



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

**8906**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Tuesday, 16 November 2021, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez . . . . .	(Mexico)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Zhang Jun
	Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Jürgenson
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli/Ms. Bhat
	Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
	Niger . . . . .	Mr. Ousman
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. King
	Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ladeb
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Pham

## Agenda

### Maintenance of international peace and security

Peace and security through preventive diplomacy: a common objective to all the principal organs of the United Nations

Letter dated 19 October 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2021/888)

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In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of Security Council members dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, this official record of the Security Council will be supplemented by a compilation of annexes (S/2021/952) containing the statements submitted by interested non-members of the Council.



*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

#### **Peace and security through preventive diplomacy: a common objective to all the principal organs of the United Nations**

#### **Letter dated 19 October 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2021/888)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Belgium, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Ukraine and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly; His Excellency Mr. Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council; and Judge Joan Donoghue, President of the International Court of Justice.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/888, which contains a letter dated 19 October 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, and give him the floor.

**The Secretary-General** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for highlighting the importance of preventive diplomacy.

Prevention does not always receive the attention it deserves. Perhaps that is because it is difficult to measure the results of preventing conflict, preventing war or preventing the suffering of thousands of people in advance. We have war reporters, but there are no peace reporters.

But prevention is absolutely vital to lasting peace. Prevention is the ultimate goal of the work of the Council and its resolutions to help countries build peace and stability, and to resolve their disputes before they escalate into armed conflicts. The role of the International Court of Justice is essential in that regard. Prevention is the very reason for the existence of the United Nations. The Organization was born from the ashes of the Second World War with the intention, set out in our Charter, not to return to subject humankind to the inhumanity of war.

*(spoke in English)*

For 76 years, the United Nations system has given the world a home for dialogue and tools and mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. From the judicial dimension of prevention provided by the International Court of Justice; to the Economic and Social Council, which works to address conflict by advancing sustainable development; to the twin resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council in 2016 (resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262), which reminded us once again that prevention must be at the heart of our collective goals of building and sustaining peace; to the women and men of the Organization who are working every day to forge, build and maintain peace in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on Earth — prevention is essential.

That is why I placed my agenda of prevention at the centre of my mandates for my first and second terms as Secretary-General. I called for a surge in diplomacy for peace to ensure that political solutions remain the first and primary option to settle disputes. That includes reviews of all of the tools that comprise the United Nations peace architecture and a better integration of prevention and risk-assessment across United Nations decision-making. It includes more innovation and more foresight, including a much more robust system of regional monthly risk reviews, senior decision-making

and stronger support to Member States in managing and addressing crisis risks. And it includes connecting the dots among all of the drivers of conflict, including poverty, inequalities and climate change.

That is because history has shown that conflicts do not emerge out of thin air, nor are they inevitable. Too often, they are the result of gaps that are ignored or not properly addressed: gaps in access to basic necessities like food, water, social services and medicine; gaps in security or governance systems, where aggrieved groups can coalesce and find a pathway to power by force; gaps in trust in Governments, in institutions and laws, and in one another; gaps in tolerance and social cohesion rooted in discrimination, prejudice and grievances old and new; or gaps in equality between rich and poor, among and within countries, and between men and women. All of these gaps are potential flashpoints for violence and even conflict.

Prevention is ultimately the business of stopping wars and conflicts before they happen, and of defusing through dialogue the tensions that spark division and war that put millions of lives in danger every day. But prevention is also the business of making sure that no mother has to skip a meal to feed her children; of bringing hope for a better future through education, health care and the possibility of an income; of fostering tolerance, trust, equality and respect for human rights — all the ingredients of a peaceful society; of closing the development gaps that lead to conflict and bringing the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals to life for all people, equally; and of reversing the vicious cycle of conflict and division and, instead, setting in motion a virtuous cycle of development and peace. And diplomacy has a vital role to play in carrying this virtuous cycle forward.

My report *Our Common Agenda* proposes a new agenda for peace that takes a comprehensive, holistic view of global security — one that not only includes efforts to consolidate peace, build resilience in fragile contexts and avert conflict relapse, but that also recognizes the importance of sustainable development to preventing violence and conflicts from happening in the first place. For the women and men of the United Nations, preventive diplomacy and development go hand-in-hand. There is no separation.

We know that preventive diplomacy works. I have consistently used my good offices — sometimes publicly, sometimes behind the scenes — to seek to

defuse conflicts and advance peace. From border disputes to constitutional and electoral crises and fragile peace talks, we can point to example after example where our regional offices, special envoys, special political missions and peacekeeping operations are working around the clock and around the world.

A central part of our prevention strategy is working with regional and subregional organizations, from the African Union to subregional organizations throughout Africa, to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to the European Union and beyond. These organizations are vital voices of peace and play a key role in promoting confidence-building and dialogue as we work to prevent and resolve conflicts.

Our work together with our partners to help prepare for and ensure peaceful elections is another critical part of our preventive efforts, including past elections in Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Malawi, Zambia and Sao Tome and Principe. In Somalia, we have joined forces with the African Union and the European Union to work with parties to prevent the escalation of tensions in the midst of a fraught election. In Libya, we are working closely with the transitional authorities to ensure that the ceasefire holds and that the country seizes this moment for peace in the lead-up to next month's elections.

Beyond elections, our Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia is bringing the region's Governments together to jointly develop common approaches to share water resources and counter terrorism. In Mali, together with the Economic Community of West African States and partners, we are supporting the political transition to ensure a peaceful and timely return to constitutional order, sometimes against all odds.

In the Great Lakes region, my Special Envoy is focused on building mutual confidence and trust between countries and leaders, The Special Coordinator for development in the Sahel is working shoulder-to-shoulder with all entities to build peace and support people in that subregion. The Peacebuilding Commission is supporting the peace process in Papua New Guinea and peace programming in South Sudan. And in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), our resident coordinators and country teams are supporting the response to the pandemic, while also serving people's

needs in the midst of humanitarian emergencies, from Haiti to Yemen to Myanmar.

While we are proud of our work, we also know that we must do far more to join up our humanitarian, peace and development efforts. My report *Our Common Agenda* calls for a new social contract within all societies, anchored in human rights and focused on accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This means urgent investments in universal health coverage, social protection, education and, of course, COVID-19 vaccines for all. It means working to end inequalities that deny entire groups of people access to civil and economic life and the levers of decision-making. It means, finally, ensuring that we balance the scales of power and participation equally for women. And it means transforming our commitment to human rights from words to practice in every context. That is also an essential element in preventing crises.

But it also means strengthening all the tools of preventive diplomacy for the future, as proposed in the Agenda for Peace. This means stronger early-warning systems and strategic foresight tools, including better data and analytics, so we can develop a shared understanding of threats to detect and avoid looming crises. It means stronger mediation capacities, the front lines of our diplomatic efforts to build peace in communities around the world. It means expanding the pool of women leaders to serve as envoys or mediation specialists, just as we have increased the number of women peacekeepers and women leading our field missions. And it means more joint work across the United Nations family, including the Peacebuilding Commission, to bring together system-wide expertise through regular reports and dialogue.

*(spoke in French)*

Prevention is not a political tool but a realistic path to peace. If preventive diplomacy and development are to contribute to the peace to which we all aspire, we need the full support of the Council, and indeed of all Member States. We have seen too many missed opportunities in prevention because of the mistrust among Member States about their respective motivations. This is understandable. We live in a world where the balance of power has always been unbalanced; a world where double standards reign and where principles are applied selectively and unfairly; a world where prosperity and development are unevenly distributed; a world where entire groups have been left behind by poverty and

discrimination. Lasting peace requires constant work with leaders, communities and all partners to build the stability that only inclusive development can bring.

This is my message to the Security Council: stand by our side to build peace through dialogue and collaboration. That is the only viable solution to build our common future.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the President of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Shahid**: It is indeed a great honour to speak today at the Security Council open debate on peace and security through preventive diplomacy — my first time as the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session. I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation and for your initiative as President of the Security Council to organize this meeting.

For 76 years, the United Nations has represented the pinnacle of what concerted diplomacy can achieve in preventing global conflict. In that time, we have learned much about what is required to preserve international peace. We understand better how socioeconomic factors exacerbate conflict, and more keenly appreciate diplomacy's role in preventing it. We understand that peace requires a holistic effort that goes beyond traditional paradigms, one that considers the security, human rights and development priorities of the entire membership; one that empowers all voices in the global security discourse, including women and youth.

It is in acknowledgement of that that the membership has been increasingly calling for a more representative Security Council, one that is better equipped to deal with the novel and complex challenges of the twenty-first century; one that works in tandem with other United Nations organs to deliver comprehensive solutions to current and emerging security issues.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has exacerbated socioeconomic challenges. It has starkly highlighted the interconnectedness of today's challenges. Our health, our economic prosperity, our planet's well-being and our safety and security are all interlinked.

Indeed, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has long recognized that peace and sustainable development complement one other. Communities that struggle to meet their most basic

needs, or that lack economic and social mobility, are prone to unrest and strife. Climate crises and disasters threaten displacement and force communities into competition over scarce resources. Ineffective institutions rob people of hope and undermine their faith in Governments and justice systems. And the absence of democratic participation, political freedoms and equality deprives entire populations of their human rights. That limits their ability to turn to peaceful recourse in redressing their grievances. We see those truths borne out in many conflict-ridden places across the world. The global community simply must do more.

In addition to humanitarian relief, we must support preventive measures to build resilience and strengthen sustainable development to give people an opportunity to live in dignity and prosperity. Truly, human rights, justice and sustainable development are our greatest tools in both building and maintaining peace and security.

Preventive diplomacy today is being conducted by a broader array of actors, using a wider range of tools, than ever before. Those include the development of early-warning systems and targeted funding mechanisms for rapid response, the establishment of dedicated prevention structures and the ongoing use of special envoys.

The critical importance of peacekeeping operations in the Organization's overall peace and security toolkit has been recognized for decades. However, sustaining peace and peacebuilding today is no longer limited to traditional military peacekeeping but also includes strengthening capacities, institutions and democratic integrity. That dramatically reduces the likelihood of conflict and is one of the most effective strategies to secure durable peace.

The Peacebuilding Commission, which is an intergovernmental advisory body of the Security Council and the General Assembly, ensures sustained international attention to countries emerging from conflict, including to the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict. I welcome the call in *Our Common Agenda* to invest in prevention and strengthened peacebuilding efforts through adequate and predictable financing. And I call upon all United Nations bodies to coordinate to embed peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations more deeply in the global security architecture.

Global security will always be within the proper remit of the Security Council. However, work done by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to build resilient and prosperous communities facilitates the work of the Security Council.

In November 1999, the Security Council adopted presidential statement S/PRST/1999/34, which recognized the importance of building a culture of prevention and the need for all United Nations organs to pursue preventive strategies. In fact, in his 2011 report entitled *Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results*, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underscored the importance of preventive diplomacy throughout the conflict spectrum. The report noted that, through its norm-setting capacity and deliberative functions, the General Assembly has a central role in contributing to a conducive environment for conflict prevention.

