



# General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

**78<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting

Friday, 11 June 2021, 10 a.m.

New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Bozkir ..... (Turkey)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

## Agenda item 145 (continued)

### Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

#### Letter dated 11 June 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/75/661/Add.4)

**The President:** I would like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/75/661/Add.4, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/75/661/Add.3, the Islamic Republic of Iran has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/75/661/Add.4?

*It was so decided.*

## Agenda item 118 (continued)

### Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

#### (a) Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council

**The President:** As indicated in my letter dated 2 June 2021, the General Assembly will proceed to the election of five non-permanent members of the Security

Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2021. The five outgoing non-permanent members are the following: Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Viet Nam. Those five States cannot be re-elected. Their names should therefore not appear on the ballot papers.

Apart from the five permanent members, the Security Council will include the following States in the year 2022: India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway. The names of those States should therefore also not appear on the ballot papers. Of the five non-permanent members that will remain in office in the year 2022, two are from among African and Asia-Pacific States, one is from among Latin American and Caribbean States and two are from among Western European and other States. Consequently, pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1991 A (XVIII), of 17 December 1963, the five non-permanent members should be elected according to the following pattern: three from African and Asia-Pacific States, one from Eastern European States and one from Latin American and Caribbean States. The ballot papers reflect this pattern.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that, of the three States to be elected from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, two should be from Africa and one should be from the Asia-Pacific region.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates — their number not to exceed the number of seats to be filled — receiving the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of those present

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and voting will be declared elected. If the number of candidates obtaining a two-thirds majority is less than the number of members to be elected, there shall be additional ballots to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the number of places remaining to be filled.

Also, consistent with past practice, in the case of a tie vote, and when it becomes necessary to determine the candidate that will proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Regarding candidatures, I have been informed of the following. For the three vacant seats from among the African and Asia-Pacific States, three endorsed candidates have been communicated, namely, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates. For the one vacant seat from among the Eastern European States, one candidate has been communicated, namely, Albania. For the one vacant seat from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, there is one endorsed candidate, namely, Brazil.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting. Any announcements, including those concerning withdrawals of candidatures, should therefore be made prior to the commencement of the voting process, that is to say, before the announcement of the beginning of the voting process. In addition, ballot papers will be given only to the representative seated directly behind the country's name plate.

As indicated in my letter dated 2 June 2021, all representatives were requested to pick up their ballot papers from the east documents counter, located towards the back of the General Assembly Hall, before being seated. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers. Representatives are requested to remain

in their seats until they are asked to cast their ballots. While the 1+1 format outlined in my letter dated 21 May 2021 will apply to this meeting, only one representative per delegation should walk from the national seat to cast the ballot.

In accordance with resolution 71/323, of 8 September 2017, the names of the candidates that have been communicated to the Secretariat have been printed on the ballot papers for each of the regional groups. Also, additional blank lines corresponding to the number of vacant seats to be filled for each of the regional groups have been provided on the ballot papers for inscribing other names, as necessary.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed and to put an "X" in the boxes next to the names of the candidates, from the relevant region, for which they wish to vote and/or to write other eligible names on the blank lines. If the box next to the name of a candidate is checked, the name of that candidate does not have to be repeated on the blank line. The total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed the number of vacant seats to be filled, as indicated on the ballot paper.

A ballot will be declared invalid if it contains more names of Member States from the relevant region than the number of seats allocated to it. Accordingly, on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African States and Asia-Pacific States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed three; on the ballot papers marked "B", for the Eastern European States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed one; and on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Latin American and Caribbean States, the total number of checked boxes and/or handwritten names should not exceed one.

A ballot paper will be declared invalid if none of the names of the Member States on that ballot for which votes were cast belongs to the relevant region.

If a ballot paper for a region contains one of the following categories of names of Member States, the ballot remains valid, but the vote for a Member State within those categories will not be counted: first, the names of Member States that do not belong to the region concerned or, secondly, the names of Member States that will continue to be non-permanent members of the Security Council next year.

If a ballot paper contains any notation other than votes in favour of specific candidates, those notations will be disregarded. If a mistake is made in filling out the ballot paper, delegations should request a new ballot paper from the Secretariat at the East Documents Counter.

Representatives of the following States have agreed to serve as tellers: Cyprus, Ireland, Latvia, Mozambique and Trinidad and Tobago. One ballot box has been placed at the front of the General Assembly Hall, where tellers will be able to observe it and the casting of ballots. For the casting of ballots, the Secretary will call the name of each delegation following the General Assembly protocol seating arrangement, starting from the delegation of Iceland, and ask the representative concerned to proceed to cast their ballot. Representatives are requested to practice distancing of no less than two metres and to proceed to cast their ballot only when the previous representative has completed casting her or his ballot. This will continue until the last representative has cast her or his ballot.

After casting their ballot, representatives will leave the General Assembly Hall through the exit on the west side and return to their seats through the doors located on the east side. Signs marked "Re-entry" have been placed to guide representatives back to the General Assembly Hall.

Once all ballots are cast, the voting will be declared closed, and the meeting will continue with the consideration of other items as announced in the *Journal of the United Nations*. The tellers, accompanied by the Secretariat staff, will proceed to the Trusteeship Council Chamber for the counting of the ballots. Upon receipt of the results certified by the tellers, the results will be announced. The proceeding of the plenary meeting, including the announcement of the results, will be webcast.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** We will now begin the voting process.

*At the invitation of the President, the representatives of Cyprus, Ireland, Latvia, Mozambique and Trinidad and Tobago acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

**The President:** As announced earlier, while the votes are being counted, the General Assembly will continue with the plenary meeting to take up sub-item (k) of agenda item 120 and agenda items 117 and 30.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 118.

#### **Agenda item 120 (*continued*)**

#### **Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments**

#### **(k) Confirmation of the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

#### **Note by the Secretary-General (A/75/909)**

**The President:** Section II, paragraph 27, of resolution 1995 (XIX) of 30 December 1964, provides that the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development shall be appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and that the appointment shall be confirmed by the General Assembly.

As stated in paragraph 2 of his note (A/75/909), the Secretary-General, pursuant to that resolution, proposes to appoint Rebeca Grynspan of Costa Rica as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for a term of office of four years. The effective date of her appointment will be communicated to the Assembly at a later stage.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of Rebeca Grynspan of Costa Rica as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for a term of office of four years?

*It was so decided (decision 75/420).*

**The President:** The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (k) of agenda item 120.

**Agenda item 117****Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations****Note by the Secretary-General (A/75/300)**

**The President:** In accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations, and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of the matters with which the Council has ceased to deal.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/75/300?

*It was so decided (decision 75/567).*

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 117?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 30****Report of the Security Council****Report of the Security Council (A/75/2)**

**The President:** It is my pleasure to welcome the President of the Security Council to the General Assembly as we consider the annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2).

I would like to thank the Estonian presidency of the Council, which will present the report to us today, the delegation of the Niger, for leading the drafting process of the report's introduction, and the Chinese delegation, for its efforts to prepare the report during its presidency of the Council.

The importance of today's debate cannot be overstated. Through the United Nations Charter, the full membership of the United Nations has conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, one of the three pillars of the United Nations. We agreed that the Security Council will act on our behalf in carrying out its duties. Today's meeting allows us to fulfil two mandates set out by the Charter: first, that the Security

Council shall, pursuant to Article 24, submit an annual report on its work to the General Assembly, and, secondly, that, as stipulated in Article 15, the Assembly shall consider the report.

The submission and consideration of the annual report is about fulfilling a Charter responsibility, and our debate today is critical. It allows us to assess the work that the Council does on our behalf, and it gives us the opportunity to hold the Council to account for its actions, and, arguably more importantly, for the occasions where it fails to act.

I commend the members of the Council for presenting the annual report in a timely manner for the first time in recent history. It is a positive step towards enhancing the Council's transparency and accountability to the broader membership. I hope this practice continues so as to ensure greater predictability and consequently a more deliberate treatment of the report by the General Assembly.

As stipulated in the report, 2020 was marked by many crises and ongoing conflicts across the globe that required the immediate action of the Council. Despite the negative impacts on its work by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), I welcome the fact that the Council sustained activity in both virtual and hybrid formats to discharge its responsibilities. However, I also note with regret that there have been occasions where the Council was divided and unable to rise to the challenge and so it failed to deliver on its mandate to maintain international peace and security, which has had deadly consequences and caused untold human suffering.

In September, as we celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization, global leaders reiterated that the work of the United Nations was more critical than ever, especially in the light of the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The world is looking to the United Nations for leadership as we build back from COVID-19. For millions around the world, the Security Council is the face and embodiment of the United Nations. Its success or failure to achieve its mandate is seen as the success or failure of the United Nations. It is more crucial than ever that our efforts are efficient and effective in order that the United Nations, including the Security Council, is fit for purpose so that we can best deliver for those we serve.

