principles and process of cooperation that had been launched in 1955. The Governments of Indonesia and South Africa later agreed to organize the Asian-African Summit, to be held on 21 and 22 April 2005 in Jakarta, which will be immediately followed by the commemoration of the golden jubilee of the Asian-African Conference, to be held on 23 April 2005 in Bandung. The theme of that summit will be "Reinvigorating the Bandung spirit: working towards a new Asian-African strategic partnership".

At the second Conference, held in Durban, South Africa, on 19 and 20 August 2004, it was agreed that the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership be launched by the leaders of the two continents during the Asian-African Summit to be held in April 2005. The Partnership is envisioned as a vehicle to enable the countries of the two regions to cooperate for their mutual benefit, and it is intended to promote peace, prosperity and progress.

I would like to conclude by saying that ASEAN and NEPAD share a common aspiration, and that is to pursue a path of development that rests on the principles of peace, security, stability and prosperity. Towards that objective, ASEAN would like to reaffirm its commitment to the successful outcome of the Asian-African Summit and of the golden jubilee of the 1955 Asian-African Conference, both to be held in 2005, and emphasizes the important role of the international community in ensuring implementation of the outcomes of the 2005 Asian-African Summit.

Mr. Hackett (Barbados): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member States at the United Nations on agenda item 38 (a), "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", and 38 (b), "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

CARICOM countries have strong ties of history and a long tradition of cooperation and solidarity with the countries of Africa: we endured together the experience of slavery, with a large number of African slaves arriving on our shores at the height of the slave trade; we participated around the same period of time in the anti-colonial struggle leading to the independence of our countries; and we stood by the side of African States, particularly South Africa, in their fight against Apartheid. The item that is before us today therefore holds special significance for the countries of the Caribbean Community. So, while we associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, we wanted to make a few remarks of our own.

I would like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for the two reports contained in documents A/59/206 and A/59/285, which do much to facilitate our consideration of the agenda item before us. They provide an insightful analysis of the progress made and the problems that still remain to be overcome in achieving development and extending peace and prosperity throughout the African continent.

CARICOM member States are heartened by the leadership that African countries have shown, both in laying the foundations for long-term development and in creating conditions for durable peace and security on that continent. Those efforts deserve the unstinting support of the international community. I take this opportunity to pledge the full support and cooperation of CARICOM in that regard.

In considering the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), CARICOM member States take note of the strong sense of ownership demonstrated by African countries and organizations, as witnessed by the increasing integration of NEPAD priorities into national policies and programmes. We are encouraged by the progress being made in developing sectoral policy frameworks, implementing

specific programmes and projects and establishing targets for expenditure on selected NEPAD sectoral priorities. As the report (A/59/206) indicates, that progress clearly demonstrates the policy coherence that is being achieved in the implementation of NEPAD.

We also welcome the launching of specific initiatives in such areas as infrastructure, health, education, environment, tourism, agriculture, science and technology and industrialization. Since the agricultural sector is considered to be the centrepiece of the NEPAD agenda, permit me to single out that sector for specific comment. It is particularly noteworthy that African Governments have been strengthening their agricultural research and development as well as their agricultural technology systems and that they have committed themselves to allocating at least 10 per cent of national budgetary resources to that sector. That shows not only a deepening of national ownership but also a recognition of the critical role that agriculture plays in the attainment of sustainable development.

The establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism is a laudable initiative. We believe that the Mechanism will help African countries to identify the institutional, policy and capacity strengths and weaknesses of the programme and will serve as a tool for making the implementation of NEPAD more effective. The increase in the number of countries that have signed on to the Mechanism and the progress that has been made in moving that important initiative forward reflect the growing confidence in its value and gives practical expression to the principle of African ownership of the NEPAD programme.

Notwithstanding the encouraging achievements made thus far, however, CARICOM member States take note of the fact that many challenges and constraints beset our work towards the full attainment of the NEPAD objectives. The support of the international community remains crucial to the successful realization of the goals of the New Partnership. Africa continues to bear a heavy debt burden and lacks domestic resources. Africa's share of global trade continues to be minuscule, while the continent has been unable to attract sufficient levels of foreign direct investment.

While several developed countries have granted various forms of debt relief, including outright cancellation, to several African countries, the issue of

debt relief continues to pose a significant challenge to the development efforts of many African countries. Attaining the decision point, we learn from the report, has not brought about the much-hoped-for debt sustainability. We therefore support the extension of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative until December 2006 in order to provide the necessary financing for its completion, and thereby greater relief for some current beneficiaries, as well as for those countries that have yet to reach the decision point. CARICOM countries also join the call for a new framework for debt sustainability that aims at greater flexibility in dealing with the external debt crisis and greater willingness to reduce the debt of countries that are at risk or that display signs of insolvency.

It is clear, however, that, in addition to debt relief, much more is required in terms of increases in official development assistance and foreign direct investment and in terms of reformed trade policies if Africa is to be able to achieve the objectives of NEPAD and, ultimately, the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, assistance in all those areas could be more effective if there were greater coherence of policy actions in the international assistance provided by donors.

CARICOM States therefore urge increased international efforts for the New Partnership. We ourselves have provided support in areas such as electoral reform and public-sector reform and stand ready to extend further cooperation, within the limits of our resources. In addition, we believe that the African Partnership Forum, which was established for the purpose of deepening dialogue in support of Africa's development, is a mechanism through which the potential of South-South cooperation could be harnessed in support of NEPAD. In that regard, African Governments may wish to consider including a representative, or representatives, from other parts of the South in the membership of the Forum.

Turning now to questions of peace and security, CARICOM member States are encouraged by indications of abatement in armed conflict in Africa. As the Secretary-General's report (A/59/285) notes, the number of countries in the region experiencing armed conflict or civil strife has dropped from 14, in 1998, to six today. Similar trends are noted with respect to countries under severe political crisis or turbulence. CARICOM member States welcome the recent launching of the African Peace and Security Council,

which we believe will play a pivotal role in the resolution of conflict and the promotion of durable peace on the continent.

We commend the active role played by the African Union in addressing major crises such as the one in Darfur.