The Secretary-General's report *Our Common Agenda* also stresses the importance of system-wide cooperation and the need for greater focus on prevention. The agenda's commitment to boosting partnerships envisions stronger engagement within the United Nations system and calls for reforms of the Organization's three principal organs — making the Security Council more representative, revitalizing the work of the General Assembly and strengthening Economic and Social Council.

Revitalizing the General Assembly is one the key elements of my "Presidency of Hope". To that end, I not only want to make it more inclusive of the views and priorities of the membership, but also want to strengthen cooperation between the main United Nations organs to streamline our responses to global challenges, including security challenges.

I call upon the membership to work together to implement General Assembly resolution 75/325, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, which encourages regular interaction and continued coordination among the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Regular coordination meetings among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as mandated in the resolution, help bridge differences and improve the efficiency of our work.

On my part, as President of the General Assembly, I am keen to engage with my peers to synergize our efforts to recover better, improve global governance

and strengthen the international security regime. Under my “Presidency of Hope”, I will continue to engage with Member States as well as with the principal organs of the United Nations to ensure progress in our common endeavours.

I hope that same spirit of cooperation will guide our discussions today. I look forward to a wide-ranging and productive debate. I expect that the outcomes will put us in a better position to deliver to our global constituents.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Shahid for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kelapile.

**Mr. Kelapile**: It is a great pleasure for me to address the Security Council in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council at this very timely open debate. I wish to thank the Mexican presidency of the Council for convening this debate and for inviting me. The event is, in fact, a very welcome step in the improvement of cooperation and collaboration among the United Nations Charter-based principal organs.

The Charter of the United Nations recognizes development as the indispensable foundation of collective security. While there is no dispute that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, conflict prevention is also at the core of the work of the United Nations and must therefore actively involve all principal organs.

At its founding, the Economic and Social Council was entrusted with the responsibility to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples and the promotion and protection of human rights. Protecting our citizens from want, disease and environmental degradation means protecting their security and preventing conflict. The Economic and Social Council’s oversight and coordination of the United Nations development system, including in conflict settings, as well as its work on humanitarian action and coordination, are also highly relevant to the maintenance of peace and security.

To date, however, interactions between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council have remained sporadic and ad hoc. We must acknowledge that today’s complex challenges require more institutionalized collaboration. We already have the legal basis for inter-Council collaboration

and coordination. Article 65 of the Charter clearly provides that

“[t]he Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist the Security Council upon its request”.

The Economic and Social Council’s own rules of procedure also provide that special sessions can be requested by the Security Council or, alternatively, an item can be proposed on the Economic and Social Council’s agenda. Despite that, we can find only two examples of explicit requests to the Economic and Social Council for assistance by the Security Council referring to Article 65: the first in 1950, regarding the situation in Korea, and the second in 1973, with respect to Zambia. The most recent request by the Security Council to the Economic and Social Council in 1998, inviting it to contribute to the elaboration of a long-term programme of support for Haiti, did not reference Article 65.

With over 75 years of development experience and a vast body of knowledge — both of which are increasingly pertinent to the work of the Security Council — the Economic and Social Council, together with its subsidiary bodies, has much to offer. It was the seminal work of the Commission on the Status of Women on gender-mainstreaming that created the momentum for the consideration of the women and peace and security agenda in the Security Council. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute have also done work at the intersection of conflict and the rule of law.

Moreover, the Economic and Social Council’s Commission for Social Development addresses social exclusion and inequality and focuses on those communities often left behind. Its Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and its Youth Forum also provide a platform for engaging communities that have traditionally been voiceless. Information from the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, could constitute an early warning system.

The voluntary national reviews of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, also offer valuable insights and lessons learned for the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in conflict-affected countries. At the High-level Political Forum in July 2022, of the 46 countries that will present their voluntary national reviews on implementation of the 2030 Agenda, approximately 12 have been affected by conflict within the past two decades.

I am from a region of the world where surmounting the challenges to peace and development has been most elusive. In the Sahel, we continue to witness untold suffering due to the failure to appreciate the complex interplay of human survival in a very fragile and culturally diverse environment. Extreme poverty in South Sudan is rooted in over 50 years of conflict. Haiti's vast humanitarian needs, structural inequality, governance deficits and vulnerability to climate change require that we work ever more closely together, as the United Nations principal organs, to address the long-term development needs of that country. Currently, those three cases are on the agendas of both Councils and could benefit from joint and complementary approaches.

Having said all that, allow me to share some practical options for strengthening inter-Council coordination that will be more visible, transparent, complementary and effective. Those could constitute elements for an institutional framework that could promote comprehensive, integrated solutions that span actions across the peace and security, humanitarian and development pillars of the Organization.

First, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council could build on their previous collaboration in the early 2000s. The Chair of the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa regularly participated in the work of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African Countries Emerging from Conflict. There was even a joint mission to Guinea-Bissau in 2004. The work of the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Africa, which includes, in its terms of reference, strengthening cooperation with the Economic and Social Council, could benefit from the participation of a member of the Economic and Social Council Bureau. While the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African Countries no longer exist, the Council's consideration of South Sudan and the Sahel remain relevant for joint discussion.

Secondly, we can also draw on the experience of the existing regular interactions among the General

Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) that have been in place for a number of years. There are monthly meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and the two Presidents also convene joint briefings at the beginning of the calendar year. There are also annual joint meetings between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

Given that rich and valuable experience, I would also like to propose regular meetings among the heads of the principal organs under the Charter and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Work programmes could be shared, which could help plan a more systematic approach to engaging the heads of the principal organs where relevant.

Another option could be regular joint meetings of a composite committee of the bureaus of the Economic and Social Council, the PBC and, of course, a troika of Security Council Presidents of the prior, current and following month. Those meetings could serve to mobilize political will and international solidarity and could be the medium through which to discuss integrated strategies and targeted policy interventions that support conflict prevention. Those meetings could be prepared by existing informal coordinators that have been put in place by the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council and the General Assembly. The informal coordinators for the PBC and the Economic and Social Council will be selected very soon. Those informal coordinators can identify areas where collaboration would be most useful and mainstream a more holistic and coherent approach to our work.

Thirdly and finally, we could envision that joint meetings on common themes could also extend to the entire membership of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Joining forces on crises of a global nature, such as pandemics and the climate crisis, will demonstrate to the global public that Member States can put aside their differences for the greater good. It would also mobilize a more coherent, coordinated and accountable United Nations system-wide response.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that we need innovative solutions to the multidimensional crises across the pillars of the Organization. As we move forward, and onward, to the 100th anniversary of the United Nations, let us work together more closely and

engender the ambition to give life and meaning to a larger vision of collective security, rooted in sustainable development and conflict prevention.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continues to threaten our world and has already reversed many gains made towards the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The pandemic has hit the poorest and the most vulnerable in our societies hardest. With its multifaceted impacts on health, the economy, food security and education, it has exposed, and further exacerbated, pre-existing inequalities within and among countries, which, if not dealt with in a collaborative way, will be palpable sources of future tensions and conflict.

In that regard, I commend you, Mr. President, for also convening the high-level open debate on exclusion, inequality and conflict on 9 November (see S/PV.8900). We in the Economic and Social Council agree that it is imperative to address the root causes of conflict, which often lie in poverty and unequal access to opportunities for a better life.

Moving forward, the Economic and Social Council is fully mobilized to ensure a swift recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, including by promoting equitable access to affordable vaccines for everyone. That issue has been at the centre of our work since March 2020 and will continue to be so until the crisis dissipates. It is one among several areas where the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council can work together, in coordination with the General Assembly, in a complementary manner in accordance the respective mandates of the principal organs.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Kelapile for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Judge Donoghue.

**Judge Donoghue**: A few weeks ago, I had the honour of travelling to Headquarters in New York to deliver the traditional addresses of the President of the International Court of Justice to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Sixth Committee and to take part in valuable meetings with United Nations officials and representatives of Member States. Today's signature event provides the perfect opportunity to follow up on some of the points raised while I was in New York as part of the ongoing dialogue among the principal organs that seeks to identify avenues to promote our shared objectives of peace and security.

I am therefore grateful to Your Excellency, Mr. President, for convening this signature event, which I am pleased to join via video-teleconference from the seat of the Court at The Hague. In that regard, as indicated when the meeting was scheduled, I will need to excuse myself today at noon, New York time.

In your concept note (S/2021/888, annex), Mr. President, you drew attention to the Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels (General Assembly resolution 67/1), unanimously adopted in 2012, which recognizes the respective contributions of different United Nations organs to the prevention of conflicts. Today I will touch upon three points addressed in the Declaration that highlight the indispensable interplay between the Court and other principal organs in that field.

First, the International Court of Justice welcomes efforts by the other principal organs to promote the resort by Member States to the settlement of their disputes before the Court. In the 2012 Declaration, the General Assembly called upon States that have not yet done so to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. The Court welcomes related initiatives of United Nations organs and Member States, including most recently the declaration on promoting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, launched earlier this month by a core group of States. Of course, depositing a declaration recognizing the Court's jurisdiction as compulsory is only one of several ways in which a State may express its consent to that jurisdiction. The encouragement to embrace the Court's jurisdiction can therefore usefully be expanded beyond the deposit of those so-called Optional Clause declarations.

The principal organs of the United Nations represented at this event can be, and have been, involved in other ways in the process that leads to contentious cases being submitted to the Court. For instance, under Article 36, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council may recommend, in relation to legal disputes that endanger international peace and security, that the States involved refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice. The Security Council did that with respect to the very first case heard by the Court — the Corfu Channel case. More recently, the Secretary-General played a crucial role in the decades-long process that led to the

submission to the Court of a dispute between Guyana and Venezuela.

Turning to a second point mentioned in the 2012 Declaration, the Assembly recalled the ability of the relevant organs of the United Nations to request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice.

During events that take place each fall in International Law Week, including those that were held this year, Member State representatives often make general calls for increased resort by United Nations organs to the advisory opinion mechanism. The question whether to seek any particular advisory opinion from the Court is a matter entirely in the hands of the relevant organ or specialized agency and its members and must be carefully weighed on the basis of a range of different factors and considerations. The Court itself stands ready to receive any requests for advisory opinions that relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies may make.

Moving to a third issue addressed in the 2012 Declaration, the General Assembly reaffirmed the obligation of all States to comply with the decisions of the International Court of Justice in cases to which they are parties. Once the Court delivers its final judgment in relation to a given dispute, the case is removed from its docket. The Court is not a monitoring body. Its role in relation to a given dispute ends at that point. However, depending on the particulars of the case, other international organs may be able to play a role in bringing about the full implementation of the Court's decisions.

As Council members know, Article 94, paragraph 2, of the United Nations Charter sets out a specific role for the Security Council in the implementation of the Court's decisions. The very limited practice under that provision suggests that States have found it more valuable to pursue other avenues to achieve the full implementation of judgments of the International Court of Justice in their favour.