The report is only one of many interactions between the General Assembly and the Security Council. As members know, the Security Council presidency and I



are assigned the task to carry forward the process to select and appoint the next Secretary-General. Given the critical role that the Secretary-General plays in ensuring that the Organization is run as efficiently and effectively as possible, and given that the outside world increasingly expects the Organization to meet the highest possible standards, I have made the commitment to ensuring that the selection and appointment process remains guided by the principles of transparency and inclusiveness. I hope the process can be successfully brought to completion next week, when the membership convenes again for the final decision.

I look forward to hearing members' views on this year's annual report, as well as proposals on how best to make it a more useful tool for General Assembly consideration, as we look to continuously improve the interaction between the different organs of the United Nations.

I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Sven Jürgenson, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

**Mr. Jürgenson** (Estonia), President of the Security Council: On behalf of all the members of the Security Council, let me begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for his service at the helm of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, and for arranging today's meeting.

As the President of the Security Council for the month of June 2021, Estonia has the honour to introduce the annual report of the Council (A/75/2), covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020. I extend my thanks to the delegation of the Niger for preparing the introduction to the report and to the other members of the Council for their contributions to it. On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat and all others involved in compiling and producing the report.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. With the support of the United Nations membership, the Security Council has sought to discharge its responsibilities actively, support peacekeeping efforts and urge peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

Despite the impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic during the period under review,

the Council held 81 in-person meetings and 269 video-conferences. The Council agreed to adopt exceptional working methods to allow for continuity in its work for the period of the pandemic; these methods were mostly reiterated during each presidency of the Council from March until December.

The Council adopted 57 resolutions in person and by written procedure and 13 presidential statements. It issued 46 statements to the press. During the reporting period, it was unable to conduct any field missions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council continued to focus on situations that affect peace and security in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. Last year, it continued to consider thematic, general and cross-cutting issues, including non-proliferation; threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts; the protection of civilians in armed conflict; children and armed conflict; peacekeeping and peacebuilding; women and peace and security; and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

The Council continued to receive briefings on the work of its subsidiary bodies, including its sanctions committees. It convened an annual open debate on its working methods in May 2020 to look at the implementation of note S/2010/507 by the President of the Security Council and to discuss how to ensure transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in its work.

In conclusion, I am pleased to say that despite the limitations of the Council's working methods resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, it managed to finish and adopt the report even earlier than last year.

The Assembly's consideration of the report of the Council is a very important aspect of transparency and I look forward to the discussion of the report by the members of the General Assembly. I will convey their views to our colleagues in the Security Council.

**Mr. Duarte Lopes** (Portugal): I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of the 27 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and my own country, Portugal.

We welcome the annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2), which was adopted by the Council at its 8781st meeting, on 27 May. We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting and the Estonian presidency of the Council for the month of June for presenting the report for 2020.

The ACT group aims to promote a more transparent, effective and efficient United Nations. Promoting the meaningful interaction of the Security Council with the General Assembly and greater transparency and accountability regarding the work of the Council towards the wider United Nations membership is a priority of the group. While at the seventy-fourth session we considered the report at an informal meeting held virtually, we are pleased that the present circumstances allow the Assembly to hold today's debate in person, contributing to upholding the highest standards of transparency and inclusion.

Today, the ACT group would like to address both the process and the substance of the 2020 annual report of the Security Council, as well as future reports.

First, the ACT group acknowledges the progress made in the timeline for the adoption of the report by the Security Council. We commend the Niger for its dedication in steering this process and coordinating the report's introduction. The 2020 annual report is the first to follow the more precise timeline set out in note S/2019/997 by the President of the Security Council of 27 December 2019. We commend the adoption of the report by the Council three days in advance of the deadline of 30 May established by the aforementioned note and its consideration by the General Assembly immediately thereafter.

Secondly, the report provides a valuable and factual overview of the work of the Security Council during last year, which was deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. As mentioned in the introduction, the Council

“was unable to hold in-person meetings and conduct several field missions as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which had an impact on its work in general and on its working methods” (A/75/2, *para. 1*).

The ACT group particularly underlines the importance of preserving institutional memory in the working methods of the Council in exceptional circumstances and encourages a continued discussion

of the lessons learned, keeping in mind objectives such as preparedness for contingencies and the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the Council's work.

We also appreciate the efforts made for a progressive return to the Security Council Chamber and to the correlated working methods, in the light of the evolution of restrictions in place in New York pursuant to the COVID-19 pandemic. We nonetheless regret that the sanitary restrictions during 2020 affected the inclusivity of the Council for both non-Council members and other stakeholders.

We welcome the introduction of clear headings on individual and thematic files. Contributions by briefers from other United Nations organs or civil society, as well as those by non-Council members during relevant meetings, could also be better reflected. We would also suggest including details on the draft resolutions that failed to be adopted by the Council.

The ACT group also wishes to underline the importance of the monthly assessments by Council presidencies and to encourage their compilation and use. Those assessments constitute important reference documents to reflect the views of members and inform the work of the drafter of the annual report and the deliberations of the Council on the matter. Keeping that in mind, it is crucial that even though the President is strongly encouraged to consult with other members of the Council, the assessment should not be considered as representing the views of the Council as a whole and therefore the substance of the assessments should not suffer in the name of consensus.

We would also like to commend the efforts to increase the transparency of the activities of the Council, with successive Presidents of the Security Council holding briefings for all members at the beginning of their presidencies and wrap-up sessions at the end of their presidencies. We encourage all current and future Council members to continue and strengthen that practice. To that end, the ACT group will present a non-paper on wrap-up sessions in due course.

Thirdly, looking ahead to the annual report 2021 and beyond: the current year will still be marked by the exceptional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, both on the functioning of the Security Council, as well as on almost all of the items on its agenda.

The ACT group reiterates its calls on the Council to give due consideration, in the report's introduction, to the impact of the pandemic on international peace and security and the Council's work and tools, possibly through a section of the introduction dedicated to an overall and cross-cutting analysis of the matter, beyond the monthly assessments on working methods. We invite Council members to discuss this option, including in the framework of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

We also trust that the Council will give due consideration in the 2021 annual report to all meetings held in a virtual format, notwithstanding the fact that they have been labelled as videoconferences or informal meetings in the programme of work of the Council since April 2020. The ACT group looks forward to engaging with France, which will lead the drafting process of the 2021 report, and with other Council members throughout the process.

**Ms. Leu** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I am honoured to speak on behalf of Switzerland at the debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2). The report covers an exceptional year, marked by a pandemic that has spared no country and has directly affected millions of people, including in conflict zones. While the number and complexity of crises has not diminished, the consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pose a clear additional challenge to international peace and security.

The annual report documents the Security Council's responsiveness to the challenges faced in terms of peace and security, while demonstrating the potential for improvement. Allow me to raise three issues that are important for Switzerland.

First, Switzerland welcomes the flexibility that the Security Council has shown in ensuring that its activities were able to continue throughout the pandemic. It was the United Nations body that responded the most quickly and remained operational even when New York was under a strict lockdown. However, we regret the fact that those changes made it more difficult for non-members to participate in the Council's work.

In terms of substance, despite long and difficult negotiations, the Council ultimately sent a strong message of responsibility in adopting resolution 2532 (2020). A global ceasefire remains crucial in ensuring

humanitarian access to those in need and concentrating our efforts in the fight against the pandemic.

Secondly, 2020 marked the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). During this time, we have seen encouraging developments in the area of women and peace and security, for example, in Colombia, the Sudan and the political process in Yemen. Nevertheless, we cannot continue to settle for encouraging developments knowing that increased representation of women at all levels of decision-making is essential to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts.

The commemorations of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2020 have shown that we do not necessarily need a new resolution on women and peace and security, but rather a comprehensive and consistent implementation of all the pillars of that agenda and a key role for civil society in that collective effort. As a pioneer in the establishment of a national action plan, Switzerland will engage itself in the framework of its fourth plan, while also partnering the development and implementation of such instruments in other countries, as it did recently in Mali and Chad.

Thirdly, Switzerland understands the magnitude of the task assigned to the Security Council in 2020 and commends its use of the wide range of tools at its disposal to tackle the challenges it faces. For example, we welcome the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, which plays a key role in supporting the transition under way in the Sudan. Switzerland fully supports this new mission's mandate and will work in close collaboration with it.

However, we regret the weakening in recent years of the mechanism for the delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid in Syria, where more than 13 million people are in urgent need of assistance. Syria represents the largest humanitarian commitment in Switzerland's history. Rapid, unimpeded and sustainable access is essential for maintaining an effective humanitarian response in Syria. We call on Council members to renew the resolution that allows for cross-border assistance on the basis of identified needs.