We call for further strengthening of cooperation, under Chapter VIII of the Charter, between the United Nations and regional arrangements and institutions in Africa.

In conclusion, CARICOM member States are of the view that the encouraging signs of change in Africa need to be matched by robust international support, so that the gains made can be consolidated and the continent placed on a path to sustainable progress. We stand ready to support Africa in that noble exercise.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the reports before us.

The report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/59/206) lays out the various projects under way in the areas of infrastructure, health, education, agriculture and industrialization, to mention but a few, that the African Union has undertaken to enhance Africa's development. It goes without saying that, development being a dynamic process, the implementation of those projects is also interconnected. Nevertheless, allow me to comment on some of the individual undertakings mentioned in the report.

The importance of infrastructure to Africa's development cannot be overemphasized. In that context, I wish to point out that the Southern Africa power pool project is of crucial importance to Southern Africa and to the continent as whole. However, we are faced with a problem that could have devastating effects on our development. Hence, at the last summit of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), heads of State or Government reaffirmed that "the power supply situation in the SADC region will reach crisis levels by 2007 if no concrete steps are taken to increase the region's power-generation capacity".

It is in that context that we express our appreciation to the African Development Bank (ADB) for funds provided to NEPAD, and call on the international community to augment the capacity of the

ADB to assist with the development efforts of Africa in that critical area.

African heads of State or Government have reaffirmed their commitment and determination to increase food production, reduce hunger and transform rural Africa by way of developing and launching Africa's green revolution. Through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, Africa aims to achieve food security and to eradicate poverty on the continent. Agricultural research and development is a priority in that respect. We therefore express our thanks and appreciation to the Canadian International Development Agency for financial assistance aimed at carrying out research and establishing agricultural centres on the continent.

I wish to stress that mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of NEPAD remains a priority for the African Union. At their most recent Assembly, which was held in Addis Ababa, the heads of State and Government adopted a declaration on the subject of gender in which they acknowledged the progress made and emphasized the importance of extending gender parity to the subregional and national levels. In that connection, we are proud that the first President of the Pan-African Parliament is a woman. That demonstrates Africa's commitment to gender equality.

The report of the Secretary-General points out the role of regional economic communities in implementing NEPAD. We believe that regional economic communities are key in that process, as they are the building blocks of the African Union. Convinced of that important role, SADC held a two-day workshop for its member States that was aimed at building synergies between NEPAD and the SADC regional indicative strategic development plan. In addition, the meeting acknowledged the linkage among the implementation of, respectively, the regional indicative strategic development plan, NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The challenges and constraints with regard to the implementation of NEPAD are well covered in the report, and I shall not repeat them. However, I must emphasize that external support to NEPAD is complementary to the efforts of the African countries in this partnership. In that respect, we welcome the various efforts and initiatives undertaken to support Africa's development. In addition, we seek to increase

South-South cooperation, for it continues to play an important role in the development of Africa.

The United Nations is at the centre of mobilizing international support for NEPAD. But, as we all know, the United Nations system, which has long supported Africa's development, can continue to do so only if Member States provide it with financial support. Therefore, the capacity of the United Nations hinges on the commitment of Member States. The conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary-General are valid and encompass the spirit of partnership, which is what is needed to implement NEPAD and to assist Africa in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

On the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/59/285), we are encouraged by the progress that has been made. We note, for example, that only six African countries are considered to be in a situation of armed conflict today, as opposed to 16 countries that were in that situation when the first report was issued, in 1998. We also note that African countries and regional organizations on the continent have made serious efforts to deal with the scourge of conflict by promoting peace negotiations and brokering peace agreements. Clearly, our aim is to completely rid Africa of armed conflict.

The African Union has created a Peace and Security Council and is in the process of establishing an African standby force to enable Africa to undertake effective peace operations and to enhance collective security. We note with appreciation the positive response by the United Nations and the international community to conflict situations in Africa.

Laudable as these peacemaking and peacekeeping developments are, progress has been modest, and the implementation of most recommendations has been slow. Needless to say, there can be no peace without development, and there can be no development without peace. Hence, peace efforts should go hand in hand with economic development efforts.

Also of concern to us is the fact, that while some long-standing conflicts have been resolved, there are new challenges threatening peace and stability, such as the spread of HIV and AIDS. We therefore call on the United Nations and the international community to engage with Africa to make serious efforts in assisting it to implement NEPAD and its priority areas. Only

then can we ensure durable peace and sustainable development on the African continent.

The Abuja Declaration on Roll Back Malaria in Africa is a collective undertaking by African heads of State to address this major killer disease in Africa. While the sixtieth session of the General Assembly is expected to evaluate progress made in the achievement of the mid-term targets, the seriousness of this disease warrants consideration at the present session.

In Namibia, malaria continues to be a major public health problem and thus warrants special attention in terms of monitoring trends, formulating control strategies and ensuring prevention at all levels of the health care system. Namibia is prone to outbreaks, with seasonal trends, which are mainly influenced by rainfall. We have established the National Vector-borne Disease Control Programme to formulate and update policies and guidelines on malaria control and prevention and thus prevent deaths and reduce illness and socio-economic loss due to malaria and other vector-borne diseases through the progressive improvement and strengthening of local and national capabilities.

Malaria cases seem to have decreased during the years 2002 and 2003. This can be attributed to improvement in vector control interventions and, partly, to climatic changes that resulted in relatively short malaria transmission seasons.

To promote awareness-raising, Malaria Awareness Week in Namibia, Southern African Economic Community (SADC) Malaria Day and Africa Malaria Day were all commemorated in Namibia. We have also trained trainers who will, in turn, train others at district and facility levels. As a result, the monitoring of epidemics has shown improvement in a number of districts. However, we know that a lot still needs to be done.

Furthermore, various partners donated more than 42,000 nets during the current year. These include 36,000 from the World Health Organization (WHO), 7,000 from the United Nations Children's Fund and the rest from the Shell Company, Old Mutual and Standard Bank Namibia. Most of these nets have been distributed to pregnant mothers and to children under the age of five. Thanks to the European Union, our programme and support services currently have adequate infrastructure, which enhances our work.