In many cases, the two States, acting individually or in concert, give effect to a judgment without the involvement of third parties. In some circumstances, however, outside actors within the United Nations framework and beyond can assist the two States in moving forward from a situation of conflict to a situation where a dispute has been resolved. The principal organs of the United Nations can play a positive role in that regard. I would like to draw attention, for example,

to the fundamental role played by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in bringing about the implementation of the Court's 2012 judgment in the case concerning the *Land and Maritime Boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria*.

While the circumstances and requirements of each case vary, that example demonstrates that other United Nations organs have opportunities, within their respective purviews, to contribute to the implementation of judgments of the International Court of Justice and to the promotion of peace, security and justice. I invite the participants at this event to consider the ways in which the contributions of the Court and those of the other principal organs could be mutually reinforcing.

The Court welcomes opportunities for engagement with the other principal organs of the United Nations. In my briefing, I hope to have briefly addressed some of the areas in which the role of the Court and those of other organs can complement each other with a view to the prevention of conflicts, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Judge Donoghue for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Mexico.

For the United Nations to be able to carry out genuine preventive diplomacy, coordination among its principal organs must be strengthened. That is the very reason that Mexico convened this debate. We express our gratitude and appreciation for the presence of the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice, as well as the 34 countries that are inscribed on the list of speakers for this open debate. Their participation is a sign of their commitment and reaffirms the will towards more coordinated and effective multilateral diplomacy.

Unfortunately, the wide range of tools at the disposal of the United Nations to promote conflict prevention does not reflect the outcomes that we have seen in recent years. We only have to look at the range of issues that the Security Council will address this month alone — Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Syria, to name but a few — to recognize that the United Nations, as a single body, has not been able to prevent these conflicts from arising, escalating and threatening

international peace and security, putting the lives of thousands of people at risk. It is therefore timely to reflect on what we can do to prevent more situations from coming before the Council and to ensure that the Council does not limit itself to administering conflicts.

Nor can we ignore the stigma that it represents for many countries to have their national situations addressed in the Security Council. This is one of the best incentives for other principal organs, working within their mandates, to act early and in a timely manner to prevent the emergence of conflict. Violence is always the product of processes of frustration and pain, fuelled by deprivation and need and exacerbated by intolerance, excessive ambition and hatred. This whole chain of vicious circles can be tackled from the different trenches of the United Nations, provided there is a swift and coordinated reaction.

Conflict also represents the victory of force over reason and law. This is why we should not underestimate the tools offered by the United Nations Charter for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The same applies to the accountability of those responsible for committing international crimes. This is why we insist that the veto cannot and should not be used to prevent Council action in cases of mass atrocities. Every time this happens, the United Nations fails twice: by failing to prevent and by failing to react.

I reiterate: sustainable peace is the responsibility of all the principal organs of the United Nations, working within their respective mandates and competences. And today's challenges require a United Nations that shows a common front and call for accountability with a single voice. Today's exercise therefore opens a space for dialogue in order to ensure that the Organization responds with unity and improves its effectiveness.

This preventive approach puts the individual at the centre of the Organization, and this must include all agencies, funds, programmes and specialized bodies, as well as the teams deployed in the field. Preventive diplomacy, mediation, the peaceful settlement of disputes and strengthening the rule of law are key to peacebuilding and complement the action of peacekeeping operations and special political missions mandated by the Council itself.

The current coronavirus disease pandemic has shown that we need synergies with a long-term vision for the United Nations to respond to current and future challenges. Despite the serious threat to international

security that the pandemic has posed from the outset, we should not forget that it was the General Assembly that first reacted substantively, followed months later by the Security Council.

The report of the Secretary-General entitled *Our Common Agenda* and yesterday's adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution that arose from it (General Assembly resolution 76/6) provide a framework for action to adapt, strengthen and accelerate multilateral cooperation. This inevitably requires the involvement of regional organizations and the full participation of civil society.

I conclude by making four concrete proposals that can be explored to give continuity to the collegial process we have initiated today.

First, we believe that the communication and collaboration between the Secretary-General's envoys and special representatives for situations on the Council's agenda with the other principal organs of the United Nations can be strengthened. This interaction can provide a more comprehensive and holistic approach that makes their work more effective.

Secondly, we reiterate our proposal to allow the Secretary-General to request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice where these may benefit his conflict-prevention work.

Thirdly, we believe that coordination among the principal organs should be incorporated in their subsidiary bodies, especially the Human Rights Council, whose work is fundamental to preventive diplomacy and to sustainable peace and development.

Fourthly and finally, we propose regularizing this type of meeting in order to prevent dialogue between the main bodies from taking place in isolation or on a case-by-case basis, with a view to opening a new stage of coordination and collaboration. To this end, we could explore the creation of a working group or other mechanism to develop a real agenda for communication among the principal organs of the United Nations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

**Mr. Ladeb** (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): First and foremost, I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the

President of the International Court of Justice, for their useful briefings.

I would not wish to fail to thank Mexico for having chosen the topic of today's meeting. This is an excellent opportunity for the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations to take stock of their contribution and their cooperation to promote international peace and security, in particular through preventive diplomacy, and to find ways of achieving complementarity in their efforts and of perfecting their coordination for better action in preventing, managing and finding solutions to conflicts.

Preventive diplomacy is based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular the principle of the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 1 stipulates that the United Nations must

“take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace”.

If the Charter confers the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to the Security Council, the Charter also attributes to the General Assembly several prerogatives in this area, including those of discussing all matters linked to international peace and security and drawing the attention of the Security Council to situations that might endanger international peace and security.

Article 8 of the Charter confers upon regional organizations the prerogative of peacefully settling local disputes before submitting them to the Security Council. The Charter requests the Economic and Social Council to provide information to the Security Council and to assist it if it so requests. It also entrusts the Secretary-General with an important responsibility, namely, to alert the Security Council to any issue that might threaten international peace and security. We attach great importance to the role of the principal organs of the United Nations, each in their specific area of remit, in maintaining international peace and security through effective collective measures.

The causes of crises and conflicts vary — from poverty and unemployment to marginalization and exclusion. Economic indicators are declining, with weak State institutions and governance, as well as corruption, terrorism, violent extremism, organized transnational crimes, human rights abuses, climate change and the spread of pandemics. Challenges arising from those

situations are diverse and multifaceted. They require a broader view of the concept of international peace and security, instead of a focus on preventing differences. We must look at all actions to prevent certain situations from occurring, spreading and transforming into conflict. That must be done through the collaborative efforts of the principal organs of the United Nations.

We welcome today's debate, but we would like to underscore the importance of preventive diplomacy, which includes action to contain conflicts and prevent them from spreading. We also stress the importance of holding regular meetings with a view to generating practical recommendations on this matter. Preventive diplomacy remains one of the best ways of maintaining international peace and security. It is not only the best option from a political and moral standpoint but is also the least costly option for the United Nations and the international community.

Given the complexities in the international situation today, we believe that preventive diplomacy must also include regional organizations, which constantly demonstrate their effectiveness and their central role of crisis management in their respective regions thanks to their knowledge of the specificities of the situation on the ground. We therefore reiterate that enhancing cooperation, partnerships and integration with regional organizations is critical in order to enable them to intervene first and as soon as possible in order for them to use their tools to promote a peaceful settlement and uphold international peace and security. That is a crucial component of effective preventive diplomacy.

We are convinced that wars and conflicts are not inevitable. Instead, we must work to prevent their occurrence or exacerbation. Instead of rushing to attend to emergencies, we could take early preventive action so that emerging threats do not spiral out of control.

Despite progress in this area, preventive diplomacy still faces challenges, particularly the absence of political resolve among some parties to conflict, as well as the difficulty of imposing solutions. Every day, many lives are lost, and people are suffering from the ravages of wars and conflicts. That includes women and children. That is the price we pay for our inability to prevent. We are therefore firmly convinced that the use of preventive diplomacy is not an option, but rather an urgent need.

We hope that today's meeting will be a decisive turning point towards better coordinating the efforts

of the various United Nations organs in furtherance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, as well as the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Kelapile from the Economic and Social Council and Judge Donoghue for their briefings.

In 2016, the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted a pair of ground-breaking resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262). Those resolutions explicitly acknowledged — for the first time — that conflict prevention was the responsibility of the entire United Nations system. Building on our collective recognition that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, the resolutions envisioned a more integrated and coherent United Nations approach to preventing conflict.

As we heard today and as the 2020 United Nations peacebuilding architecture review also reminded us, making that a reality is still a work in progress. We warmly welcome the Secretary-General's prioritization of peace in *Our Common Agenda*. I would like to make three points on this issue.

First, a system-wide approach to sustaining peace is critical. By the time an issue reaches the Security Council, it may be too late for many on the front line — the receiving end of conflict. Peace needs to be a core consideration of the wider United Nations architecture. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is obviously key, but we can do more to realize the PBC's full potential and, as we heard today, to enhance the role of other United Nations bodies and organs.

The human rights architecture is particularly important in that regard. Those who hide behind arguments about mandates and competencies in order to maintain that human rights have no bearing on peace and security would do well to revisit the Charter of the United Nations. Moreover, as we see, human rights violations are often an early indicator of conflict, and human rights diplomacy is a key part of preventive diplomacy.

Secondly, peace needs to be more firmly embedded in the work of United Nations bodies concerned with development. Development may be the best form

of conflict prevention, but, as we have said before, development done poorly is not the master key to unlocking all problems. For development to be sustainable, it needs to simultaneously address issues that we know drive conflict, including social, economic and political exclusion.

Thirdly, as your concept note (S/2021/888/annex) states, Mr. President, an international order based on the rule of law is indispensable for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. That includes the Security Council holding Governments to account when they disregard international treaties, especially when that involves serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. For the United Kingdom, that also means promoting open societies, good governance and the rule of law at the national level. Combatting corruption and ensuring that people have access to justice and security can be important steps in preventing conflict.

In conclusion, overcoming the silos of the United Nations system is critical for United Nations conflict prevention. The United Kingdom is committed to realizing the promise of the 2016 twin resolutions. We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for this timely debate.

**Mr. Ragutthalli** (India): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to express our appreciation to your delegation for organizing today's open debate on the respective roles and functions of the United Nations principal organs in the context of preventive diplomacy. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the President of International Court of Justice for their briefings.

The principal organs of the United Nations have specific roles and functions and should act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter. There have been recent attempts to assume work in the Council which would be better undertaken in the specialized agencies and organs created for the purpose. We do not favour this trend, both as a matter of propriety and of pragmatism. From the functional point of view as well, burdening the Council with increasing numbers of issues distracts us from relevant issues of international peace and security, and is therefore best avoided.

The objective of the United Nations, as reflected in Chapter I of the Charter, will be better served, when each of its principal organs works in harmony, focusing

on its mandate. The Charter should remain our guiding light, and we need to make concerted efforts towards the reform and strengthening of the United Nations organs to address global challenges, particularly issues associated with peace and security. In this regard, let me offer the following five observations.