As we elect the next members of the Security Council, the record of the Council's work in 2020 shows that all members have a role to play in ensuring that we are able to meet the global challenges. As we elect the next members of the Security Council, we are holding this debate to remind ourselves of the importance of

transparency, inclusiveness and accountability in the Council. My country will maintain its commitment to those goals in collaboration with our partners in the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, which we have the honour of coordinating and whose statement, which was just read by representative of Portugal, we endorse.

As we elect the next members of the Security Council, Switzerland is already looking forward to the next elections in one year's time. We will then have the honour of asking for the support of Member States in joining the Council for the first time, so that we may strengthen our contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mr. Espinosa Cañizares** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on the presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2). Ecuador aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. As we are attending such a meeting as a member of that group for the first time, I thank all of its members, in particular Portugal, for the opportunity we had to co-lead ACT participation in this crucial debate.

I would now like to take this opportunity to refer to matters of specific interest to Ecuador.

Ecuador appreciates the progress outlined in the Security Council's report for 2020. We underscore and acknowledge the special efforts made by Council members and their delegations in the context of one of the most serious global crises of the past 75 years. I wish to acknowledge the coordinated work that is being conducted by the Security Council and the United Nations system on the ground to minimize the disruption created by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic as far as possible. I also acknowledge the extraordinary efforts made with regard to the coordination and presentation of the report, which even today we are considering against the backdrop of ongoing limitations.

However, I would like to emphasize the importance of ensuring that in the future the report provides not only quantitative information, which is very valuable, but also comprehensive, substantive and analytical information on the Council's work. The report continues to inform the Organization in an intelligent way of useful information that is publicly available.

For Ecuador, it would be very useful to have a report that went into more detail on important issues that were managed carefully at the time but that Member States must be made aware of, such as why on certain occasions agreements were not reached or what the specific challenges were that the Council encountered on particular issues.

We urge the Security Council to consider the possibility of including in the report assessments of the major challenges being faced in the area of international peace and security. For example, the Council should consider including in its 2021 report an analysis of how the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect its work both in New York and on the ground, as well as the obstacles that hindered the implementation by parties to conflicts of resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2565 (2021).

Ecuador also suggests that, prior to the adoption of the report by the Security Council, there be close coordination with the Office of the President of the General Assembly in order to facilitate the convening of a plenary meeting under this agenda item, which is more eagerly awaited every year. In that regard, I would like to recognize the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Volkan Bozkir, and his team.

Lastly, I reiterate the interest of Ecuador in continuing to contribute to efforts to ensure the best possible results of the work of all the principal United Nations organs.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate in advance the Member States that will be elected to the Security Council today. In 2022-2023, the Security Council will surely provide essential contributions to peace and security throughout the world. Ecuador is a candidate for a seat on the Security Council for 2023-2024. We are sure that we will enjoy the support of the Assembly next year and in 2023 will engage with the five members that will be elected today, to whom I offer my delegation's support and cooperation.

**Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the members of the General Assembly for confirming the appointment, proposed by the Secretary-General, of Rebeca Grynspan of Costa Rica for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement of Portugal on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence



and Transparency group. We acknowledge the prompt preparation by the Security Council of its annual report (A/75/2), which thereby remedied the persistent anomaly of its late submission in previous years. We also take note of the inclusion in the methods of work of the Council of specific provisions to ensure compliance with the time frame for the submission of the report.

The submission of the annual report of the Security Council is a solemn opportunity, which gives the General Assembly the opportunity to debate the most urgent and pressing matters in the area of international peace and security. Therefore, the discussions that emerge from that accountability should not be conducted in a perfunctory manner, as requested in paragraph 17 of resolution 73/341.

Yet, owing to the complete absence of evaluations or substantive content in the report, it does not allow for informed discussion of the most urgent matters. It is just a compilation of resolutions adopted by the Council, letters from the President of the Council, dates and signatures, as well as a list of the items on the Council's agenda — nothing of substance; no opinions; not even the outcomes of votes when votes were held; no mention of disagreements or vetoes that might have been cast.

The very limited substantive and analytical content of the report has actually been decreasing — from six lines in the 2018 report to four lines in the 2019 report and just three lines in the report before us today.

In 2018, it mentioned the existence of unresolved conflicts with severe impact on civilians, the persistence of large-scale humanitarian crises and large flows of displaced people, conflicts that could not be effectively addressed owing to divisions in the Security Council.

In 2019, it mentioned that the international situation remained quite turbulent and many serious conflicts remained unresolved in spite of their severe impact, thereby warning about the impossibility of reaching an agreement within the Council, especially on the most sensitive and high-profile conflicts.

In 2020, its only substantive content was limited to mentioning that

“[i]n 2020, the international situation was marked by crises, despite the call by the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire to focus on combating the COVID-19 pandemic” (A/75/2, *para.* 2).

The report does not even mention what those crises were or why it took four months for a vote to be held on the urgent appeal for a global ceasefire, or that it took the Security Council many months to express its position on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

In January 2020, the conflict between Iran and the United States reached unprecedented levels. There were strikes against ships, attacks against military bases in third countries and assassinations with drones and a civilian airplane was shot down. A global confrontation was possible. Meanwhile, the Security Council remained absolutely silent — yet nothing about that is mentioned in the report, not even the reasons for that inaction. The report makes no mention of the persistent inaction that appears to be the *modus operandi* of the Security Council.

In accordance with the methods of work of the Security Council, the introduction of the report is supposed to be the substantive of part of the report and should be submitted for adoption in an open meeting of the Security Council. According to paragraph 129 of note S/2017/507 by the President of the Security Council, the introduction to the report should be based on the monthly assessments that members of the Council prepare with regard to their respective presidencies.

In an effort to attain uniformity, the structure of those monthly assessments has been reduced to a simple list and compilation, without any kind of assessment or analysis. Several members of the Council have even failed to prepare that monthly assessment. In fact, two permanent members did not prepare a monthly assessment on the past two occasions when they were supposed to present them.

Costa Rica urges the Security Council and its members to strive to make the annual report to more analytical, reflexive and forward-looking and not simply a compilation. Costa Rica requests that, in its annual report, the Security Council introduce an analysis of the decision-making process, including the points of agreement and disagreement, and inform the membership of the obstacles that lead to its inaction.

Costa Rica urges the Security Council to include an explanation of the circumstances in which, as a result of its deliberations on a specific conflict, the Council chooses and adopts a specific type of document — whether it be a press statement, a

presidential statement or a formal resolution. Each type of document has a specific role and relevance.

Costa Rica requests Council Presidents to continue to work to ensure that discussions in the Council are inclusive and participatory and that specific methods of work be adopted for that purpose. Costa Rica also proposes that resolutions of the Council, especially when they relate to threats to international peace and security, should be open for co-sponsorship of all Member States and not simply be limited to the 15 members of the Council.

To conclude, Costa Rica reiterates that it is important that you, Sir, as President of the General Assembly, similar to what your predecessor did, institutionalize the practice of compiling and sending to the President of the Security Council the statements made by Member States during this debate. Costa Rica hopes that this accountability exercise will not end with this meeting but that rather that, at the request of the General Assembly, the Security Council will react to the concerns and comments of Member States. Healthy, balanced and respectful communication between both organs simply requires political will. We hope that it will exist this time, as it did not in the past. Comments on those reports that were made by Member States in previous years in this very Hall have fallen on deaf ears.

We ask that in the exercise of the Assembly's authority, you request from the Security Council a response to the statements made at this meeting. That is set out in resolution 51/241, of 1997, which states that if the President of the General Assembly considers any kind of addition, clarification or response necessary, he could require it of the Security Council while maintaining open the agenda item entitled "Report of the Security Council".

Already in 2014 the President of the General Assembly, in a letter directed to the President of the Security Council, had requested that the Council prepare a report in which it would refer to the issues raised by Member States. All of that is in line with paragraph 138 of note 507, on the Council's methods of work, which obligates the President of the Council, following the presentation of the report, to inform the members of the Council about what the various delegations have stated here. That is what the President of the Council has done this morning and that is also what was done, without any follow-through, by those who submitted the report in previous years.

**Mrs. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates): The United Arab Emirates welcomes the presentation of the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly (A/75/2), and we thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to discuss its findings.

We all know that this annual report plays a critical role in improving the transparency and legitimacy of the Security Council's deliberations, and that is why there are so many calls for a substantive and strategic report that truly informs the General Assembly and the world at large about the Council's activities. I would like to emphasize three points that could strengthen the substance of those reports.

First, annual reports of the Security Council should demonstrate the difference that it has made in the world, not merely provide an overview of the number of meetings that it has had or press statements it has issued. Although it may be challenging to directly tie a Council outcome to a specific effect on a conflict or threat to peace and security, the world expects the Council to produce results. Being results-oriented can manifest itself in multiple ways that we would like to suggest here. For example, the Council could measure the effect of its actions on the women and peace and security agenda by determining whether more women have been involved in mediation processes. Similarly, it could assess whether its endorsement of the Secretary-General's call for a ceasefire has actually led to a cessation of hostilities using real data and metrics to substantiate that point.