While we commend the partnership advocacy effort, we would propose that collaboration at the country level should also include awareness-raising, thus contributing to prevention. The unavailability of medical products due to their high cost leaves us with the alternative of using insecticide-treated nets.

As indicated in the report, factors contributing to malaria are multidimensional and therefore call for a comprehensive response. Resistance to anti-malaria treatment, combined with the inaccessibility of combination therapies, is aggravating the situation. Therefore, the pilot scheme being explored by WHO is one that those affected by malaria await with great hope. We need to focus on treatment to which vectors are not resistant and that is widely available and, at the same time, affordable.

We call on the international community to contribute generously to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. That is necessary for the Fund to complement the efforts of the countries affected, particularly those in Africa.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: second consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support" (A/59/206). My delegation appreciates the effort that went into preparing it.

The delegation of China wishes to thank the representative of Qatar for his statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Chinese delegation has carefully studied the Secretary-General's report. We are glad to note that, through the collective and individual efforts of African countries, remarkable progress has been made in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). African countries have jointly formulated a sectoral policy framework. Some specific programmes and projects have been carried out, and an index for NEPAD priorities has been compiled. In addition, headway has been made in many areas, such as infrastructure, health, education, the environment, tourism, agriculture, science and technology and industrialization.

At the same time, we have also noted that Africa still faces numerous difficulties, challenges and constraints in genuinely establishing and implementing

NEPAD. In order to overcome those difficulties and respond to the challenges, the Secretary-General has put forward three recommendations, which the Chinese delegation fully endorses. I would now like to share with the Assembly my Government's view on how to assist Africa in implementing NEPAD.

First of all, we believe that the international community should strive to establish an external economic and financial environment favourable to Africa's development. Africa cannot develop in isolation from the strong support and assistance of the international community. In implementing NEPAD, African countries are faced with a wide spectrum of grave challenges in terms of financial resources, technologies, debt, trade and investment. Without an open, fair, democratic and transparent international economic and financial order, it will be very difficult for African countries to attain development.

Secondly, official development assistance (ODA) to African countries should be increased. The Secretary-General pointed out in his report that, compared with the previous year, ODA to African countries in 2003 increased by 3.9 per cent, which is still far behind the level required by the Monterrey Consensus and the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. Consequently, the international community, especially developed donor countries, should fulfil their commitments, drastically increase ODA to African countries, especially to least developed countries, and respect African countries' ownership and leadership in the use of ODA.

Thirdly, South-South cooperation with African countries should be effectively strengthened in order to realize the common development of developing countries. The Secretary-General pointed out in his report that South-South cooperation has increasingly become an important complement to international development cooperation and is playing a major role in implementing NEPAD. We fully agree with that view. We sincerely call upon developing countries to vigorously promote the Global System of Trade Preferences among developing countries and conduct fruitful South-South cooperation.

Fourthly, conflict prevention and resolution constitute an important guarantee for Africa's development. The United Nations should play a heightened role in African conflict prevention, peace-

building, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction, and reinforce its coordination and cooperation with the relevant African regional and subregional organizations.

An important component of China's foreign policy is to develop and consolidate friendly relations and cooperation with African countries and peoples and to support and assist their endeavours for economic development and social progress. As a major step towards enhancing South-South cooperation, China and African countries have established the China-Africa Cooperation Forum. China has conducted extensive and substantive exchanges and cooperation with African countries. The Chinese Government has already signed debt-cancellation agreements with 31 African countries, and the cancelled debts account for over 60 per cent of the total amount owed to China. At the same time, the Chinese Government has decided to award duty-free status to some goods exported to China by least-developed African countries.

Finally, I would like to state that the Chinese Government is ready to support Africa's development and the implementation of the NEPAD through the China-Africa Cooperation Forum and all other cooperation channels.

Mr. Amayo (Kenya): My delegation appreciates the able manner in which you, Mr. President, continue to steer our deliberations. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his second consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We also align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf the African Union, as well as that made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the G-77 and China.

NEPAD's goal is based on a common vision: a firm and shared conviction of the pressing duty to eradicate poverty in Africa. It aims at placing African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development, both individually and collectively. In addition, it aims at ensuring that our countries participate actively in the world economy and the body politic.

My delegation would like to reiterate Kenya's commitment to promoting accelerated growth and sustainable development by eradicating widespread and severe poverty, halting Africa's marginalization,

increasing Africa's competitiveness and bargaining power in the globalization process and restoring peace, security and stability. My Government has therefore incorporated that initiative into its economic planning process. In that regard, the implementation of the NEPAD agenda is central to the realization of Kenya's aspirations, as espoused in our economic recovery strategy for wealth and employment creation.

Kenya's commitment to the challenge of the new beginning and strategic direction spelled out in NEPAD is demonstrated by the fact that it has established a national steering committee charged with the responsibility for coordinating the country's participation in the NEPAD initiative and, specifically, with promoting a genuine partnership between the Government, the private sector and civil society. The committee is also a mechanism for constructive engagement with development partners, especially in the harmonization of aid flows and procedures as they relate to the implementation of NEPAD activities.

At the second East Africa NEPAD summit, held in Kenya in October of last year, the secretariat was charged with the responsibility of coordinating regional NEPAD activities. The Governments of Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Mauritius, Rwanda, the Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as representatives of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and various diplomatic missions and United Nations agencies attended the summit.

One of the key elements in the implementation of NEPAD is the African Peer Review Mechanism. This voluntary mechanism is open to all member States for evaluating progress in improving standards of human rights, political, economic and corporate governance and democracy through periodic reviews. We believe that this indicates the seriousness with which the African continent will engage in the real issues of governance that stand in the way of development.

I am pleased to say that Kenya was among the first countries to accede to the Mechanism. We note with satisfaction that 23 countries have now acceded to the mechanism. In July this year, Graça Machel led a support mission to assess Kenya's preparedness and capacity to participate in the peer review process. The mission also ascertained the degree of participation of major stakeholders in the national process.