While the United Nations was founded on the basis of the sovereign equality of nations, nowhere else was that principle more belied than in its principal organ, the Security Council. More than seven and a half decades since its inception, the structural inequality persists. While the world is changing, the institutional architecture primarily responsible for international peace and security remains frozen. A composition that is rooted in 1945 detracts from the Organization's abilities to fully harness the capabilities of its Member States as of today. We need to show our collective commitment to reformed multilateralism. As our Prime Minister said in his address during the general debate of the General Assembly last year, "reform in the responses, in the processes, and in the very character of the United Nations is the need of the hour" (*A/75/PV.12, annex I*).

The peaceful settlement of disputes is key for the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of the rule of law. Adequate attention needs to be paid to the provisions of Chapter VI, rather than Chapter VII becoming the ready recourse.

Issues related to the economic and social domain fall under the realm of the sovereignty of Member States, which assume the responsibility of protection and welfare of their population. India believes that the advancement of the rule of law at the national level is an essential tool for the protection of democracy, economic growth, sustainable development, ensuring gender justice, the eradication of poverty and hunger, and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are the right forums where Member States can discuss and work collaboratively on these issues.

Increasing acts of terrorism and the expansion of terrorist groups, particularly in Asia and Africa, remain a serious challenge to the maintenance of international peace and security. All organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, need to have a zero-tolerance approach towards terrorism and act against non-State actors and their sponsors. Any narrative that

justifies the actions of terrorism in any manner would embolden terrorists and those sponsoring them.

The complex and interlinked nature of various aspects of building and sustaining peace are now better understood than before. The perspective is increasingly expanding across the spectrum, from prevention to resolution, from reconciliation to recovery, and from reconstruction and the prevention of a relapse of conflict. There is a greater recognition of the importance of a comprehensive sustainable development, inclusive economic growth and political processes in preventing conflict, as well as undertaking effective peacebuilding efforts. What is lacking is the political commitment for commensurate action and substantive support for the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission. We need to address this shortcoming purposefully and in the right spirit.

In concluding, as our leaders said in the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, "[t]here is no other global organization with the legitimacy, convening power and normative impact of the United Nations" (*resolution 75/1, para. 1*). We have a moral obligation to strengthen its principal organs for the effective functioning of the United Nations, corresponding to contemporary global realities and challenges. Factoring in the aforementioned five observations in the work of the relevant organs of the United Nations will help us to fulfil the objectives for which our forefathers set up the United Nations.

**Mr. Zhang Jun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Secretary-General Guterres, General Assembly President Shahid, Economic and Social Council President Kelapile and International Court of Justice President Donoghue for their briefings.

Seventy-six years ago, our forefathers made a solemn commitment in the Charter of the United Nations to take effective and collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. Over the years, the United Nations and its Member States, with that principle as their guide for action, have actively pursued preventive diplomacy. There are both success stories and important lessons learned.

The world today is undergoing complex and profound changes. We need to further enhance our understanding of preventive diplomacy and exert greater efforts in that context.

First, preventive diplomacy is all about prevention. In the early stages of a crisis, taking timely and appropriate action can have a multiplier effect, allowing us to do more with less. The key is to formulate a preventive diplomacy strategy that is systematic, scientific and effective, making full use of such means as good offices and mediation, strengthening the early warning mechanism and supporting the Secretary-General in playing his unique role. The early warning mechanism allows for the early detection of major problems so that immediate action can be taken to address them, but it is also necessary to ensure that it does not lead to overreactions and inappropriate involvement.

Secondly, the root causes must be addressed. An emergency response can only avert or postpone crises temporarily. It is only by eliminating the root causes of a conflict that we can achieve lasting peace and stability. We should help countries in conflict to improve their governance system, enhance their governing capacity, persist in a people-centred approach, focus on development and explore development paths that are in line with their national conditions. We should take concrete measures and actions to support the relevant countries in combatting poverty and hunger and increasing investment in education, health care, infrastructure and other public services. These are important means for strengthening national identity and promoting social solidarity. Major economies should pursue responsible economic and trade policies so as not to cause volatility in economic sectors and the global financial markets. That is important for developing countries in terms of maintaining economic growth and social stability.

Thirdly, the ownership of the parties concerned must be respected. In preventive diplomacy, it is imperative to adhere to the principles and practices of the Charter and to adhere to the basic norms of international relations, such as sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs. A successful preventive diplomacy programme is necessarily anchored in a specific situation and owned by the parties concerned. There is no single template or approach that is uniformly applicable. Preventive diplomacy cannot and must not become a pretext for interference in domestic affairs. History has shown time and again that arbitrary interference in other countries' internal affairs, the imposition of governance models on developing countries, or even pitting one faction

against another often leads to internal conflicts in those countries.

Fourthly, we should enhance coordination to create synergies. We reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations, as well as to strengthening coordination within the United Nations system. The General Assembly is the most representative organ of the United Nations and provides an important platform for Member States to engage in dialogue and cooperation to build consensus. The Economic and Social Council has comparative advantages in promoting economic development and advancing peace and stability. The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, dedicated to promoting the international rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Secretariat has an important role to play in strengthening coordination within the United Nations system. Those organs should carry out their work in accordance with their respective mandates, while maintaining communication and cooperation.

China supports the Peacebuilding Commission in line with its mandate to strengthen interaction with the Security Council and play a greater role in conflict prevention. The Security Council should further strengthen its cooperation with the African Union and other regional organizations, while allowing them to leverage their unique advantages in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in their respective regions.

China welcomes the recent report presented by the Secretary-General entitled *Our Common Agenda*. The report proposes that greater attention and investment be made in preventive diplomacy, that a new agenda for peace be formulated and that security risks be managed through effective and efficient measures. In particular, the report notes the need for targeted development assistance as a way to help address the root causes of conflicts. China looks forward to engaging with the United Nations membership to carry out in-depth discussions, step up cooperation, gain clarity on follow-up ideas and strive to further transform into reality the vision proposed in the report, so as to jointly build a better world of peace and security.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I thank our briefers for being with us today. Their presence and interventions serve as important reminders of how we can work together to collectively deliver for the people of the world.

As President Biden noted in his proclamation on United Nations Day last month, the United Nations remains the cornerstone of the international order, contributing to unmatched strides towards peace and prosperity shared around the world. That is what Member States should collectively strive to accomplish.

When the United Nations was founded, the world united and embarked upon a shared mission: creating a rules-based international order grounded in democratic principles to advance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and strengthen adherence to international law. The United Nations is not a perfect body, but the progress we have made in the past eight decades is overall a remarkable achievement.

We took another unified step forward three years ago when the General Assembly endorsed, by consensus, the Secretary-General's United Nations reform agenda on peace and security, development and management reform. As part of those reforms, the Secretary-General proposed new ways to strengthen the United Nations capacity to prevent conflict. The United Nations has a unique advantage when engaging in preventive diplomacy, given its extensive presence in conflict-affected settings worldwide. United Nations field mechanisms — such as the Resident Coordinator system, peace and development advisers, special political missions and peacekeeping operations — are on the front lines of preventive diplomacy, and we must empower them and reinforce their efforts.

A modern approach to our work requires a modern approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The United States is now implementing the United States strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability, which details lessons learned and best practices for addressing the root causes of conflict and preventing future ones. Many of those lessons are relevant to the United Nations, including the primacy of political solutions to conflict, the value of local buy-in, legitimacy and accountability, the need for monitoring and evaluation and the importance of integrating all diplomatic assistance and security activities under a coherent plan. Fundamentally, we have found that conflicts are often fuelled by the abuse of human rights, which is one reason that it is so important that Member States uphold their international obligations and commitments.

Many have spoken today about greater coordination within the United Nations system. In that vein, we will

continue to push for the Peacebuilding Commission to brief the Human Rights Council, as it would serve as an opportunity to advise the Human Rights Council on the important work of the Commission. That is exactly what the Secretary-General called for when he asked for more networked, inclusive and effective multilateralism.

At its best, the United Nations can advance peace, security and prosperity for people around the globe. It can lead the world forward through the choppy waters of the twenty-first century. We saw that during the coronavirus disease pandemic, where the United Nations once again demonstrated the essential role that it plays in times of global crisis. It is up to us collectively to ensure that the United Nations is up to the task of making this century the most peaceful and prosperous one in human history.

Tremendous work lies ahead of us. We must remain committed to the vision laid out by the Secretary-General, and endorsed by all Member States, to empower the United Nations to prevent violence and to bring parties together in support of political solutions to conflict. But I know we can meet this moment so long as we stay true to the original vision and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations: freedom, equality, opportunity and human, dignity for all.

**Mr. Ousman (Niger)** (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on organizing this open debate, whose theme is generating great interest. I also take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all the briefers for their excellent presentations.

The purpose behind the establishment of the United Nations was to maintain international peace and security and save future generations from the scourge of war. Given that prevention is better than cure, preventive diplomacy efforts must figure prominently in the Organization's architecture for seeking and strengthening peace. With the enormous challenges facing humankind today — some of them new — conflict prevention is not an option, but an imperative.

Peace and security, for which the Niger has always shown a strong commitment, are fundamental elements of our foreign policy, which is why the Niger is committed to respect for the Charter of the United Nations and for multilateralism. With regard to the provisions of the Charter, the goal of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, with the Security Council charged with that responsibility.

Therefore, coherence, coordination and the interaction of all the principal organs of the Organization must continue and be strengthened to achieve the common objective sought.

One of the main functions of some of those organs is the peaceful settlement of disputes as enshrined in the Charter, which, if implemented effectively, would prevent many wars with incalculable consequences. Preventive diplomacy can include intervention by the Security Council, the Secretary-General and other actors to discourage the use of violence in critical situations. But intervention cannot replace political dialogue and mediation — for, without genuine dialogue, conflict prevention and lasting peace are difficult to achieve.

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity enshrined in Chapter VIII of the Charter, the United Nations must also work in partnership with regional organizations to put an end to ongoing conflicts and prevent new crises from breaking out or worsening. In that regard, the Niger welcomes the Secretary-General's commitment to the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security. We also welcome the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union through the 2017 Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the memorandum of understanding on the partnership on peacebuilding between the two organizations.

The creation of United Nations regional offices, including the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, also remains an advantageous approach. Not only does it bring the Organization closer to the people, but it also enables it to better contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding by focusing on specific challenges affecting security in the region, including organized crime, terrorism, the effects of climate change, migration issues and poverty, inter alia.

My delegation calls for the strengthening of the capacity of the Secretariat to support the preventive diplomacy functions of the relevant legislative bodies through the allocation of a substantial budget for that purpose. Effective preventive diplomacy could avoid the need to engage in multiple post-conflict peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities and humanitarian and reconstruction measures, which are far more costly. The Peacebuilding Commission remains the best example of cooperation among the principal organs of the United

Nations and, as such, deserves to be strengthened and its advisory areas expanded.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that anticipating crises must be at the centre of the work of the United Nations. Hence the importance of the Secretary-General bringing urgent and sensitive situations that are likely to degenerate into conflicts to the attention of the Security Council as soon as possible, in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council must further strengthen its cooperation with all the principal organs of the United Nations in order to successfully prevent conflict and save lives.