Council resolutions and presidential statements are known as outcomes, but we should not lose sight of the fact that the actual outcomes are whether those resolutions or statements are making a difference in people's lives. The Council should ensure that that happens by following up on its decisions and not think, of course, that the work is done when a resolution is adopted. In fact, as we all know, that is when the work truly begins. As a prospective Council member for 2022-2023, the United Arab Emirates will be part of the coalition that seeks to strengthen the results-oriented nature of the Council as much as possible.

Secondly, the Council is most effective when it is united. As Security Council challenges become more complex and reaching unanimity can be challenging, we must create the conditions that allow for compromise and consensus. Although the pandemic has made old-fashioned negotiations impossible, the transition back

to in-person meetings should enable the Council to create the space for the frank private exchanges that help overcome political hurdles. Bridging positions on thorny issues requires a frank exchange of views where everyone feels comfortable sharing their perspectives in the interest of uniting the Council.

But we should not pin our hopes of a more united Council solely on in-person meetings. We also need to strive for consensus on mandate renewals, particularly when the Council puts peacekeepers in harm's way. In 2019, 84 per cent of mandate renewals were done unanimously. Last year, that number dropped to 77 per cent. We cannot let politics erode the support of peacekeeping missions and undermine the mandates that the Security Council has given them.

Lastly, the coronavirus disease has been a challenge for all of us, as many here have commented. The Council, however, was able to adapt its working methods relatively quickly, proving that it can indeed be resilient, adaptive and innovative. Successive presidencies sharing best practices in managing virtual meetings played a key role in enabling the Council to cope with the early challenges required by the sudden shift in working methods. As we begin to transition back to the new normal, we hope that the Council's proven innovative spirit will be maintained and exercised in the business-as-usual context as well as especially when it comes to improving working methods.

As we respond to security threats, pandemics and environmental challenges, multilateral institutions need to also step up their game and prove their usefulness. By improving its working methods, the Council can increase its effectiveness, legitimacy and inclusivity to better deliver on its mandate.

**Mr. Aidid** (Malaysia): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for having convened today's plenary meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council for 2020 as contained in document A/75/2. I wish to also thank the Permanent Representative of Estonia for the presentation of the report. Allow me also to take this opportunity to congratulate in advance all newly elected members of the Council for 2022-2023.

Today's debate is important for a number of reasons. First, the Security Council is obligated under the Charter of the United Nations to submit an annual report to the General Assembly for the latter's consideration. Secondly, the members of the Council, both elected and non-elected, act on behalf of the

general membership, and this debate is an important accountability mechanism that governs the relationship between the two organs. Finally, this debate allows the membership to give its views on the entire body of work of the Council during the reporting period.

Malaysia welcomes the deliberation on the Council's annual report in the General Assembly in spring this year, compared with August in the previous year. With regard to the content of the report for 2020, my delegation continues to call for a more analytical and reflective report rather than just a compilation of statistics, letters and resolutions. The report is still far from being the substantial document needed to allow Member States to satisfactorily assess the Council's work, with a view to improving that work. In addition, the report could have offered an analysis on the Council's inaction as well as actions and polarization in addressing some threats to international peace and security, including in highlighting violations of Security Council resolutions.

We also note that only eight Council members have submitted their monthly assessments for 2020. In that connection, we continue to call on all Council members to make their reports available to the broader United Nations membership in a timely manner. We also note the challenge faced by Council members in making a frank assessment due to the unanimity requirement. However, we believe that Council members are capable of being innovative in presenting their presidency assessments. In that connection, we strongly welcome the efforts undertaken by Estonia, Belgium, Germany and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in taking that approach for their report last year.

My delegation commands some positive developments in enhancing the accountability, transparency and coherence of the Security Council. We applaud the monthly presidency informal briefings by Council members on their work and the convening of open debates, as well as Arria Formula meetings. We also commend the constant efforts of the Council in exploring practical working methods during the reporting period amid the coronavirus disease pandemic. However, we hope that in-person participation of the wider United Nations membership in open meetings can be reinstated to allow for a more meaningful engagement.

Although the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international

peace and security, it does not and should not act entirely in isolation. Its engagement with other principal United Nations organs and the wider membership is crucial in addressing cross-cutting issues as well as in improving the efficiency, credibility and legitimacy of the Security Council. We hope that more substantive progress can be made concerning the report in future.

**Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein): The debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2), held at a more appropriate moment than in recent years, is a key opportunity to reflect on the relationship between two principal Charter of the United Nations organs with carefully crafted mandates and clear provisions for cooperation.

Crisis situations such as the current one in Myanmar illustrate the need for a dynamic role on the part of the Assembly in a manner that is supportive of and complementary to the pronouncements of the Security Council. In a year like no other in the history of the United Nations due to the impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic, the accountability of the Security Council vis-à-vis the United Nations membership, on whose behalf it does its work, is of particular importance.

We are discussing the annual report at a time when, under the able leadership of Estonia, the Council is finally getting back to regular in-person meetings, something that the Assembly achieved a good number of months ago. That has come at a price, preventing the Council from implementing the full range of decision-making provisions in accordance with the Charter and leaving the better part of the Council's work of 2020 off the official records. There must be a way for the most important global decision-making body to remain fully functional and accountable at all times and to develop mechanisms to prevent a recurrence of the lack of transparency during the pandemic.

The pandemic has demonstrated that the importance of sound working methods can hardly be overstated. A thorough analysis by the Council of its work and functioning during the pandemic should be an integral part of the report to the Assembly. We strongly encourage its discussion in the next report of the Council. Today's debate should inform that conversation, and a dedicated open debate of the Security Council could provide further useful input, including for the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

We appreciate the continued positive contribution of the elected members of the Council on the update and implementation of presidential note 507 (S/2017/507) and underline the need to account for the views of the wider membership in that respect. While they have created positive momentum and initiated productive discussions on better working methods, progress in implementation has been slow, and agreements on such instrumental improvements as co-penholdership and fair burden-sharing are still missing.

We continue to see a concerning trend that the Council's annual report represents an incomplete reflection of its performance. The format of the report as well as the nature of the drafting exercise does not lend itself to fully reflecting the Council's work, including where it has been unable to act. The Council has found it difficult to show leadership on the pandemic itself; only after a considerable delay did it endorse the Secretary-General's initiative for a global ceasefire, thereby limiting its early positive effects.

In its discussions, the Council was hampered by an outdated and narrow militarized approach to security. The pandemic has clearly demonstrated that human security must be at the heart of the Council's work in order to be prepared for future security crises and responsive to the expectations of the international community.

With respect to various crisis situations, the Council has fallen short of its tasks mandated by the Charter, with severe consequences for the people whom it is supposed to protect. Its decision to restrict the delivery of humanitarian aid across the Syrian border to bare minimum standards stands out in particular in that respect given the needs on the ground. The remaining cross-border channel for humanitarian aid is today a precarious lifeline for millions of Syrians, who once again have become a political bargaining chip at the whim of those willing to use their prerogatives to advance their national political interests. The Assembly has a responsibility to step up if necessary in that respect.

While the Secretary-General and other authoritative voices such as the International Committee of the Red Cross report record numbers of violations of international humanitarian law and failures to protect civilians, there is little in the Council's report on what it has done to address and reverse those trends. One initiative that aims to improve the Council's record



on the protection of civilians is the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group Code of Conduct, now supported by 122 States, including two thirds of the current Security Council membership, which together constitute a procedural majority.

The Council's ability to take effective action continues to be undermined by the veto power. We have again seen three vetoes in 2020, a significant number in its own right. More difficult to quantify is the number of proposals never put forward or decisions modified to the point of ineffectiveness owing to the threat of a veto.

But we remain convinced that where the Council fails, the Assembly can do more to reaffirm its role, which is narrow by practice but not by law. We will continue to advocate for a formal General Assembly discussion of any use of the veto without prejudice to any possible outcome and independently of the substance of the resolution that was subject to a veto.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): I thank you very much, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting today. I also thank the President of the Security Council for the month of June, the Permanent Representative of Estonia, for presenting the report of the Security Council (A/75/2) on behalf of all members of the Council.

Today's debate is an important exercise in accountability, transparency and legitimacy. The Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States and therefore has the corresponding duty to report back to the General Assembly, as highlighted in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. As members of the General Assembly, we, too, have the responsibility to carefully scrutinize the Council's report and to engage in a serious discussion on the activities of the Council. This debate benefits not only the members of the Security Council but also the wider membership. More important, this debate is an inclusive exercise that enhances the legitimacy of the work of the Security Council.

Overall, the report this year is an improvement from previous years. We acknowledge the fact that the members of the Security Council had to work under the constraints of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health and safety measures, and we welcome the fact that Council members made an effort to listen to the views of the members of the General Assembly in the drafting of the report.