My delegation is happy to report that the Peer Review Mechanism continues to attract participation and gain acceptance by a broad spectrum of stakeholders in Kenya. My Government is committed to making the review process fully participatory. Hence, the question designed to elicit information for the review mechanism covers varied interests and a broad spectrum of society. This will ensure that the concept of ownership and the perception of social, political and corporate governance are fully entrenched in society.

In this regard, the Government is in the process of instituting a NEPAD national governing council, composed of civil society, the private sector and Government representatives, to oversee the smooth management of the review process. It is hoped that our experience with the mechanism will be shared among Kenya's peers.

While welcoming the support accorded to the NEPAD initiative by the United Nations and the Group of Eight, we note that the commitments made to NEPAD have not been fully realized. We call upon our development partners to fulfil their pledges.

Malaria, which ranks among the world's most serious tropical parasitic diseases, causes more deaths than any other communicable disease. Moreover, it remains the number-one killer of children in sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for the deaths of approximately 1 million children every year. The mortality rate for adults is comparatively lower, but frequent debilitating attacks reduce the quality of life for chronic sufferers.

As a signatory to the Abuja Declaration to Roll Back Malaria, Kenya has removed taxes and tariffs associated with insecticide-treated mosquito nets. A national malaria strategy has been put in place, which focuses on improving malaria case management at all levels of the health sector; reducing the risk of malaria during pregnancy; increasing the use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and vector-control technologies; and responding to malaria epidemics.

In conclusion, the National Malaria Control Council has been reconstructed to become the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee. This is a more effective political and financial management tool for soliciting and directing investment to roll back malaria in Kenya. The Government intends to reduce morbidity and mortality by 30 per cent among Kenya's

population by the 2006 and to sustain improved levels of control through to 2010.

We welcome the announcement by the World Health Organization's strategy coordinator for the Roll Back Malaria Campaign that trials carried out in Mozambique indicate that a malaria vaccine is beginning to yield promising results. That would be a major breakthrough for combating one of the most devastating diseases affecting development. We are grateful to our development partners and to the United Nations Global Fund for both technical and financial support in fighting communicable diseases.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his two reports on the items we are discussing today, namely, those on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Union and by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

In his report on NEPAD, the Secretary-General highlights the policy measures and actions taken by African countries and institutions to implement the New Partnership for Africa's Development and acknowledges that African countries have underlined the significance that they attach to the priorities of NEPAD by earmarking financial allocations to those priorities, which also gives practical expression to the principle of African ownership.

At the same time, the Secretary-General points out the severe constraints and challenges faced by the Partnership. It is clear that, despite all the actions and commitments by the African countries and institutions, the main constraint remains the lack of resources, financial or otherwise. It is evident that, in order for NEPAD to succeed, it needs to become a true partnership between Africa and the rest of the international community.

While the Secretary-General's report highlights what has been done by the international community, it concludes that that is not enough. The report specifically refers to the challenge of the coherence of policy actions, and it correctly states that the intention would be to lead to increased and effective aid,

reformed trade policies and debt relief by developed countries for Africa. We are pleased to see the reference, in paragraph 36, to the need to "incorporate more explicitly the impact of debt-servicing on the financing requirements for meeting the Millennium Development Goals", as that is in line with the spirit behind the inclusion of debt relief in the Monterrey Consensus and its treatment as a source of resources to obtain the Millennium Development Goals.

My delegation believes that the challenge of policy coherence can flow naturally only from clear political will and a determined commitment to assist and contribute to the well-being of the people of Africa. In this regard, my delegation appreciates the establishment of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We look forward to its eventual assessment of the scope and adequacy of international support for NEPAD and recommendations on actions to be taken by the international community to enhance support for NEPAD's implementation.

That laudable initiative is fully in keeping with the notion that the United Nations is one of the pillars of international support for NEPAD and that it has a key role to play in mobilizing such support. These ideas were, in fact, inherent in the declaration and first resolution on NEPAD, adopted during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

It should, therefore, come as no surprise that my delegation is somewhat perplexed by the sentiment underlying the language used in the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/59/206). The report refers to further efforts Africa will "need to make" (*ibid.*, para. 67) but when addressing the role of the development partners of Africa, the report only suggests that the partners "can give further practical expression to their support" (*ibid.*, para. 68).

We find this aspect of the report unfortunate, since the United Nations is supposed to play a key role in mobilizing international support, and its language should not be more prescriptive to the countries of Africa than to the rest of the international community. More specific actions must be directed at addressing the particular needs of Africa, which were so well captured in the Millennium Declaration and clearly spelled out in the NEPAD programme.

We look forward to a strong effort by the United Nations to generate international support for the implementation of NEPAD, to assist it in becoming a true partnership, as intended by its designers and proponents. Already, an Asian and African summit will be held in Indonesia in May 2005 to further strengthen the ties between the two subregions. The Asian-African Sub-Regional Organizations Conference, better known as AASROC, will observe the golden jubilee of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference that was held in Bandung, Indonesia, and led to, among other things, the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement.

On the issue of the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, my delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his thorough and comprehensive report (A/59/285). It correctly highlights the progress that has been made in addressing conflicts and civil strife on the continent since the Secretary-General's original report on these issues in 1998 (A/52/871). The Secretary-General points out how the prevalence of conflicts on the African continent has been reduced over the past six years. He also highlights the efforts of Africa and the international community to improve Africa's ability not only to deal with conflict prevention, but also with peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction on the continent.

The report acknowledges that the African Union is playing an effective role in the management and resolution of conflicts on the African continent through the creation of structures within the African Union, such as the Peace and Security Council, as well as through the African Union's subregional organizations. A challenge that remains in this area is to clarify the relationship between the African structures and their efforts, and the support of the international community. In that regard, the provision of the requisite moral and material support by the international community to African efforts remains to be addressed.

Another very important challenge highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General is the need to address post-conflict peacebuilding and development and the financing of the recovery effort. The introduction of multidisciplinary peacekeeping mandates is already a move in the right direction, and it prepares the way for post-conflict peace consolidation. It is essential that populations see a peace dividend resulting from the end of conflict and

that the post-conflict authorities be empowered to address the needs of the population. This is critical in the effort to avoid a relapse into conflict and civil instability.