**Mr. Pham (Viet Nam):** Let me begin by thanking the Mexican presidency for convening today's important debate. I would also like to welcome the participation of the Secretary-General as well as the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice. I thank them for their comprehensive remarks.

While peace, cooperation and development continue as the prevailing trend, we are far from overcoming persistent challenges to the maintenance of international peace and security, such as border and territorial disputes, armed conflicts, frictions, tension, arms races and geostrategic competition. At the same time, non-traditional challenges, such as the coronavirus disease pandemic, the negative effects of climate change, natural disasters, poverty and inequities, inter alia, are having more and more impact. There remain around 20 million refugees, 48 million displaced persons due to conflicts and 235 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Those challenges can be averted or mitigated. In that context, an ounce of prevention can be worth much more than a pound of cure.

The Charter of the United Nations, as the cornerstone of the Organization's foundation, has made clear the purposes of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, namely:

“to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or

settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace”.

All Member States and United Nations organs and bodies must therefore step up efforts to enhance effective conflict prevention through the appropriate measures, especially the upholding of international law, full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter, including the principle of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, promoting a culture of peace, confidence-building and maintaining friendly relations among States.

The Security Council is tasked with the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security and, furthermore, the implementation of measures to prevent the aggravation of a situation. But early conflict prevention also requires inclusive and comprehensive solutions to address the root causes of conflicts that may require the engagement of other organs and actors, in accordance with their respective mandates. The principal organs within the United Nations system could contribute to that goal by consistently promoting dialogue and joint coordination in a complementary manner within their mandates. Those activities should be planned and implemented in both the short and long term, with the interests of the people always at the forefront.

At the same time, given the scale of that endeavour — which relates to the fundamental tasks and roles of the principal organs — preventive efforts must be carried out through full consultation with and among Member States and in accordance with the Charter, including the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Secretary-General plays an important role and has many time-proven tools at his disposal, especially mediation and good offices, which enjoy broad support. Regional and subregional organizations can also play an important role in conflict prevention and dispute settlement, as they know regional particularities best. Cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations and among those organizations should be further promoted through dialogue and cooperation frameworks.

In conclusion, the United Nations, with the Charter at its core and through its principal organs, has undeniably proven to be indispensable in the maintenance of international peace and security, including in conflict prevention. Viet Nam is committed

to actively engaging in working with other States at the international and regional levels to ensure greater effectiveness and coordination towards that goal.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation of Secretary-General António Guterres; the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Abdulla Shahid; the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile; and the President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Joan Donoghue, in today's meeting. We are grateful to Mexico for drawing attention to preventive diplomacy and convening this unique event with the participation of the heads of the principal United Nations organs.

I would like to endorse the statement to be delivered shortly by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

The challenge of conflict prevention is 76 years old. That goal was enshrined as our main objective in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945. We remember how, upon assuming his role five years ago, Secretary-General Guterres began his work with a call for peace and for the efforts to achieve it to permeate all areas of our Organization's activities, from the cessation of hostilities to negotiating political solution to conflicts.

Over all those years, the United Nations, its Security Council and other principal organs, the Secretariat and regional and subregional organizations have carried out significant work to identify the root causes of and ways to prevent conflicts. Despite all of that, we keep coming back to the topic of preventive diplomacy, reaffirming it time and again as an overarching priority of the United Nations. Unfortunately, crises are constantly recurring, and new hotbeds of conflict erupt. There are no swift or radical blanket solutions for solving such problems. Curbing conflicts successfully depends on the systematic application of early-warning instruments, tapping into the potential of preventive diplomacy and using mediation and good offices.

However, for all of those efforts to be successful, in our opinion, a number of conditions must be met. We are convinced that there should be no place in our work for double standards dictated by political situations or the preferences of certain States. Why are painstaking efforts undertaken with regard to some countries to establish a political process and allow time for quiet diplomacy, while in other countries the international

community and the Security Council immediately start firing all guns, apply sanctions, including unilateral illegal measures, put pressure on national Governments and instigate opposition to confront them despite the fact that it has long been obvious that interference in domestic political processes, regardless of the position of the host parties, is far from being in the interest of long-term stabilization. Only the people themselves can determine the fate of their countries. Armed or other outside interference in internal conflicts only risks triggering a spiral of confrontation.

However, we should also not forget that every situation has its own origins and, accordingly, sensitive, impartial approaches and tailor-made solutions should be found. Basically, there can be no one-size-fits-all formulas or set criteria. We firmly believe that early warning cannot be based on an arbitrary combination of conflict indicators, even if they are as important as the human rights indicators or those relating to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Global trends show the increasing role of mediators in conflict prevention and resolution. Their work requires great skill and, importantly, patience. The good offices missions of the Secretary-General and his special envoys continue to prove their relevance. They must be ready to work impartially and independently, as well as to take innovative decisions that are not based on their previous roles or achievements.

The responsibility for the effectiveness of the United Nations crisis-prevention toolkit lies, to a large extent, with the Organization's peacekeeping operations. We have repeatedly said that we do not share the understanding of peacekeeping solely as the protection of civilians and the provision of humanitarian assistance. Without a political process, it is not possible to achieve peace or to significantly stabilize a situation, even with thousands of Blue Helmets deployed and \$1-billion mission budgets.

The Peacebuilding Commission, whose coordination and mobilization activities we fully support, carries out important work in assisting post-conflict countries. However, the issue of sustainable funding for peacebuilding efforts remains unresolved. We should also take a fresh look at the preventive capacities of regional and subregional organizations.

The role of the Secretariat is clearly significant. Headquarters and field presences have amassed a huge potential of knowledge and expertise in monitoring

and analysing situations in the regions and forecasting their development according to crisis scenarios. After all, when stressing a universal institution, with a unique legitimacy, playing a significant role in conflict prevention conflicts, we are talking about members of the Secretariat.

We would like to note that, unfortunately, instead of focusing on pursuing political solutions and using existing tools, we have recently been paying more attention to topics such as coordinating the efforts of various United Nations bodies, identifying some kind of linkage among the different aspects of the Organization's work and discussing significant issues of our time in all forums at once. It would seem that the Security Council is now well placed, if not to perform the functions of all United Nations bodies at once, then at least to provide its views on virtually all generic issues. The same trend can be seen in other United Nations bodies.

For our part, we remain convinced that we should do justice to the founders of the United Nations and stop reinventing the wheel. In particular, the Security Council should not be distracted from its main task of maintaining international peace and security. We need to step up our efforts in ensuring that all United Nations bodies work effectively, adhering to the principle of division of labour. All the building blocks of international cooperation will then be in place to form a solid foundation for conflict prevention and resolution.

**Mr. Kiboino (Kenya):** I congratulate you, Mr. President, on having convened this timely open debate. I recognize the participation of the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice. I thank them for their insights on this important topic.

If the United Nations is to deliver on the promise enshrined in the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, preventive diplomacy cannot be a One-United-Nations organ affair. The existence of differentiated mandates, cross-cutting resolutions, including the normative frameworks pertaining to women and youth and peace and security, and other resolutions that cut across the three founding pillars of the United Nations system, is an indicator of the necessity of that envisioned coordination.

While the prevention of conflicts remains the primary responsibility of States, it is also a shared responsibility. When done right, it entails States engaging with neighbouring countries, subregional and regional arrangements, including regional economic communities and mechanisms, and the international community, including within the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In addition, a preventive diplomatic strategy requires the Security Council to work in coherence with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as underlined, respectively, in Articles 11 and 65 of the Charter. Consequently, for the Security Council to effectively fulfil its mandate, in coordination with the other United Nations principal organs, it must consider and address the economic, political and social dimensions of conflict. It is also critical that it stand for an approach to international justice that is underpinned by fairness and political and economic equality, both in opportunities and in outcomes for all.

As evidenced by our interventions in the Security Council, Kenya looks at preventive diplomacy through a political, economic and social lens. In that regard, I will highlight three points that we consider key preventive tools.

The first point is peacebuilding as a preventive tool. As outlined in United Nations resolutions pertaining to the peacebuilding architecture, peacebuilding is an inherently political process that is critical to preventing the outbreak, escalation, recurrence and continuation of conflict. The advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to the Council and its bridging mandate must therefore remain key in strengthening the United Nations response to the multidimensional global threats to peace and security. Kenya continues to champion that role of the PBC, in alignment with the national ownership and priorities of the affected countries.

The second point is inclusive development as a preventive tool. Underdevelopment and insecurity are intricately linked, particularly in developing countries. The peace and development nexus is a reality that is recognized by the Secretary-General's three-track reform and his recently issued *Our Common Agenda*.

In its capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, Kenya held a meeting on 27 August, in partnership with the Office of the

Special Adviser on Africa, focused on the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/2021/562). The goal was to identify opportunities for the Security Council to constructively, comprehensively, and contextually operationalize this linkage in partnership with the African Union, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the PBC in hotspots where conflict and development linkage is most pressing.

We believe in the need for the Security Council to rally behind a preventive diplomacy that goes beyond rhetoric and ambition — a preventive diplomacy that entails strengthened coordinated efforts geared towards delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty, and support for countries going through transitions to build resilient governance and economic infrastructure.

We also firmly hold that the ultimate defence against climate change and its attendant security implications is development. This demands that we bring the climate-security nexus closer to development, investment and financing. A coordinated development-climate-peace-impact approach will go a long way towards contributing to localized risk assessment and contextual adaptive measures accompanied by requisite financing for climate action.

My third and last point is the effective management of diversity by States as an essential preventive tool. The key message from the high-level debate on diversity, State-building and the search for peace, organized by Kenya during its October presidency of the Security Council (see S/PV.8877), was that poor management of diversity is leading to grave threats to international peace and security and that the Security Council needs to pay attention to this dynamic.

The coordinated efforts of the United Nations system as a whole can contribute to supporting States to orient themselves in a governance system that can fairly balance the interests of citizens of diverse cultural, social, ethnic, racial, religious or other extractions to ensure a stable continuity that mitigates against group-on-group conflicts that often threaten to descend into organized violence. It is our firm belief that a coordinated United Nations system can better deliver on the creation of conditions of stability and well-being, which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among States, as envisaged by Article 55 of the United Nations Charter.

**Mr. De Rivière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Mexican presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's debate, as well as the other four distinguished briefers for their briefings.

Preventive diplomacy is everyone's business at the United Nations. The framers of the Charter gave the Security Council a clear mandate in this area. We know that investing in the early stages of conflict is the best way to save lives. In the Council, we focus primarily on situations of open conflict, but significant efforts have been made in recent years to do more upstream work and target the root causes of crises.

I would like to welcome the Secretary-General's push for peace diplomacy. I am thinking of the strengthening of mediation capacities. I am also thinking of the monitoring and early-warning system entrusted to the country teams or the Secretary-General's special advisers on the prevention of genocide and on the responsibility to protect. I would also like to mention the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia as a successful example in this regard. It has helped to strengthen dialogue and coordinate the response to shared challenges of the States of the region: the terrorist threat, the crisis in Afghanistan, drug trafficking and water management.