Nevertheless, we have some comments on how we can further improve the content of the annual report.

First, we think that it is important to assess not just what the Council has achieved in the year but also what it has not been able to achieve. We welcome the fact that the introduction gives an overview of the number and type of Council products that were adopted. It is also good that the introduction includes mention of draft resolutions that were not adopted. That is a change that we welcome.

Nevertheless, we would suggest that the annual report should give more details on why draft resolutions were not adopted, including the total number of times the veto was exercised. For example, the veto was exercised on three draft resolutions last year, and that is not mentioned in the report directly. The report should also give a summary of the votes cast and vetoes used throughout the year. The veto is a special privilege, and it must be wielded with special responsibilities, including accountability.

The idea behind my comment is not to criticize the members of the Security Council. Instead, it is to provide greater transparency on the challenges faced such that the Council and the wider membership can work together on difficult issues with a view to finding convergence.

Secondly, the report should give more details on discussions related to improvements to the working methods of the Council. We recognize that the immediate priority last year was to adapt the Council's working methods to the COVID-19 situation. We look forward to more updates from the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and we look forward also to the open debate on working methods that is scheduled for next week.

Last September, my delegation wrote to the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, namely, the Ambassador of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, to offer her, in her capacity as Chair, our views on working methods. We would like to encourage all members of the General Assembly to similarly consider writing to the Chair of the Informal Working Group to offer their views and suggestions and, of course, also to participate in the open debate that is upcoming soon.

I now turn to the process of considering the report in the General Assembly, and here, too, I am pleased

to note the progress that we have achieved on several issues.

First, I should like to commend the drafters of the report, in particular the Permanent Mission of the Niger and the Permanent Mission of China, for having prepared the report earlier this year. We are heartened by the fact that the report was adopted before 30 May, in accordance with the timeline stipulated in presidential note S/2019/997.

As this is the first year for the new timeline to take effect, it was extremely important for the Council to have adhered to it to demonstrate the Council's seriousness in abiding by its own recommendations. We certainly hope that the Council will continue to adhere to that timeline in order to demonstrate consistency.

Secondly, it is good that this debate is being held earlier in the year instead of in August or September as in previous years. Indeed, presidential note S/2019/997 states that the consideration of the report by the General Assembly should occur immediately after the adoption of the report, by 30 May, and we welcome your initiative, Mr. President, to schedule this debate early this year and hope that your successor in future years will make this schedule a regular and predictable one.

Thirdly, I should like to comment on the monthly assessment reports. As I mentioned in previous years, the monthly assessment reports should not be taken as a mechanical exercise. We are therefore encouraged by the fact that nearly all Security Council members had submitted their monthly assessment reports for 2020, thereby reversing the recent trend of non-submission. It is important that all members, including those members that are to be elected today, will take this responsibility seriously, because we will be monitoring their performance as well. We hope that the members of the Security Council will continue to take the submission of these monthly reports in a serious manner.

The fourth point that I wanted to make is that there remains a lack of effort at wider consultations in the preparation of the annual report. Paragraph 129 of presidential note 507 (S/2017/507) states that the drafter of the report

“may also consider organizing, where appropriate, interactive informal exchanges of views with the wider membership.”

However, we are not aware of any informal exchange of views with the wider membership on the annual report. There also appears to be a lack of engagement on the report, even within the Council and among its members. The only time that all 15 Council members made interventions during the adoption of the report was in 2002. We would propose that there should be a discussion of the report in an open setting within the Council before the annual report is adopted. We would also strongly recommend to members of the Council that it should organize an informal dialogue with the wider membership before finalizing the report. We believe that such a consultation with the wider membership can only have positive effects by enhancing the transparency and legitimacy of the working methods of the Security Council. We do not believe that there is any reason to fear that such a wider consultation with members of the General Assembly could lead to anything negative.

We hope that the newly elected members, those that are to be elected today, will also look at these issues and support the effort to look at the working methods of the Security Council, because the Council's working methods are a means through which we enhance the transparency of the Security Council, and for those of us that are not members of the Security Council, and those of us that are not going to be elected any time soon to serve in the Council, it is important that there be such greater transparency.

Let me conclude by saying that the submission of the annual report of the Security Council and its consideration by the General Assembly is an important exercise in transparency, accountability and legitimacy. We acknowledge and welcome the improvements made and hope that they will become regular practice. We also hope that the Council will build on those improvements and make further improvements to its working methods, the content of the annual report and the process by which that report is prepared and considered here in the General Assembly.

**The President:** As the ballots have been counted for the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the debate on the report of the Security Council will be suspended now for the announcement of the result of the election.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 30.

**Agenda item 118 (continued)****Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs****(a) Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council**

**The President:** The result of the voting is as follows:

*Group A — African and Asia-Pacific States (3 seats)*

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	0
Number of members present and voting:	190
Required two-thirds majority:	127
Number of votes obtained:	
Ghana:	185
Gabon:	183
United Arab Emirates:	179
Democratic Republic of the Congo:	3
Islamic Republic of Iran:	1

*Group B — Eastern European States (1 seat)*

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	189
Abstentions:	14
Number of members present and voting:	175
Required two-thirds majority:	117
Number of votes obtained:	
Albania:	175

*Group C — Latin American and Caribbean States (1 seat)*

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	8
Number of members present and voting:	182
Required two-thirds majority:	122
Number of votes obtained:	
Brazil:	181
Peru:	1

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority and the largest number of votes, Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates were elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning on 1 January 2022 (decision 75/421).*

**The President:** I congratulate the States that have just been elected members of the Security Council. I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 118.

**Agenda item 30 (continued)****Report of the Security Council****Report of the Security Council (A/75/2)**

**Mr. Takht Ravanchi** (Iran): I sincerely thank the Niger for its timely preparation of the Security Council's report (A/75/2) and appreciate the Estonian presidency of the Council for presenting it.

While the report provides valuable factual information on the Council's work, it lacks substantive and analytical information, including on overarching trends in international peace and security. It therefore does not match the requirements of a report as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations, because it cannot enable the General Assembly to substantively and comprehensively appraise the Council's performance and assess the state of international peace and security. As examples, I would like to refer to certain developments in the Middle East.

On 3 January 2020, in a terrorist act directly ordered by the United States President, the military forces of the United States violated Iraq's sovereignty and horrifically martyred Major General Qasem Soleimani. Although such military adventurism on the part of a permanent member of the Council placed our volatile region on the verge of an all-out war and the United Nations was expected to act promptly and effectively, pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the Council was dead silent.

Subsequently, on 4 and 5 January 2020, the United States President threatened to hit 52 Iranian sites very hard and in a disproportionate manner, including some sites very important to Iranian culture. Although such unbridled threats were in flagrant violation of the peremptory norms of international law and Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, again the Council was utterly silent.

Nevertheless, on 14 August 2020, when the United States presented draft resolution S/2020/797 to the Council to impose an arms embargo against Iran, it was rejected by 13 members of the Council (see

S/2020/803). Although that is reflected in paragraph 160 of the report, what is not mentioned is that such a strong objection was due to the fact that the proposal of the United States was in violation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Subsequently, on 20 August 2020, the United States attempted to initiate a process to reimpose Council sanctions against Iran. Again, the reactions of the Council members were decisive. As clearly stated in paragraph 162 of the report,

“[i]n August, 13 members of the Council explicitly stated in their communication that, by withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the United States had lost any rights to make use of the instruments provided for in resolution 2231 (2015), including those outlined in paragraph 11, and that attempts by the United States to claim otherwise were not legitimate and therefore could not have any legal, political or practical implications.”

While the current United States Administration has claimed that its policy towards the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has changed, I must stress that such a change is a change of words only, and in practice the maximum-pressure policy continues. Due to such unlawful and inhumane policies and sanctions, Iran is not even able to use its financial resources in foreign banks to import much-needed medicine amid the coronavirus disease outbreak.

Indeed, the ongoing nuclear talks in Vienna are the first opportunity to test the sincerity and genuine political will of the United States with regard to the JCPOA. The real test will be when it is verifiably demonstrated that the United States has changed course, put aside its failed maximum-pressure policy and stopped its economic terrorism against Iran.

Although the unlawful occupation of Palestine and the 15-year old inhumane blockade of Gaza by the Israeli regime continued in 2020, again the Security Council miserably failed to compel that regime to put an end to its systematic violation of international law.

Recently, we all saw the result of such inaction by the Council. Emboldened by the silence of the Security Council, in only 11 days during its brutal and all-out war on Gaza in May 2021, Israeli forces killed 248 Palestinians, including 66 children and 39 women, and wounded 1,948 others. Those casualties included

13 members of an extended family — many of them children and one only six months old — who were killed and buried in the rubble of their own home. Moreover, countless health facilities, schools, mosques and houses were destroyed.