My delegation is pleased to see the specific references by the Secretary-General in his report to the situations in Guinea-Bissau and Burundi and the role played by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in addressing the dire needs of both countries. As I had the honour to chair the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi, I wish to confirm the Secretary-General's observation about the flexibility and foresight demonstrated by the IMF and World Bank in their dealings with Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. The responses by the donor community to the challenges faced by the two countries has, unfortunately, not yet been sufficient to consolidate their post-conflict recovery.

The Economic and Social Council's ad hoc advisory groups have also found a very receptive partner in the Security Council and its Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. This has led to these two Charter bodies — the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council — searching for ways to bridge the gap between peace and development and addressing the socio-economic and political sides of post-conflict reconstruction in a coherent manner, in accordance with their respective mandates under the Charter. This effort is already delivering positive results and holds exciting prospects for the future.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's conclusion that, for the consolidation of peace and security and the creation of conditions for sustainable development, the international community must engage more seriously in the fight against poverty on the African continent. We thus welcome his assertion that it has become urgent to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD through strong support by the international community.

My delegation also agrees with the notion that stronger cooperation is needed between the United Nations, the African Union and the regional and subregional organizations on the continent. We therefore appreciate the Secretary-General's instruction to the relevant agencies and other elements of the United Nations system to look into new ways to

collaborate with the African Union. My delegation is convinced that these global institutions will find a very willing partner in the Africa.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): Today, we are gathered for the annual meeting of the General Assembly on the subject of Africa. It is natural and satisfying that the subject of Africa should find a special place among the priorities of our universal body at a time when its agenda is becoming stronger and more coherent. The debate that brings us together under your authority, Mr. President, and the activities organized this week illustrate both the dynamic process created by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is an initiative by the African countries, and our joint commitment to further strengthen our partnership with Africa.

The past year, we are pleased to say, has seen numerous initiatives and concrete activities carried out in the first instance by the African countries themselves, as well as by their partners and by the United Nations system. The report of the Secretary-General (A/59/206) clearly sets forth those decisions and measures. Its recommendations urge us to consider them in depth, to make them more consistent and to identify priorities. France, for its part, is resolved to implement those recommendations.

The Dutch presidency of the European Union just reminded us of Europeans' commitment to support projects defined by African countries with regard to peace and security, good governance, economic and social progress and environmental protection. The presidency rightly stressed how Africa is, more than ever before, at the heart of our common development policy. France's constant efforts are naturally within that framework.

Africa and the challenges it is facing are also top international priorities. The principles and objectives defined at the Millennium Summit commit all of us everywhere, but we know what is particularly at stake in Africa. NEPAD was endorsed and supported by the partnership of the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, and by the actions decided upon at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held at Johannesburg. The international financial institutions are also strengthening their activities in Africa. At the World Trade Organization, States are beginning to understand Africa's particular characteristics.

As for the Group of Eight (G-8), it has tried for several years to mobilize the international community around initiatives aimed primarily at benefiting African countries. I am thinking in particular of the debt of poor countries, official development assistance or the fight against HIV/AIDS. At Genoa in 2001, at Kananaskis in 2002 and at Evian last year, the G-8 lent its full support to initiatives of African countries and, of course, to NEPAD. The General Assembly recognized that positive contribution. This year, the Sea Island Summit once again referred to it. France is pleased that the future British presidency has placed Africa at the top of its priorities.

Among all the achievements of the past 12 months related to NEPAD, I should like to highlight four particular points.

First, visible progress has been made in implementing the peace and security component. The relevant institutional architecture is being put in place. The African Union Commission is playing a decisive role in that regard, with the full cooperation of the Member States and regional organizations concerned. That progress also results from the remarkable cooperation between Africans and their partners. France has strongly contributed to that cooperation by participating in preventive and peacebuilding efforts, strengthening African peacekeeping capacities and supporting regional organizations. The European Union — as its presidency just reminded us — has established a peace facility that has already been allocated 250 million. However, further efforts are needed. The African Union must be able to benefit from predictable assistance in the long term, not only as immediate needs arise. Coordination and complementarity among the African Union, regional organizations, the United Nations and donors must be improved in this area.

Finally, France believes that the international community, in addition to financing peacekeeping operations, should create a tool to help countries emerging from crisis situations to cover the expenses incurred in the fragile period between conflict and post-conflict situations. As we see today in several African countries, such needs are significant, early and simultaneous. I am thinking, for example, of the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or the restoration of State governmental functions and basic public services. It is no longer possible to improvise ad hoc solutions, as we are doing

too often. France hopes that the discussions on that subject bear fruit as quickly as possible.

Secondly, the Peer Review Mechanism is gradually being established and becoming a reality. France naturally encourages this innovation within NEPAD and welcomes the commitment of the first countries to be volunteers. We are following with interest the dialogue and exchanges that are taking place. Furthermore, we have some experience with that type of mechanism in the European Union and in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and we know what is at stake. The Peer Review Mechanism is the African countries' instrument. We also know the role it is playing in the strengthened partnership between NEPAD and the donor countries.

My third point concerns economic and social development. Here, efforts are numerous and significant. I should simply like to mention some priorities defined by NEPAD that we strongly support, together with the European Union, the United Nations and the G-8. Those priorities — which are both interdependent and crucial for one another's success — are the fight against HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, education, employment, agriculture, water and sanitation, environmental protection and infrastructures, particularly regional ones. For each of those priorities, plans and projects are being developed within NEPAD; we hope that they will be supported. France's official development assistance has espoused those priorities. As far as Africa is concerned, we have, in a way, become "NEPAD-ized".

My fourth and last point concerns financing for development, which is essential for the success of NEPAD and of African countries. France particularly welcomes the increase in official development assistance throughout the world in recent years. We are making our contribution: the commitment to attain 0.5 per cent of our gross domestic product in 2007 will be achieved, perhaps even before that date. The objective is then to reach 0.7 per cent in 2012, as announced by the President of the French Republic. France encourages this movement at the global level, where at least 50 per cent should go to Africa. The continent is already and by far the prime beneficiary of our effort.