But we need to do more. The Security Council should take better account of global challenges that could undermine international peace and security. It should have a comprehensive overview of the risks to international security posed by climate change, pandemics or disinformation. We also need to promote the meaningful participation of women, youth and civil society in mediation and prevention processes.

The Peacebuilding Commission could do more to address situations that risk turning into conflicts and make recommendations to the Security Council in this regard. The Peacebuilding Fund has demonstrated its capacity to carry out cross-border projects, as in the Sahel. In his report entitled *Our Common Agenda*, the Secretary-General calls on States to devote more resources to the Fund. France has taken up this call. It has quadrupled its contribution to the Fund this year.

The Security Council's action in the area of preventive diplomacy must be coordinated with those of other bodies and organizations. The respective missions entrusted by the Charter to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council complement and reinforce each

other. The warning role of the Secretary-General under Article 99 of the Charter remains essential. The jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice contributes not only to the calming of relations between States, but also to a better understanding and thus to a strengthening of international law, which is the pillar of this preventive diplomacy.

We must work even more closely with regional and subregional organizations. The partnership with the African Union is being transformed. The United Nations must continue to support the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative and the achievement of the objectives of the African Union's Agenda 2063, in particular the treatment of such threats as terrorism and violent extremism. We must also fight together against the resurgence of the scourge of mercenaries, which is a destabilizing factor. We will also be attentive to the implementation of the African Union Peace Fund, which should include a component devoted to mediation and preventive diplomacy.

Finally, I would like to welcome the growing role of the International Organization of la Francophonie in conflict prevention in the French-speaking world. Under the impetus of Secretary-General Louise Mushikiwabo, several observation, assistance and good offices missions have recently been sent to Haiti, the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea. The aim is to support political transition processes and strengthen the rule of law. The United Nations would benefit from taking greater advantage of the expertise accumulated by La Francophonie, particularly in electoral matters.

Prevention in all its aspects remains a central issue at the United Nations, and in particular at the Security Council. For it is on our ability to anticipate risks, prepare for them and provide sustainable, credible responses focused on the needs of populations that our capacity to maintain international peace and security will depend. This is our responsibility.

**Mr. Jürgenson** (Estonia): I join others in thanking the Mexican presidency for organizing today's open debate, as well as the esteemed briefers for sharing their insights.

The topic of preventive diplomacy remains of utmost importance to the United Nations and most of all to the people on the ground. The proliferation and prolongation of conflicts today requires the United Nations to step up its efforts on the prevention front.

As prevention involves action taken to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts, we cannot underestimate the role of the International Court of Justice in maintaining peace. Estonia values the discussions held in the Council annually with the President of the Court. As we have pointed out on those and other occasions, Estonia believes that more frequent and timely referrals of cases to the International Court of Justice by the Council would contribute to resolving disputes and thereby promote international peace and security. Another important element of prevention is for Council members to apply initiatives to deter the use of the veto in cases related to the commission of atrocity crimes.

Allow me to quickly highlight three areas that Estonia considers important in the context of addressing root causes.

First, the international community, including the Security Council, needs to take climate change more seriously by mandating the Secretary-General to report on the impacts of climate change on international security.

Secondly, accountability and respect for the rule of law and human rights makes societies more resilient and are essential for the maintenance of peace and security. Human rights need to be put at the core of our actions.

Thirdly, we must ensure inclusivity with regard to gender equality and engaging persons belonging to marginalized groups. It has been demonstrated that societies are more peaceful and peace more lasting when women are involved in a substantive manner. A safe and diverse civil society space remains a vital component of resilient communities.

The Security Council needs to keep those elements in mind when drawing up and reviewing the robust mandates it establishes. At the same time, it is clear that none of these or other issues of international concern can be effectively tackled by one branch of the United Nations only.

Estonia further acknowledges the interdependence of security, sustainable development and human rights and therefore recognizes the need for all United Nations organs and agencies to pursue preventive strategies and to take action. We recognize that the Secretary-General's has raised the aforementioned issues in his comprehensive *Our Common Agenda*, which we have recently begun to discuss in the General Assembly.

In order for the United Nations to be relevant and credible, it also needs to adapt to new challenges. Preventive diplomacy needs to include being open to new topics that we now consider to be part of peace and security in order to make sure that its current tools are the most effective and being willing to employ new tools to tackle emerging issues.

Estonia values the regular exchanges by the Security Council with the representatives of other principal organs of the United Nations. Communication, both in public and private, is of vital importance. However, more often than not, the problem is not the lack of information, the early warning, but rather the lack of early and united action.

In that light, Estonia condemns the continuation of the massive repression by Belarusian authorities against its people and the instrumentalization of migration on a large scale for political purposes in order to distract from human rights violations and brutal repression in the country. We call on the Belarusian regime to immediately stop such practices and other hybrid threats to people's lives and health, including continuously blocking access to humanitarian aid.

Finally, we recognize that the United Nations has to be able to offer solutions to the most urgent issues that humankind is facing. While we hope that the Security Council continues to discuss the topic of prevention, we expect that the Council will take more meaningful action on delivering on its prevention mandate, along with the other United Nations principal organs, in order to spare societies from lapsing into conflict and suffering.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends Mexico for convening today's discussion, and we thank the briefers for their remarks. Our delegation ardently supports and conscientiously advocates for a comprehensive whole-of-system approach that addresses peace and security, development and humanitarian issues in a holistic and systematic manner. To that end, we place special emphasis on the theme of today's debate.

The interconnecting health, socioeconomic, political and security challenges brought about by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has further illuminated the need for steadfast political resolve, buttressed by purposeful collective action, in order to address our contemporary struggles. As we grapple with the complexities of the pandemic, the multifaceted

ordeals of the climate crisis and the numerous emerging security risks in fragile countries and regions, we must work assiduously to end conflicts, build resilience and procure peace, security and development for all of humankind.

In pursuit of that noble cause, unilateral measures and hegemonic motives — both of which undermine the norms of multilateralism and erode essential human rights, including the right to development — should be abandoned. Political dialogue, preventive diplomacy and other participatory approaches, underpinned by the ideals of inclusivity and equality, should be earnestly pursued by all States.

At the institutional level, it is essential that the complementarity between and among the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations is enhanced. At the strategic level and in the field, cross-pillar engagements between all peace and security, development, humanitarian and human rights actors should be vigorously pursued.

The United Nations has provided the international community with its most viable plans and development models for widespread peace and prosperity. But as we wade further into the uncharted waters of the twenty-first century, with protracted conflicts that spur large-scale humanitarian crises, disruptive technologies that sever our social fabric and a climate catastrophe that envelops many vulnerable countries and peoples with great uncertainty, a more refined and collaborative multilateralism is clearly needed.

The Security Council must continue its leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security. At the same time, more creative and innovative approaches should be brought to bear to address existing implementation gaps, which range from conflict prevention to post-conflict peacebuilding and across the spectrum of thematic questions concerning women and youth, climate change and environmental degradation and other fundamental challenges of sustainable development.

The bridging, advisory and convening roles of the Peacebuilding Commission, the functional commissions and policy platforms of the Economic and Social Council, the mediatory and technical capacities of the International Court of Justice on matters pertaining to the rule of law and the popular consensus and agenda-setting powers of the General Assembly ought to be leveraged more often. That much

and more should be done with the full support of the wider international community, including regional and subregional organizations and the international financial institutions in order to help deliver on existing agreements, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals. Preventive diplomacy and proactive political engagements, underpinned by the guiding principles of international law, must remain the centrepiece of this multi-stakeholder approach.

In conclusion, let us keep the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic fresh in our minds — that collective political action, steeped in the virtues of unity and solidarity, remains the surest pathway to address our current struggles and future afflictions. Let us collaborate more closely to cultivate lasting peace and prosperity to be enjoyed by the entire global community.

Finally, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): I would like to thank our briefers — Secretary-General Guterres, President Shahid, our dear friend and colleague Ambassador Kelapile and Judge Donoghue — for their interventions this morning. It is really reassuring to have such staunch supporters of multilateralism surrounding us at the table today. Their powerful words remind us of why we are here and reinforce our common purpose to alleviate suffering and build peace across the globe.

The ambitious vision of the Charter was to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Sitting around this symbolic horseshoe table, we should always carry the weight of that vision on our shoulders. There are times when we come together that the optimism and spirit of cooperation of our forebears shines through. When that happens, we know that we can save lives.

However, far too often the positive impact of our work is diminished by a siloed and sometimes disjointed approach. The messages of our briefers today share a common thread: our challenges are too great to tackle alone. They convey the reality that, just as we Member States need to work in lockstep, so, too, must the organs of the United Nations.

I want to highlight three points that Ireland believes are critical to achieving that goal.

First, we need to invest in prevention. Too often, the Security Council is in crisis-response mode. We know that issues such as food insecurity, poverty and gender inequality are often precursors to conflict. We know that their intersection with climate change further aggravates existing tensions. To address those challenges, we see it as critical for humanitarian, development and peace support actors to work in a coordinated manner.

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), through its convening role, is uniquely placed to facilitate that work — indeed, it is already doing so. The PBC is providing the Council with very broad-based advice on specific country and regional situations, such as the Central African Republic and the Great Lakes region, as well as themes relevant across a lot of our work. What is needed now is for the Council to discuss that advice and to heed it where we can.

We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation in *Our Common Agenda* to expand the Commission's role to additional settings. That should go hand in hand with a genuine commitment to ensuring that peacebuilding activities, and in particular the valuable work of the Peacebuilding Fund, are adequately and sustainably financed.

My second point is the need to foster a more coherent relationship between human rights and the Security Council. Let us be clear: violations of human rights are obvious harbingers of conflict to come. When we protect and defend human rights, we create bulwarks against conflict. That is why, in Ireland's view, respect for human rights belongs at the Security Council.

Put simply, human rights are a peace and security issue. Bodies and entities such as the Third Committee of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), treaty bodies and Special Rapporteurs all play an important role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Indeed, the entirety of the human rights architecture is, in our view, inextricably linked to the work we do here in the Security Council.

Many of the items on our agenda today are also under discussion in the Human Rights Council. That is no coincidence. Further mechanisms created by the Human Rights Council, such as the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Myanmar, are key to ensuring accountability. The joint

investigation of OHCHR with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission into human rights violations in Tigray, including sexual violence, is another important example of the interplay between human rights and the subjects of most acute concern to the Security Council.

We believe that the relationship between human rights and the Council should be constructed around an inclusive understanding of prevention. That understanding must recognize the key role of human rights in early warning and in building national resilience. Critical to that relationship are the voices of human rights defenders, women leaders and civil society. We need to listen and learn from their testimonies. Importantly, we need to take action.

My third point concerns the role of the International Court of Justice as a key tool for conflict prevention. We strongly believe that we should not underestimate the Court's potential role in determining disputes between States that might otherwise have led to conflict. However, in our view, the Court remains underutilized as a resource for the peaceful adjudication of disputes in accordance with international law. It is our view that the Court's role in preventing conflict could be bolstered by greater interaction between the Council and the Court. Ireland believes the Council should consider, where appropriate, the possibility of seeking the Court's input in the form of advisory opinions. The Council could also recommend that States with a dispute on its agenda resolve the legal aspect of their dispute before the International Court of Justice.