Furthermore, the occupation of parts of Syria by the United States and its other unlawful activities in Syria, such as looting its oil, continued in 2020 without any preventive action by the Council.

Last year the Council once again failed to stand with the people of Yemen and bring an end to six years of aggression against that country.

Finally, we call for the submission of more analytical reports by the Council for their in-depth consideration by the General Assembly.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. I would also like to thank the Security Council for its report (A/75/2).

As we have mentioned on previous occasions, today's exercise helps to strengthen the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly and reinforces the accountability of the Council, which, by virtue of the Charter of the United Nations, acts on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization.

I begin by acknowledging that, unlike last year, the Security Council's report to the Assembly this year has been submitted within the time frame established by presidential note S/2017/507. This is a step forward, as it allows Member States a reasonable period of time to review it more carefully.

It should also be noted that, during this year of unprecedented challenges due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Security Council was able to adapt its working methods and adopt provisional measures that allowed it to continue its work. However, important challenges remain that require further reflection and innovation with regard to the Council's working methods.

Like the United Nations system as a whole, the Security Council has faced real operational problems in these times of COVID-19. It has not been possible, for example, to continue the rotation of peace mission personnel in the field.

There has also been a lack of compliance with the Secretary-General's calls for a global ceasefire in order



to concentrate efforts on combating the pandemic. Clearly, the humanitarian, sociopolitical and economic repercussions of COVID-19 on international peace and security will continue to be felt in the coming months and years, as post-pandemic recovery will take time, especially in the most vulnerable countries. It is clear that the Council's actions — in collaboration with the General Assembly and other United Nations entities — will be of great importance in addressing the emerging conditions.

It is for those reasons that we cannot ignore that some of the draft resolutions presented in 2020 whose main objective was to facilitate unhindered humanitarian access in conflict zones were vetoed. We also regret that the report makes no mention of the reasons that led some States to veto those resolutions. All of that highlights the need for greater transparency on how the Council operates from a substantive point of view.

We therefore believe that there is still a need to adopt formal mechanisms to ensure the transparency and accountability of the Security Council to the international community. We believe that the Council must respond expeditiously to any threat to international law and international humanitarian law in order to ensure the protection of civilians. That means placing greater emphasis on its preventive work.

Mexico reiterates its call on the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from using the veto, especially in cases of mass atrocities, and we call on the international community to join the Franco-Mexican initiative, which already has 105 signatory countries and is aimed at improving the Council's effectiveness.

An important omission, which we feel it is appropriate to highlight because of its implications, is that the report does not clearly identify the communications sent to the Security Council, under Article 51 of the Charter, invoking legitimate self-defence. According to part V of the report, some of them were not considered by the Council.

In that regard, we reiterate our growing concern about the invocations of that Charter provision by some States in contexts beyond its scope, thereby creating serious precedents for the use of force. That was clearly identified by several Member States in the context of the meeting convened by Mexico, open to the entire membership, under the Arria Formula format on 24 February.

In sum, the events of the past year have made it clear how crucial it is to work together in greater solidarity in order to more successfully meet the challenges we face as a global community. We firmly believe that true reconstruction and lasting peace can be achieved only through international cooperation. We reaffirm that a more harmonious and functional relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be built if we are to succeed in that endeavour. Mexico will continue to seek avenues to strengthen that relationship — not only as a matter of principle but also in fulfilment of our responsibility before the Assembly as an elected member of the Security Council.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Let me first thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I also thank Ambassador Sven Jürgenson, President of the Security Council, for presenting its annual report (A/75/2).

The Council adopted this year's report earlier than in previous years. While the improved timeline in the submission of the report to the General Assembly is encouraging, the same cannot be said about the content of the report itself. As in the past, the report provides a useful compendium of the Council's deliberations on various issues. It does not, however, shed any light on how the Council dealt with specific situations and the ways in which it reached its decisions.

The Charter of the United Nations mandates the Security Council to submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly. In fact, that is the Security Council's clear obligation to the General Assembly — highlighted in not one, but two articles, namely, Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. That fundamental obligation of the Council to the General Assembly should not be allowed to become a mere ritual.

Most often, the Council's decision-making is criticized on account of its opacity and exclusivity. Despite recent efforts to improve transparency in the functioning of the Security Council, much of its real work takes place behind closed doors. That was not always the case. During the initial years of the United Nations, the Security Council held its meetings in the open, with the active participation of all Member States, which could intervene freely on issues of concern to them. That open culture of the Council's work has been progressively eroded by the increasingly frequent closed meetings, which are not provided for under the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

Today non-members are not even allowed to participate in the open meetings of the Council on an equitable basis. Non-members are obliged to submit written contributions to the Council, while only Council members participate in the live meetings. Even those written contributions by non-members are circulated as a separate compilation document, and not as part of the official record of Security Council meetings.

Clearly, the Council has become more cloistered than ever before. The total absence of discussion, debate and interaction in open Council meetings on important issues of peace and security compromises the Council's role to act on behalf of all Member States.

That validates our long-held and principled view that the already exclusive and elitist culture of the Council, with outcomes mostly determined by its permanent members, can be changed not by seating new permanent members on the Council, but by enhancing its representativeness, openness and inclusivity with regard to decision-making through the expansion and empowerment of elected non-permanent members of the Council. As the Council resumes in-person meetings, it must — like the General Assembly under your leadership, Mr. President — ensure a judicious balance between functionality and openness.

It is essential that non-members of the Council be enabled to participate effectively in its work, especially on matters of direct concern to them. No effort should be made to perpetuate the restrictions related to the coronavirus disease pandemic in the practice of the Council. That would be a betrayal of the effort of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions and the successive presidential note S/2017/507 to promote greater transparency and equity in the Council's work.

The closed nature of the Security Council's proceedings and the lack of transparency, as illustrated in its annual report, contributes to disguising the reality that global tensions have grown, conflicts have proliferated and little progress has been made in addressing existing disputes and conflicts, such as the conflict over Jammu and Kashmir. The Security Council considered the situation in Jammu and Kashmir twice in 2020. It is one of the oldest items on the Security Council's agenda. Pakistan seeks a just settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The February 2021 understanding reached between the Directors General of Military Operations of Pakistan and India to fully observe the 2003 ceasefire understanding along the Line of Control was a manifestation of our commitment to prevent a dangerous escalation and the loss of innocent civilian lives along the Line of Control.

The Secretary-General welcomed that positive step and hoped that it would provide an opportunity for further dialogue. A constructive dialogue is possible if India takes steps to create the necessary enabling environment, including the reversal of its unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, in violation of Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 91 (1951) and 122 (1957).

Unfortunately, India persists in its policy of repression in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and in attempts to change its demography as the means to foreclose the exercise of the Kashmiris' right to self-determination — a fundamental right promised to them by the applicable Security Council resolutions. The Kashmir dispute can be durably resolved through the implementation of those resolutions. Until then, the grave human rights and humanitarian situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the accompanying tensions between Pakistan and India continue to pose an ever-present threat to international peace and security.

Afghanistan stands at a historic crossroads. We hope that the Afghan parties will seize the present opportunity for reconciliation, persist with the Doha intra-Afghan peace process and reach an inclusive, politically negotiated settlement leading to the end of hostilities and a lasting peace in Afghanistan.

We hope that the international community, including the Security Council, will support those efforts for a negotiated settlement and restrain the role of spoilers, some of whom are engaged in sponsoring terrorism from Afghanistan to advance their strategic objectives against my country. Pakistan, for its part, will continue to make every effort to keep the Afghan-led and -owned peace process on track, promote mutual accommodation and help to end violence and realize a durable political settlement in Afghanistan.

The continuing tragedy of Palestine is another example of the Council's failure to secure implementation of its own resolutions, end foreign occupation and enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination. Even as innocent

Palestinian men, women and children were being bombed indiscriminately or murdered in the streets and in their homes, even as the sanctity of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Haram Al-Sharif were being desecrated, the Security Council remained paralysed.

The continuing oppression of the people of Kashmir and Palestine and the countless other conflicts afflicting the Muslim world cannot be divorced from the rising phenomena of Islamophobia and the apparent impunity with which Muslim peoples and nations have been subject to foreign intervention, aggression and occupation. For the past 20 years, hate and discrimination against Muslims has proliferated, even within some advanced and democratic societies. The recent terrorist attack in Canada on a Muslim family of Pakistani origin is yet another tragic reminder of the pernicious threat posed by violent ideologies of hate against Muslims. We echo the call of the Secretary-General that “we must stand against Islamophobia and all forms of hatred now more than ever”.

My delegation, for its part, has consistently drawn attention to this new and emerging form of terrorism. We must act against all fascist and totalitarian ideologies and groups that have weaponized hate as a political and ideological tool. As a first step, they must be called out and designated for what they are — terrorist organizations and groups. We reiterate our call for the United Nations and the Security Council to broaden the scope of the current Security Council sanctions regimes to include not only Muslim groups, but also terrorists inspired by these new ideologies of anti-Muslim hate and terror.