Debt relief efforts are also continuing. Here again, France has sought, inter alia, to participate fully in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. At

the Paris Club and at the International Monetary Fund, France called for a two-year extension of the initiative and for serious discussions on the viability of debt and on taking external shocks into account. Those efforts should now bear fruit and enable us to release fresh resources for development.

In that context, I should also like to mention trade. Fortunately, the Geneva framework agreement relaunched the Doha round; the European Union's proposals played an essential role in that regard. France argues that development remains the objective of the round and that all developing countries can truly benefit from its results. The poorest countries — many of which, sadly, are African — must preserve and increase their share of the market, rather than the reverse. In that connection, France and the European Union have made proposals related to market access, export subsidies for agricultural products and the problem of commodities. We hope that other partners will join us.

Finally, it is increasingly recognized that progress is needed on all those fronts, but that such progress will remain insufficient. As an impressive number of heads of State or Government observed on 20 September 2004, the time has come to look at new resources for development that are additional, stable and predictable. France has been working with Brazil, Chile and Spain to identify technically feasible and economically realistic options. Each of them would enable us to release substantial funds for the fight against hunger and poverty. In that connection, I would like to point out that a briefing and dialogue will be taking place this afternoon with the representatives of that group of four countries. Mr. Landau will be taking part in that meeting on behalf of France.

Three years after its inception, NEPAD has become the principle, and perhaps even the unique, reference framework for the development of the African continent and its funding — both for African countries themselves, and also for their bilateral and multilateral partners. Support for NEPAD must continue to benefit from all of our energy and it must become a long-term endeavour. That is why France has taken the initiative of creating a "Forum for Partnership with Africa". That Forum met for the first time in November 2003 in Paris, then in Maputo in April of this year, and the third meeting was held at the beginning of this month in Washington. The next meeting is planned for Abuja next year. That Forum

will support and work with African countries in all those areas and it has, in our view, already proven its value.

The support of the United Nations system is essential. In that respect, I would like to pay tribute to the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Advisor. The specialized agencies are supporting nascent institutions and regional organizations. They are aligning their priorities with those of NEPAD. Their efforts are welcome, but they must be supplemented. The United Nations must, more than ever, turn its actions towards supporting policies, coordinating activities in the field, mobilizing the international community, facilitating the coherent organization of its work, and following up on its results.

The task is indeed immense. But, we must mobilize ourselves and remain determined, so that the commitments become realities for the benefit of all those who are suffering. Next year will be an anniversary of the United Nations and a development year and, obviously therefore, it will be Africa's year. The meeting of heads of State and Government here in September 2005 offers us an opportunity to show the world that poverty, hunger and disease are not inevitabilities, and that cooperation among nations can overcome them. This movement has been started. We shall stand by your side, Sir, in seeing that they succeed.

Mr. Aboul Atta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to express its thanks and appreciation to those who contributed to preparing for today's session to discuss very important issues for Africa, which represent a major element of the United Nations urgent African agenda: the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, as well as combating malaria.

I would like to stress our support for the two statements — one by Nigeria on behalf of the African Union, and the other by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China — calling on the international community to make every possible effort with respect to the NEPAD initiative so that it can become an enlightened African vision for dealing with the issues and problems that face our continent and for finding appropriate solutions for them. NEPAD's work is based

on African ownership of the present and the future of the continent's peoples, and on Africa's responsibility for carrying out a comprehensive strategy, provided by NEPAD, in order to deal with all of the urgent priorities that have been agreed upon.

The report indicates that last year we saw progress made in establishing sectoral policy frameworks, implementing specific programmes and projects, and determining certain sectors as priorities for NEPAD. Despite the fact that some sectors, such as transportation, water, sanitation and energy, have made some progress, some important and vital sectors, such as education and health care, still face obstacles and challenges. In the agricultural sector, which represents the axis of NEPAD's work, in the light of the dependence of African economies on it, the desired level of countries allocating 10 per cent of their budget resources to agriculture in the next five years has not been met. In addition, there has been a fall in international assistance and subsidies provided to agriculture in Africa.

As we deal with the agricultural sector in Africa and the constraints and problems it faces, we must not ignore the relationship between the possibilities of development in that sector and what had been agreed to during the Doha round of international trade negotiations. One of the most important elements in that agreement is the commitment of developed countries to put an end to subsidies for agricultural exports. Another is to begin negotiations on ending trade tariffs on cotton. The report of the Secretary-General concludes, and this is the matter that we would like to underline, that, despite the central role of the United Nations in making NEPAD a success, it faces constraints and difficulties in its support of the initiative. The most important of those problems is the lack of additional resources to finance NEPAD and the fact that donor countries and stakeholders have yet to take specific steps to give impetus to NEPAD. Those steps are particularly needed now, since African States have shown their practical commitment to moving NEPAD forward by allocating financial resources for selected priority sectors.

My delegation would still like to emphasize the pivotal role and contribution of the United Nations in the area of peacebuilding and peacekeeping in Africa, particularly in providing the technical and financial resources necessary to increase internal African capabilities in that area. It is clear that Africa has taken

concrete steps to enhance its ownership of ways and means of dealing with the sources of threat to its peace and security. This was emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General concerning the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union has ably and effectively continued its efforts in the continent to set up a rapid response force to help stop situations from escalating politically and militarily and on the humanitarian level and from leading to heavier burdens on Africa. It is still important for the international community to show more attention to and effectiveness in its commitment to support African internal efforts, as was underlined in the report of the Secretary-General. Clearly, we have heard initiatives and pledges that are encouraging in that direction by some of the industrial Group of Eight (G-8), the European Union and other countries. We call on States to implement their pledges and commitments as quickly as possible. My delegation would like to emphasize two elements here: logistical support and training for African States in peacekeeping tasks. We would like to see a close trilateral coordinating relationship between the United Nations, the donor States and the African Union in order to set up an integrated implementation strategy to translate political and moral support into concrete steps with a clear timetable.