In conclusion, the inescapable reality that faces us all, individually and collectively, is that the contemporary challenges we face do not fit neatly into preordained, predefined boxes. The effects of climate change do not stop at the doors of this Chamber. Human rights do not belong only in Geneva. Those challenges cut right across all aspects of our work, from development and human rights to peace and security.

We have heard today that the United Nations system is ready to step up and step in — not just ready to react to conflict, but to prevent it. It is incumbent upon all of us around this table to do the same. Millions of vulnerable people are relying on us, and we would be in dereliction of our duty if we were to let them down.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): Norway thanks you, Sir, for convening this important debate and in particular for bringing together so many important parts of the United Nations system. My thanks go to the briefers.

This issue is of great importance to Norway. We firmly believe that preventative diplomacy should be at the heart of the Security Council's work. As the Secretary-General set out in *Our Common Agenda*, investments in prevention and preparedness pay for themselves many times over in terms of both the human and financial costs that are spared. Early engagement with potential threats to international peace and security will also protect civilians, including children, and enhance the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

In searching for ways to facilitate early responses, we need to improve the Council's situational awareness. More effective sharing of information and insights will allow all members of the Council to participate on a more equal footing and contribute their valuable views and unique perspectives. In that regard, there is a key role for the Secretariat and the United Nations system briefers to use their interactions with the Council to bring emerging issues to its attention and sound the alarm. Indeed, the Secretary-General — the principal preventive diplomat of the United Nations — also has a defined Charter-based mandate to do so in accordance with Article 99. While better situational awareness may not fix political differences in how to resolve a conflict, it will build a common baseline of understanding and bring forward the point at which the Council first engages.

The use or threat of use of the veto also continues to prevent the Council from acting on vital topics. We call for restraint on the use of the veto, especially for actions aimed at preventing and ending mass atrocity crimes, which are at the very heart of the Council's mandate.

While, as we heard this morning, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for international peace and security, it certainly does not stand alone. All parts of the United Nations system must work together to prevent conflict and build peace.

There is no better guarantee for the prevention of conflict than for Member States to fulfil their human rights obligations. As we look to join up approaches across the United Nations system, the clear mandate of the Human Rights Council to work through dialogue and cooperation, towards the prevention of human rights violations, is of the utmost importance. Greater interaction among the Security Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and

the Human Rights Council is needed to facilitate early engagement and prevent conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission is another, may I say, underutilized tool within our conflict prevention toolbox. Working together with the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission has proved its added value, for example, in supporting important prevention programmes in Africa, in line with the Silencing the Guns initiative.

The integrity and independence provided by the good offices of the Secretary-General are also essential tools of the United Nations system to prevent conflict through mediation. The capacities within the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Mediation Support Unit are of a high quality and merit our greater support. We have all witnessed how negotiating with authorities and armed groups in humanitarian crisis can provide safe and unimpeded access to those in need. We have also seen the difference that preventive diplomacy can make in the lead-up to elections, contested political transitions and the challenging implementation phases of peace accords. The Secretariat is well placed to provide that expertise and experience.

Preventive diplomacy is more often than not resisted where it is most needed. As members of the Security Council, we must keep a particular focus on where early engagement can contribute to preventing escalation and draw on all the resources, as well as partners, throughout the United Nations system that we can.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I give her the floor.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have to take the floor, since we regret the fact that some delegations are continuing to use the most inappropriate reasons for promoting their propaganda work. The important topic of conflict prevention is not an exception. The situation in Belarus is a clear example of the destabilizing external interference that we talked about earlier in our statement and a blatant example of double standards. That also applies to the situation concerning migrants. We believe that the European Union should refrain from resorting to such double standards in dealing with that issue and that it should bear the responsibility for its actions. With

regard to the specific situation on the Belarusian-Polish border, resolving the issue in a lasting way can be done only by entering into an equal dialogue with Minsk. If Brussels is prepared to do that, we are ready to assist.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank the Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2021/23.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after four minutes.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Kai Sauer, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy of Finland.

**Mr. Sauer** (Finland): I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Finland.

We thank the briefers for their valuable insights, and we welcome this exchange organized by the Mexican presidency of the Security Council on preventive diplomacy and how the principal organs of the United Nations can work together to achieve that common objective.

Recently, we have witnessed several outbreaks and escalations of violent conflicts. Unfortunately, responses to crises have too often been reactive and sporadic rather than preventive. Vital signs may have been missed and the driving factors behind conflicts not properly understood or maybe our foresight and analysis were not sufficiently comprehensive and inclusive. Recent events have underlined the need for better preparedness, strategic foresight and, above all, enhanced cooperation and coordination to enable effective early action.

As we speak about conflict prevention, the pacific settlement of disputes, namely, political, diplomatic

solutions, should always be the first option. That applies to whether we are talking about active peace mediation in the event of a crisis or more long-term, structural work to address the root causes of conflicts. Inclusive political structures and processes should also be ensured, with the full and meaningful participation of women and young people.

As violent conflicts become more complex, the need for integrated multisectoral approaches that link conflict prevention, human rights, protection and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are vital. Effective conflict prevention is not possible without a comprehensive approach, underlining the importance of understanding the political realities of a context and including all relevant stakeholders in the process. To that end, we need the long-term commitment and cooperation of all actors regarding the development-humanitarian-peace nexus. Moreover, the protection of civilians and civilian objects should be at the centre of crisis response in order to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation.

The principal organs of the United Nations all have key roles to play in preventing conflicts and sustaining peace within their respective mandates. We encourage closer cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as with the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council, respectively. We urge the Security Council to strengthen its engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission and its unique advisory role. Interaction and cooperation with Human Rights Council and the wider human rights architecture are also crucial, as human rights violations are often the first sign of an emerging conflict.

The International Court of Justice contributes to the prevention and resolution of international disputes, in accordance with its mandate. The submission of a dispute to the Court should not be regarded as an unfriendly act. It is, rather, an act to fulfil the obligation of all States to settle their international disputes peacefully. We call upon States that have not yet done so to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the Court.

In his report *Our Common Agenda*, the Secretary-General pays special attention to enhancing conflict prevention by investing in prevention and peacebuilding and by strengthening international foresight. He also calls for better preparedness, partnerships, digital cooperation and a more participatory United Nations,

to name but a few of the Secretary-General's proposals, which can all contribute to more comprehensive and effective conflict prevention.

The Nordic countries support that broad approach to peace and security, and we will do our best to help to turn these commitments into concrete actions. We hope that by strengthening system-wide cooperation within the United Nations system and improving our tools for early warning, we can build a true culture of prevention and deliver on the promise of the United Nations Charter to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Ishikane** (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to the Mexican presidency for convening this open debate. I also would like to thank all the briefers for their insights. I welcome this meeting, which gives us a precious opportunity to underscore the importance of preventive diplomacy.

The international community focuses heavily on responding to conflict only after it occurs or recurs. So many lives have been lost and financial and human resources spent to respond to humanitarian crises due to conflicts every year. We must shift our focus to prevention, not only in the Security Council but in the entire United Nations system.

I would like to make three points that Japan believes to be the key to mainstreaming prevention in the United Nations peace and security agenda.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has a critical role to play in conflict prevention, as acknowledged in resolution 2171 (2014). With its advisory role to the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, the PBC can play a greater role in strengthening coherence across the principal organs. The Security Council and other relevant organs should seek the PBC's advice to incorporate prevention perspectives into their work.

As stressed in resolution 2171 (2014), the prevention of conflicts remains a primary responsibility of States. The PBC, with its convening role, can bring together the experience of different countries and regions, their best practices and lessons learned, and share them with the United Nations principal organs. Like many countries in Asia and other regions, Japan also has a lot to share and contribute to the work of prevention, including its

work conducted under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa.

Secondly, building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions in conflict-prone countries should be the priority in the work of the United Nations principal organs and their subsidiary bodies. Effective and impartial institutions in the security and judicial sectors, as well as institutions to ensure equal access to basic social services, have critical importance in preventing conflicts. The work to support institution-building requires coordinated action by the entire United Nations system.

Last but not least, the role of women and civil society in conflict prevention should be further strengthened, as emphasized in resolution 2171 (2014). We will never be able to achieve just and inclusive societies that are resilient against conflict or relapse into conflict without the meaningful participation of women, youth and marginalized groups. Their voices must be heard and taken into account in the work of the United Nations related to conflict prevention.

Japan looks forward to contributing to the United Nations work for conflict prevention in its principal organs, subsidiary bodies and in the PBC.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Iran.

**Mr. Takht Ravanchi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. I also thank the heads of all the principal organs of the United Nations for their inputs.

Peace and security through prevention is the dominant paradigm of the Charter of the United Nations. Today prevention is as valid and useful as it was in 1945, when the Organization's founding fathers adopted it as the overriding principle in the maintenance of international peace and security. A pertinent question is — how successful has the Security Council been in applying this principle in discharging its mandate?

A general review of the Council's practices reveals that, despite being mandated to use prevention and non-coercive means under Chapter VI of the Charter, the Council has very rarely applied that principle and has, at times, treated its Chapter VI functions as if they did not exist.

Conversely, the Council has too frequently, hastily and excessively resorted to coercive measures set forth

in Chapter VII, without attempting its Chapter VI functions first, as is logically and legally expected of it, let alone exhausting them. In many cases, that trend has resulted in the further complication of situations, violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, human rights abuses for entire populations and the like.

When combined with other factors such as the Council's *ultra vires* decisions or the exploitation of the Council by certain permanent members, the adoption of that approach has also resulted in the further prolongation of conflicts. All in all, the application of this approach has been detrimental to the maintenance of international peace and security and must therefore be reversed.

Chapter VII functions, including sanctions, must be applied only as a measure of last resort, if necessary, and after all means of peaceful settlement of disputes have been exhausted. In discharging its functions, the Council must accord priority to prevention and the use of non-coercive measures, pursuant to Chapter VI of the Charter.

Despite its importance, the principle of prevention and Chapter VI functions cannot and must not be applied arbitrarily. Rather, it must be adopted cautiously, in a smart manner and in full conformity with the letter and spirit of the Charter and international law. According to paragraph 1 of Article 33, the responsibility to settle an international dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security rests entirely with the parties concerned. That principle must therefore be fully respected and strictly observed by the Council.

More importantly, Chapter VI functions must never be invoked for the consideration of matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States or situations whose continuation is not likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, or for violating or undermining the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Finally, the Council and all other principal organs of the United Nations must adopt prevention as their main approach and, in full compliance with their respective mandates and the principles enshrined in the Charter, strive for the full and effective realization of the purposes of the Organization and the common interests of our nations.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

**Mr. De Almeida Filho** (Brazil): Brazil thanks Mexico for organizing this open debate. We also thank the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretary-General for their insightful considerations.