**Ms. Agladze** (Georgia): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today’s debate and welcome the report of the Security Council introduced today by the Estonian presidency of the Council for the month of June (A/75/2). We would also like to commend the Niger for its efforts aimed at coordinating the introduction of the report and its timely adoption this year, despite the challenges posed during the reporting period by restrictions occasioned by the coronavirus disease. We welcome this improvement.

We highly value this opportunity to discuss the report of the Security Council and believe that the annual account of the work of the Council should be comprehensive and transparent to allow the wider membership to adequately reflect on the work conducted by the Council on behalf of the States Members of

the United Nations as well as its implications for the maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore call upon the Council to explore ways to enrich the report with more analytical content so that it provides greater depth and substance on key obstacles facing the Council with regard to each of the country-specific situations and broader security challenges it addresses. Like others have noted, this analysis should address the consequences of Security Council action and inaction alike.

From my national perspective, let me note the need to address security and humanitarian challenges in Georgia following the occupation of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region of South Ossetia. Given the grave human rights violations and ongoing militarization in these occupied regions, let me stress that it is of utmost importance that the Council continues the practice of briefings and other opportunities, but under a dedicated agenda item — for example, on situation in Georgia — including meetings in the open-debate format, so that the discussions of the situations of protracted conflict in addressed in greater depth. In this regard, we regret that the Council’s briefing and discussion in 2020 on the situation in Georgia following Russia’s full-scale military aggression against my country in August 2008 took place in under the rubric “Any other business” and that it was not reflected in the annual report.

In conclusion, let me recall the negative impact of the abuse of the veto power in the Council, which Georgia has experienced first-hand. We reiterate that the veto right should be restricted both when a permanent member is involved in a conflict or situation under consideration, in line with Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations, which clearly stipulates that the party to a dispute shall abstain from voting, and also in the cases where the Council’s inaction allows for the perpetration of mass atrocities.

**Ms. Joyini** (South Africa): We thank the President for providing the United Nations membership with an opportunity to consider this year’s annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2), which covers the 2020 period during which South Africa served as an elected member of the Council. We thank the Permanent Missions of the Niger and China for preparing the report.

The report under consideration, for whose timely submission we are grateful, has been presented in accordance with the Council’s obligation under Article

24 (3), and with the understanding that the Council acts on behalf of and is accountable to the broader membership of the United Nations. It is with this understanding that the General Assembly voted to elect non-permanent members to serve in the Council for the next two years. Accordingly, I would like to make the following four points.

First, while we welcome the extensive report provided, we believe that it serves merely as a record of the activities of the Council during the reporting period. In this regard, South Africa joins others in requesting the provision of a more analytical report that will allow for a more complete understanding of the Council's efforts aimed at executing its mandate to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security.

Secondly, the issue of the self-determination of the peoples of Western Sahara and Palestine has been pending for a seemingly endless period, with a sustainable resolution nowhere in sight. South Africa remains concerned that, during the reporting period, the Council was not able to make progress on important and long-standing matters such as Western Sahara and the question of Palestine, which is a precursor of its failure to act proactively and decisively when crises erupt. The recent Palestinian crisis and the lack of an appropriate response from the Council once again demonstrated this unfortunate reality and lays bare the urgent need for Security Council reform.

Although provision is made for the issue of Western Sahara to be discussed at any given time when deemed necessary by the Council, South Africa believes that this matter should equally be afforded significant attention. The Council should, by mandate, deliberate on this topic more often, with a view to finding a durable solution at an accelerated pace.

It is unfortunate that, despite the commitment made in the declaration to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1) to infuse new life into the discussions on the reform of the Security Council, progress has been slow to the point of stagnation. South Africa firmly believes that the United Nations must reflect contemporary realities by ensuring that it is equipped to address the challenges of the present, not those of the past. In this context, we believe that genuine text-based negotiations should commence without delay, as this is the only way to achieve the commitments made in 2005 World Summit

Outcome document, almost 16 years ago (resolution 60/1).

Thirdly, South Africa believes that the elected members of the Council have a more vital role to play, as has been demonstrated in the dynamism shown in addressing fundamental issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security, such as the women and peace and security agenda. The elected members have also made strides in the codification and clarification of the working methods of the Security Council, making tangible gains in improving its effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

Fourthly, South Africa appreciates the observation made in the report that the situation in Africa continues to occupy an important place in the work of the Council, as does the need for reinforcing close cooperation with the African Union (AU), such as through the annual consultation between the members of the Security Council and those of the AU Peace and Security Council. The adoption of an annual joint communiqué expressing the Council's commitment to cooperation with the AU Peace and Security Council is significant. It is therefore our hope that both Council's will continue to make concerted efforts to sustain this practice in future annual consultations. Indeed, South Africa worked closely with all Council members to further the objectives of this cooperation, through the issuance of a presidential statement during its presidency of the Council in December 2020 (S/PRST/2020/11).

Finally, the world has grappled with a deadly pandemic for over a year, which has worsened existing difficulties in various aspects of life. Similarly, the coronavirus disease pandemic has constrained the activities of the Security Council to which the Council proactively responded and adopted the temporary extraordinary measures to ensure that the Council would continue to discharge its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. In this regard, South Africa commends the efforts of all Council members to continue the Council's work even though it was unable hold in-person meetings and conduct several field missions as a result of the pandemic.

However, we must take the opportunity to redouble our efforts to build back better, including by reforming the Council to allow for it to respond to the needs of a changing world by being more representative, accountable and effective in its approaches.



**Mr. Marschik** (Austria): At the outset, let me congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council — Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates. We wish them the best of luck for their term, and I look forward to cooperating closely with them during this important time.

Austria fully aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group (the ACT group), promoting a more transparent, effective and efficient United Nations. We welcome the holding of today's meeting. It is encouraging that after a virtual informal debate last year, this year we can have a physical, formal debate here in the General Assembly Hall. We hope that this solidifies our return to in-person meetings.

I would like to express our appreciation for the timely introduction of the report on the Security Council's activities in 2020 (A/75/2). We welcome the application of the revised process for the first time, which required the report's introduction by the end of May.

Our colleague from South Africa just addressed four points, and I will do the same. First, on the year of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the past year was without a doubt very difficult. We welcome that the report includes references to the working methods adopted as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. However, we do regret that their implications, including on participation by the wider membership, were not thoroughly addressed. We hope that, in next year's report, attention will also be devoted to such issues as the impact of participation in open debates only in the form of written statements.

Secondly, let me thank those members of the Security Council who take the time to think about the wider membership and who brief the wider membership about the Council's activities at the beginning and end of each month. As for the latter, the end of the month, we encourage inclusion of the specific term for those meetings, the so-called wrap-up meetings, in the report. In the coming days, the ACT group will present a non-paper on how to further increase the efficiency of these wrap-up meetings.

Thirdly, Austria welcomes the reference to the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, as well as, after lengthy discussions, the adoption of a subsequent Security Council resolution endorsing his call on 1 July

of last year (resolution 2532 (2020)). However, we regret that no reference was made to the implementation of the resolution. It did cause a humanitarian pause for 90 consecutive days. Next year's report should, in our view, include an analysis of the implementation of a resolution adopted in February of this year calling for a humanitarian pause to facilitate COVID-19-vaccine distribution (resolution 2565 (2021)). In this regard, an impact assessment would also be important.

My last point concerns issues raised under "Any other business", as well as informal meetings of the Council. While it is clear that there are no official records of these "Any other business" meetings and informal meetings, such as meetings in the Arria format, we strongly encourage including information about such events in the report of the Council, for example statistics or discussions of the issues or lists of the issues that were discussed. This activity of the Council is not irrelevant. It can be an important tool of conflict prevention and rapid response. It should therefore also be mentioned in the report.

As a member of the ACT group, we highly value transparency. Therefore, the obligation of the Council vis-à-vis the General Assembly established under Article 24 (3) of the United Nations Charter represents an important means of interaction for us. While we welcome the timely adoption of the report this year, we continue to encourage making the report more analytic and substantive, rather than letting it remain a technical register of meetings and resolutions adopted, resembling somewhat an exercise in ticking the box. We would appreciate a stronger emphasis on providing insights into Council deliberations.

Finally, I would like to thank the President for holding today's formal in-person debate, as well as the presidencies of the Security Council for May and June, China and Estonia, the former for ensuring the timely introduction of the report and the latter for participating in today's discussion and reporting back to Security Council members concerning the points raised. The Security Council does remain the pre-eminent body of the United Nations addressing concerns of peace and security. In today's world, multilateral institutions that seek to establish peace based on international law and customary-law principles are our hope for a secure and stable future — a precondition that would enable a speedy recovery after COVID-19 and also help us to progress further in the years ahead.