I would once again like to emphasize that the ways of dealing with conflicts in Africa should not begin and end with merely traditional elements of peacekeeping. We should give special importance to the process of making and building peace. And, we would like, within the framework of the United Nations, to have a common vision of how to apply regional mechanisms for early warning systems. We call for putting in place a clear vision of the elements of peacebuilding within the peacekeeping missions on the African continent — particularly those elements that overlap the mandates of peacebuilding and peacekeeping, such as programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. Here, we envision a clear relationship between the main organs of the United Nations, as well as coordination of those bodies and United Nations programmes for providing relief, rehabilitation and development.

The main challenge in dealing with African conflicts lies in dealing with post-conflict situations,

which involves programmes aimed at reconciliation and interrelated political, economic, social and administrative development. My delegation welcomes the fact that the Secretary-General has addressed the very important aspects of durable and comprehensive peace in Africa. In this context, we would like to underline the fact that the degree of success in bringing about a comprehensive and durable peace is dependent on the financial support provided by the committed international community to African countries emerging from conflict, with a view to building on the progress achieved in the security and political areas.

The international community fully understands the gravity of the threat posed by malaria and its spread, not just to the physical health of a large part of humanity, regardless of their nationalities, but also to their economic, social and political well-being. Africa, of which Egypt is a part, is the continent the worst affected by malaria and it spends about 40 per cent of its health-care budgets combating the disease. Malaria reduces the rate of development on the continent by 1.3 per cent each year.

All of those elements underline the fact that we cannot ignore that serious disease that impedes development efforts and eliminates appropriate opportunities for bringing about real economic development in Africa. Estimates suggest that malaria is the disease responsible for the largest number of deaths in the world. Therefore, we have two responsibilities in facing it. First and foremost, is the humanitarian responsibility, since this disease can be contained and treated. The second responsibility is a political and economic one. Developing countries will not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, to which we all aspire, if we do not contain this disease. The choice to combat malaria is not difficult; implementation is the real challenge for international collective efforts.

Mr. Lahiri (India): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his second consolidated report on progress in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and for his report on the implementation of recommendations contained in his report on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We also thank him for transmitting the report entitled "2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa".

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77.

By 2002, official development assistance to Africa had reached \$22.23 billion. According to preliminary data, developed countries increased their official development assistance by 3.9 per cent in real terms between 2002 and 2003. The need for a further effort to increase official development assistance to Africa has been highlighted in the Secretary-General's report. Official development assistance is important for the low-income countries, especially the least developed countries, among them highly-indebted poor countries, in their efforts to achieve the targets of the Millennium Development Goals. The possibility of increased funding for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative — an outcome of the Group of Eight summit of June 2004 — is a welcome development.

We have consistently held that Africa knows its own problems best, as well as the solutions to those problems. The African countries have demonstrated their commitment to advancing the implementation of NEPAD by earmarking financial allocations to selected sectoral priorities. Africa needs support for the solutions that it has identified. The Secretary-General has highlighted the need for further practical expression of the support by Africa's development partners for the efforts of the African countries. Significant additional outlays are called for.

India's commitment to Africa's development is born of the deep historical bond that exists between the peoples of India and Africa. Not only has India been trading with Africa for centuries, but we shared the pains of colonialism together. The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, drew his initial inspiration for India's freedom struggle from the continent of Africa. Today, as in the past, we remain committed to working together with African countries as partners for the progress and prosperity of the peoples of Africa, as well as for strengthening the forces of democracy and stability.

Our commitment to Africa's development has been reflected in concrete contributions made in a number of areas. Indian soldiers have contributed to African security through United Nations peacekeeping operations. India has been contributing in the area of human resource development through the training of

personnel and the provision of experts to several African countries. India has been extending its cooperation to several countries in the form of supplies of food grains, sugar and medicine, including anti-retroviral drugs to fight HIV/AIDS. India provided nearly 100,000 tons of food aid last year to African countries adversely affected by drought. Cooperation between India and Africa today covers diverse areas, ranging from the development of infrastructure, such as railways, to information and communication technologies.

India has proposed a connectivity mission — for electronic connectivity and knowledge connectivity — among the African nations, to facilitate the economic connectivity of the region. To that end, a programme to connect all the 53 nations of the African Union by a satellite and a fibre-optic network is envisaged. Apart from providing effective communication and connectivity among the nations, the same link will support tele-education, tele-medicine, e-governance, e-commerce, infotainment, resource-mapping and meteorological services. This network will give rural areas connectivity to the African Union — an effective way to use space technology to provide democratic access and empowerment.

India has decided to provide a seamless and integrated satellite, fibre-optic and wireless network connecting 53 African countries for a range of e-services. It will connect five universities, 53 learning centres, 10 super-specialty hospitals and 53 remote-end locations for patients in rural areas. Installation, initial operation and maintenance for three years will cost about \$50 million. It will be in place within three years, and all the African nations participating in the network will be able to reap the full benefits.

India has developed closer institutional engagements with the African Union, the Southern African Development Community and NEPAD. The Government of India announced a contribution of \$200 million for engagement with NEPAD projects, in a combination of concessional loans and credits, including a grant element for training, the provision of consultants and the preparation of project feasibility studies. To give further impetus to India's relations with West Africa, a new group has been formed, called TEAM-9 — the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement. A symbol of South-South cooperation, TEAM-9 is directed at the transfer of technology to Western African countries, involving the

sharing of various types of expertise and intellectual and physical resources, as well as economic opportunities for promoting welfare growth and the prosperity of the people. It will also involve providing opportunities for education and training in crucial sectors.

The gloomy picture of armed conflict and civil strife in Africa has changed dramatically and positively over the past six years. We share the satisfaction and sense of optimism of the African nations themselves at this development, and particularly at the Secretary-General's observation that most African countries today enjoy relatively stable political conditions, are governed by democratically elected regimes, and are concentrating their efforts on economic reconstruction and on combating poverty and underdevelopment.

We are sympathetic to the need for immediate peace dividends in the post-conflict recovery phase, which would help give rise to a better appreciation of the benefits of peace. We are therefore concerned to note the slow progress in poverty reduction, despite the great effort made by African countries to implement NEPAD and to create an enabling environment for economic growth and sustainable development.

The worsening conditions for young people owing to high unemployment are a potential threat to peace and stability. These challenges need to be faced urgently to consolidate the gains achieved in the immediate post-conflict period.

The funding facility set up by India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) on the margins of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as an initiative complementary to other ongoing efforts of the international community to combat poverty and hunger, has made its own contribution by recently launching the first project to be financed by the IBSA Fund, in support of agriculture and livestock development in Guinea-Bissau. The project encompasses activities aimed at the eradication of poverty and hunger, as a contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The IBSA facility has thus begun its contribution to Africa and to enhancing South-South Cooperation.

It is unfortunate that malaria continues to plague several regions of the world, particularly many parts of Africa, even after a nearly century-long campaign against that disease, which kills more than a million people a year, including 700,000 children.

The fight against malaria has been made more difficult by the emergence of strains with resistance towards available effective and affordable anti-malarial medicines and insecticides. Such resistance has now reached unacceptably high levels in Africa, and a multi-drug-resistant malaria strain has been widely prevalent in South-East Asia and South America.

Diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS incapacitate the workforce, decrease economic productivity and reduce output. In African countries, malarial infection has been estimated to be responsible for slowing down economic growth by about 1.3 per cent per year. In rural areas, where the malaria transmission season generally coincides with the planting or harvesting season, this imposes a dual burden on the poor: they not only lose wages but also need to spend their meagre resources on medical treatment and health care. The human suffering and economic loss caused by malaria are unnecessary, as the disease is preventable, treatable and curable.

Although financial investments have increased rapidly over the past few years, only about one quarter of the amount needed to effectively combat malaria in Africa alone is currently available. Allocation of sufficient resources is imperative in the context of the Millennium Development Goal targets to be achieved by the affected countries.

Mr. Chulkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation views the strengthening of stability on the African continent as an integral part of the international community's effort to build, under the auspices of the United Nations, a global system to counter new threats and challenges. We will not be able to achieve a harmonious development of international relations if Africa, one of the largest international communities, remains politically, socially, economically and ethnically seismic.

We are pleased to note that the countries and regional organizations of Africa are making serious efforts to settle conflicts by encouraging peace talks and peace agreements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We support the new approach in United Nations peacekeeping practice, to ensure close interaction among United Nations missions working in neighbouring African States. It is important to ensure

coordination in that work. Here, however, we should be particularly careful: coordinated activities of United Nations forces should be based on the principle of full respect for the sovereignty of individual States and should not go beyond the mandates defined for each mission.

We welcome proposals on reinforcing the national borders of African States. The Russian delegation has pointed out on numerous occasions that specific measures should be taken at the borders to counter such dangerous phenomena as the trans-border spillover of conflicts; movements of illegal armed groups, mercenaries and child soldiers; illicit arms trafficking; and illicit natural resource exports. This must not compromise inter-State communication, trade and economic cooperation, integration processes or communications among populations living in border areas.

Africa has not only accumulated a great many problems; it has also succeeded in mobilizing a commensurate potential for international cooperation for the solution of those problems. It is important to make effective and timely use of that potential.

The implementation of the social and economic dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is gathering speed. We are pleased to note the determination of African peoples to pursue the objectives of NEPAD and the willingness of the international community and of Africa's multilateral and bilateral development partners to render all possible support. We view NEPAD as an effective mechanism for achieving the Millennium Development Goals on the continent.

We take note of the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report (A/59/285) addressed to the partners of African countries on the need to bring much-needed coherence to trade, assistance and debt policies, and we call for coordination of the current initiatives on Africa, which should be aimed at mobilizing efforts in support of the implementation of NEPAD.

As a member of the Group of Eight (G-8), Russia is making its own tangible contribution to the implementation of the decisions in support of NEPAD taken by the G-8 at its recent summit, and of measures designed to overcome the most urgent problems of the developing countries, in particular in Africa.

Russia continues focusing its assistance to Africa on such important areas for the continent as debt relief within the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. From 1998 to 2003, we wrote off African countries' debt in the total amount of about \$11.3 billion. Intergovernmental agreements to settle the debt of a number of African States were signed in 2003. Russia makes a significant contribution to the HIPC Trust Fund.

The Russian Federation offers trade preferences to 50 African countries, including 29 least developed countries, whose exports to Russia are exempt from duty. In 2003, most of the goods that Russia imported from Africa were imported under the preferences regime.

Priority is given to professional training in the context of the assistance that Russia renders to African States in the educational field. During the current year alone, Russia has provided more than 700 public education grants to African countries. For the first time, cooperation in this area has been extended to the training of personnel for subregional organizations, in particular the Southern African Development Community.

Russia continues to provide assistance in training personnel for humanitarian operations. The Polytechnic Centre in the city of Kavumu, Rwanda, which was set up by Russia's Ministry of Emergency — a project in which Russia invested more than \$1 million — has trained over 1,200 drivers and mechanics, as well as professional search-and-rescue brigades. That centre is now under the authority of the Rwandese people.

Russia continues to provide targeted humanitarian disaster relief assistance to African countries. In the past two years, Russia has provided such assistance to Algeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Morocco. Last year Russia shipped \$1 million in emergency food assistance to Angola through the World Food Programme. We also made a voluntary contribution of \$2 million to the budget of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to finance humanitarian operations in Africa.

Aware of the urgency of problems relating to the spread of malaria in Africa and its negative effects on the social and economic development of the continent, we support the tireless efforts of the United Nations in carrying out programmes to roll back that disease. That is why assistance of various kinds in the area of health

is an important component of our assistance to the African continent. Of its overall pledge of \$20 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the period 2002-2006, Russia has to date paid \$7.5 million. In response to the appeal of the Group of Eight partners, Russia has joined the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, and to date \$3 million has been provided the World Health Organization for its implementation.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that the African continent continues to face numerous problems, including in the economic and social areas. However, the commitment of African countries to the implementation of NEPAD, with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, requires that all of us show solidarity with the peoples of the continent. Russia intends to continue effectively to participate in joint efforts to promote the development of African States.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.