As you know, Mr. President, Austria highly values and supports wherever it can effective multilateralism and the rule of law. We do this in this Hall at this meeting today, and we will do it with the Assembly's kind support during a potential term at the Security Council during 2027-2028.

**Mr. Rae** (Canada): I want to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate today. I also wish to thank in particular Ambassador Jürgenson for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/75/2) to the General Assembly.

I think it is exceptionally important for all of us to take stock of the work of the 15-member Security Council, particularly since much of the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies is relatively inaccessible to those who are outside it. And yet we have to recognize that the Council's decisions and its non-decisions and, indeed, its agenda items and the relevant issues that are absent from the agenda are deeply important to all of us, but more importantly deeply important to the peoples of the world.

Through you, Mr. President, we would like to thank the members of the Council for adopting and circulating their annual report in a timely manner this year. But one has to admit that it is a little odd that we would be congratulating the Security Council for filing a report in a timely manner. We know why we have to do that: it is because frequently that has not been the case.

Nevertheless, I have to say that in terms of the content, I would like very much to associate myself with the remarks of several other representatives who have spoken — from the United Arab Emirates, from Singapore, from Malaysia, and, just before me, from Austria — with whom we agree very much that we need to see a more analytical product, with more information on trends and trajectories, especially with regard to regional and country-specific items. I also have a few points to highlight from Canada's perspective.

First of all, I want to stress that we continue to believe that a reform of the Security Council to broaden its membership, make it more accountable and transparent and improve its working methods, are critical features of United Nations reform.

This past year, in the latter half of 2020, I have had the distinct honour of chairing the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). As the only body of the United Nations that is mandated to play a bridging and

convening role across the three pillars of the United Nations, the PBC offers advice that, I believe very strongly, is important. I think its advice is very meaningful and particularly relevant in the cases of complex and multidimensional crises, such as we have seen only too often in the last while.

I was pleased to notice that the Council made use of this advice on a number of occasions in 2020, on the impact of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), on peacebuilding contexts and mandate renewals in the Central African Republic and Guinea Bissau and on the regional crises in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin. I urge the Council to continue to seek out and draw upon the PBC's advice. I know that my successor as Chair, Ambassador Edrees of Egypt, is eager to have the PBC deliver thoughtful and actionable points in this regard. I think it is exceptionally important that we break down the formality of some of these relationships and carry them on in a way that is nimble, quick and responsive.

*(spoke in French)*

COVID-19 remains the issue of the day for all of us. I am thinking in particular of the consequences it has for the most vulnerable, and of the urgency of organizing a response that is truly global. While it is true that the Council has adapted its methods to continue its work, it took too long before the consequences of the pandemic itself were addressed. This was an abject failure, particularly insofar as the Secretary-General, with the support of Canada and a large number of Member States, called almost immediately for a global ceasefire in order to focus on the fight against COVID-19.

The ability for the Council to meet virtually was crucial. It allowed for the continuity of essential pandemic activities. It also facilitated the participation of high-level representatives from some Council member States and briefers, a novelty that should be sustained. However — and there is always a catch — the access of non-member States to the work of the Council has been cut off, as several of my colleagues have said this morning, even during so-called “open” debates. This situation cannot continue. Other members of the Organization have relevant perspectives to bring to bear and can make valuable contributions. Our colleagues on the Security Council should take quick decisions to allow them to resume their participation.

With respect to multilingualism and inclusion, multilingualism has also suffered from the pandemic and the shift to virtual meetings. This has created

inequalities between delegations here in New York, which is a problem in itself. The problem is even greater, however, when it comes to the participation of people on the ground, who have the best knowledge of conflict situations.

The Secretariat and Council Member States have, in our view, been slow to adopt technological solutions; indeed, they have been much slower than other United Nations bodies. This is an issue about which Canada, and I am sure other countries, are concerned.

On the subject of gender equality, I want to mention that we remain concerned about the issue of women's participation in the work of the Council. Council members and the Council presidency must give precedence to women briefers and experts when setting the monthly programmes of work. The problem is caused, frankly, by a lack of ambition, not by a lack of women in relevant positions. I find that this clearly remains the case in the area of peace and security. We know very well that the women's perspective is particularly important. It is worth noting that Canada, as chair of the PBC over the past year, in a context that was also marked by COVID-19, and with the support of other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat, managed to increase the proportion of women involved in peacebuilding work fivefold over the previous year. Therefore, if it is possible for the PBC to encourage women's participation, it is also possible for the Security Council to do so

**Mr. Skoknic Tapia** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/75/2). We would also like to thank Estonia for introducing the report.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

On behalf of my country, Chile, I would like to express our appreciation to the Security Council for having for the first time since its adoption complied with the mandate that establishes the end of May as the deadline for the submitting the report to the General Assembly, and we reiterate our gratitude for the opportunity to meet today in the General Assembly.

The report covers the period of the coronavirus disease pandemic and its impact on the working methods of the Council as it continued to carry out its work. It

also implicitly reflects the differences that Council members brought to establishing innovative, agile and flexible working methods for adapting and ensuring continuity of work when in-person meetings could not take place for health reasons. The report also reflects the willingness of the Council to find technological solutions to meet the demands of transparency and decision-making and the participation of Member States through written statements in the open debates and their compilation and issuance as Security Council documents.

We are grateful for the monthly assessments of the work of the Security Council by former Presidents, which are included in part I, section XIV, of the 2020 report, and we urge delegations that have not included them in their relevant activities to do so. We believe it is imperative to foster an exchange between the Council and the full membership of the General Assembly through the wrap-up sessions, which go beyond merely a summary of monthly meetings and which, we believe, can create a space enabling substantive exchanges on issues of global interest and useful information to be included in future reports.

Nevertheless, we emphasize that we would also have liked to see a deeper analysis of the content and contexts concerning situations that are of interest to both the Council and Member States. In that regard, we underscore the agenda items that are of particular importance for our region, specifically developments related to the implementation of the mandates of the special political missions in Colombia and Haiti.

Accordingly, the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the interest that the Security Council has taken in supporting the sanctions imposed by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace illustrate the importance of upholding peace agreement commitments and the support of the international community to that end. With regard to the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, we stress the mission's linkage of security with development components, especially within the context of the pandemic, in order to successfully achieve the goals sought and multilaterally support the principle of national ownership.

In conclusion, we believe that everything I just said is in line with strengthening multilateralism, with the demands of the citizens of the world for greater transparency and accountability in decision-making

and with the commitments made in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), in which we established promoting peace, preventing conflict, building trust and modernizing the United Nations as priorities.

**Mr. Hawke** (New Zealand): I thank you, Sir, for convening this important meeting.

New Zealand aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. Let me therefore make a few additional comments in my national capacity.

Every year, this debate provides a key opportunity to reflect both on the institutional relationship between the two organs and the work of the Security Council. We are pleased to be able to do this in person. This is also a timely month, which coincides with the Security Council's annual open debate on working methods — to be held on 16 June. We thank the Niger for leading the timely adoption of the 2020 annual report of the Security Council (A/75/2) and congratulate Council members on adhering to the deadline for the report's adoption and presentation.

With regard to the substance of the report, it is clear that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic deeply impacted the work of the Council. But the pandemic did not stop the Council's workload or its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to deliver on its mandate. The report highlights that 2020 was also a year marked by turbulence and instability, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The inability of the Council to act in some of the most critical areas threatening peace and security, including owing to the threat of the use of the veto, remains of deep concern to us. We regret that, concerning the Council's working methods, it was unable during this time to agree on a number of interim measures, including virtual real-time voting. New Zealand wishes to amplify the ACT group's comment that it would be helpful, in the introduction of the report, to highlight

the impact of the pandemic on international peace and security, the Council's work and its tools. That would provide a better snapshot of how the work of the Council was impacted and the lessons that could be learned.

We do not want to see the Council continue to move towards a worrisome trend where differences result in inaction and are more common than agreement. The work of the Security Council in maintaining peace and security is a critical part of the United Nations, but it cannot be achieved in isolation. That is why the General Assembly has a role in pushing for a more transparent, accountable and coherent Council. This report and the debate that we are having here today serve as a step towards achieving that.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in this debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers this afternoon at 3 p.m. in the Hall.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 30.

### **Results of the election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees**

**The President:** I wish to inform members that the following representatives have been elected Chairpersons of the six Main Committees of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session and are accordingly members of the General Committee for that session: First Committee, Mr. Omar Hilale of Morocco; Second Committee, Mrs. Vanessa Frazier of Malta; Third Committee, Mr. Mohamed Siad Doualeh of Djibouti; Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), Mrs. Egriselda Aracely González López of El Salvador; Fifth Committee, Mr. Mher Margaryan of Armenia; and Sixth Committee, Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani of Qatar. I congratulate the Chairpersons of the six Main Committees for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly on their elections.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*