As an incoming member of the Security Council, we will continue to support the peaceful settlement of disputes, a principle inscribed in our Constitution, and the advancement of preventive diplomacy in order to reduce threats to international peace and security. A genuine and lasting peace can only be achieved through respect of fundamental human freedoms and human dignity and the prevalence of human rights.

Mediation, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding are crucial tools to prevent crises from escalating into conflicts. Conflict prevention requires sustained and inclusive action, with a people-centred approach that tackles the root causes of crises. Once tension escalates to armed conflict, it creates a vicious cycle that is hard to break.

Brazil firmly believes that the purposes of the United Nations Charter are better achieved through increased coordination, cooperation and interaction between the Security Council and the relevant organs of the United Nations, including the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). It is our desire to have a more transparent, efficient and inclusive Security Council. We have seen a number of improvements in recent years, including more public briefings and stronger recognition of the need for increased cooperation between the Council and regional organizations, such as the African Union. We welcome the progress made through Note by the President of the Security Council S/2017/507, but there is more to be done.

With respect to the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, we advocate improved accountability of the Security Council to the wider membership. We commend the regular dialogues between the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council, aimed at streamlining and coordinating the agendas of the two organs. We encourage the continuity of this practice. We also encourage more analytical reports to the General Assembly, with a comprehensive assessment of its work.

The Council should engage more regularly with the General Assembly, not only to enhance its effectiveness but also to avoid encroachment on the mandate of the General Assembly and unnecessary duplication of work. The same goes for the Council's relationship with the Economic and Social Council. As the Council starts considering a broader set of issues in order to better fulfil its mandate, it also becomes imperative to enhance its cooperation with other United Nations bodies.

Moreover, there is potential for increased cooperation between the Security Council and the International Court of Justice, such as on requests for advisory opinions on legal issues related to both country-specific situations and thematic items on the agenda of the Council. The Council could also make more use of the possibility of recommending that conflicting States submit their disputes to the International Court of Justice. Another area of cooperation lies in the enforcement of the Court's decisions in cases of non-compliance, taking into account Article 94 of the Charter.

Prevention requires tackling the root causes of conflict, especially those of a socioeconomic nature. In this context, the PBC is uniquely positioned to bridge discussions across the different United Nations pillars. To strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of United Nations peacebuilding efforts, the PBC should continue to enhance its advisory capacities. In particular, the PBC can provide important inputs to the Council in discussions of the renewal of mandates and the drawdowns of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. PBC representatives could also be invited to accompany the field visits of the members of the Security Council and to periodic briefings to its subsidiary bodies

I would also like to address the role of the special political missions. We have seen a rise in the establishment of those missions, as opposed to the downward trend in peacekeeping operations. It would be important to ensure that other United Nations bodies are involved in the elaboration of the mandates of the special political missions and in assessing current inconsistencies in their financing system.

In its eleventh mandate as an elected member, Brazil will continue to support the Security Council's role in the prevention and resolution of threats to international peace and security.

**Mr. Ruidíaz Pérez (Chile)** (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mexico for organizing this debate. We are pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Council. We also thank the briefers for their relevant contributions.

We know that preventive diplomacy has been useful for the Organization, almost from its inception, in containing and addressing conflicts and disputes. We know of successful cases that encourage us to keep this concept current. In that sense, we note that while some bodies are more oriented towards operational prevention, others are responsible for structural prevention.

Chile recognizes that human dignity is the fundamental value for the success of any conflict prevention. For that reason, we must defend the essential values of the United Nations — the rule of law, human rights and democracy — which are mutually reinforcing and make up an indivisible whole. In that regard, we highlight the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a road map that has been incorporated and adopted by all States, and that is people-centred and based on human rights, setting out a comprehensive view of sustainable development, subjects that are the competence of the principal organs of the United Nations and essential to building peaceful and inclusive society.

Just a week ago, in this Chamber (see S/PV.8900), the Secretary-General told us that we were facing the highest number of violent conflicts since 1945 and that they were growing longer and more complex, while the number of humanitarian needs that we are seeing, for various reasons, has reached a tragic record in this period. Chile therefore maintains that, now more than ever, preventive diplomacy must be made to work. In this regard, we are sure that coordination among the main organs of the United Nations, in accordance with their Charter mandates, is the best way to prevent conflicts. A number of factors are necessary if this prevention is to be successful, since the will of the parties is not enough to stop conflict but is the starting point.

In this sense, we agree with the first report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy of 2011 (S/2011/552), to the effect that success depends on adequate warning systems that allow predicting crises; the flexibility to adapt available resources to cope with changing forms of violence; collaborative associations, such as regional and subregional organizations; the sustainability and durability of peace accords; empirical

assessment and demonstration; and human and financial resources adequate to the task. Similarly, we believe that it is appropriate to highlight the preventive functions that groups of friends, contact groups and or ad hoc can perform.

Chile has consistently supported the Secretary-General in playing a relevant role in preventive diplomacy. In accordance with Article 99 of the Charter, the Secretary-General has the responsibility of drawing the attention of the Security Council to any matter that may endanger international peace and security.

We encourage the joint work of the bodies continue to develop, as established in resolution 2282 (2016), the input of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, entitled “The challenge of sustaining peace” (S/2015/490). It is worth recalling that the resolution states that

“sustaining peace requires coherence, sustained engagement, and coordination between the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council, consistent with their mandates as set out in the Charter of the United Nations” (resolution 2282 (2016), para. 2).

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica,

**Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica thanks Mexico for convening this open debate, and the briefers for their presentations. Let me highlight three points.

First, Costa Rica reaffirms that the gender perspective must mainstream preventive diplomacy. There is a strong consensus on the need for the full and effective participation of women in conflict prevention and in all decision-making processes. That consensus recognizes that women and girls are affected differently and disproportionately by armed conflict. However, when we debate the impact of small arms and light weapons on gender-based and sexual violence, that consensus collapses. In a world where gender identity and sexual orientation continue to be a reason to be killed, mutilated, trafficked, sexually abused, exploited and rejected, closing the gap between the silos of the Organization can and should save lives.

Secondly, according to the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, the norms and commitments contained in international treaties are binding and should not be ignored when the preferences of States change. That

applies to the commitments set out in Articles 6 and 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty, which oblige States parties to deny authorization or stop an arms transfer if there exists knowledge, or an overriding risk, that the arms transferred could be used to commit, or facilitate the commission of, serious violations of international humanitarian law or human rights.

However, ensuring that such risk assessment is carried out with consistency and that action is based on an assessment undertaken remains an aspiration. In the absence of a specific international accountability mechanism, States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty must rely on transparency. States must comply with their obligations not only to conduct and act on risk assessments, but also to share the information — to both demonstrate and encourage compliance. It is transparency that builds trust and confidence in the Treaty, which therefore strengthens compliance by all.

Thirdly, Costa Rica reiterates the importance of improving the working methods of the Security Council by deepening its communication with other organs and actors. Such communication should be more fluid and dynamic, and not only with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, but with the Peacebuilding Commission, Special Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General and, in particular, with the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. And that communication should also extend to regional and subregional organizations, troop-contributing countries and civil society organizations. Costa Rica regrets that representatives of civil society are excluded from participating in person in negotiations of such great importance, especially in matters of peace and security.

Lastly, it is tempting to fight fire with fire, but that will only fuel the flames of conflict. Laws, strong institutions, compliance with international treaties and respect for human rights are the path to stability and human security.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

**Mrs. Frazier** (Malta): I begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing today’s open debate. I also thank the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the President of the International

Court of Justice for sharing their valuable thoughts and insights.

As strong supporters of the multilateral system and as a country that sees value in investing in prevention, Malta welcomes this discussion, which will also serve as an opportunity to reflect on how the international community can maximize existing resources and minimize the risk of war and violent conflict.

The United Nations was established 76 years ago with the task of preventing another global conflict right after two devastating world wars. It was the dawn of a new era, where countries chose dialogue over fighting, cooperation over competition and multilateralism over nationalism. It is now up to us to make sure that our institutions remain relevant today and that they be given the necessary flexibility to adapt to an ever-changing world. It is our responsibility to protect them, strengthen them and counter contempt for them.

Investing in preventive diplomacy is our duty. We strongly believe that all bodies of the United Nations have an important role to play to that end. While it may be difficult to quantify and demonstrate the effectiveness of preventive measures, we just need to keep in mind the incalculable price of conflict in terms of loss of life, economic loss, societal divisions, environmental degradation and other long-term consequences, to better appreciate its value.

Against that backdrop, we believe that the international community must redouble early-warning/early-action efforts to identify and tackle the root causes of conflict, such as human rights violations, gender-based violence, injustice, the lack of accountability, exclusion and inequality, before things escalate into a full-blown conflict.

The Charter of the United Nations clearly identifies ways in which the various United Nations organs can contribute to preventive diplomacy. Articles 10 and 11 state that the General Assembly may discuss any matters within the scope of the Charter and that it may call the attention of the Security Council to situations that are likely to endanger international peace and security. Furthermore, Article 14 states that the General Assembly may recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation. Those are important powers that could yield even better results if triggered in a timely manner and if synergies between the General Assembly and the Security Council were strengthened further.

The Economic and Social Council can also play a central role in identifying the socioeconomic drivers of conflict in specific contexts and country situations and form an integral part of a comprehensive early-warning system.

The expertise of the Peacebuilding Commission on thematic issues, such as the role of women and youth in peace and security, must be used to its full potential, and its advisory role to the Security Council and the General Assembly must be intensified. We also stress the importance of ensuring that the Peacebuilding Fund be adequately funded. And it is in that spirit that Malta started contributing to it from this year. We strongly believe that, if we all contribute, we will achieve significant results.

Injustice and the lack of accountability are also root causes of conflict. And the International Court of Justice has a key role to play in upholding international law, the rule of law and the fight against impunity.

Holding annual or biannual interactive dialogues among the President of the Security Council, the President of the General Assembly, the President of Economic and Social Council and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, along with representatives of civil society, is an idea that could be worth considering and studying in further detail. Such a forum would provide civil society members from different regions with the space they need to express their concerns and highlight emerging challenges at an early stage. In turn, that would give the Security Council and other relevant United Nations bodies sufficient time to examine these issues and develop comprehensive solutions towards peace, security and stability.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

**Mr. Rodríguez Cuadros** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Yesterday the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 76/6, on follow-up to the report *Our Common Agenda*. I believe that this debate should be guided by the context of the proposals that the Agenda makes available to States, centred on the functioning and interaction of all United Nations organs with competencies in the maintenance and consolidation of peace.

The agenda for peace proposed in that report includes components linked to preventive diplomacy; reducing strategic risks, particularly on disarmament

and nuclear non-proliferation; the effective control of conventional weapons; the prevention and fight against terrorism; strengthening international early-warning and capacity to detect new risks to peace and security; greater investment in prevention and peacebuilding; and support for regional prevention activities. To that must be added the proposals for the extension of the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission and the eventual establishment of an emergency platform for complex crises, the desirability and nature of which will also have to be debated and discussed.

In the general approach of the new peace agenda proposed by the Secretary-General, the crucial issue of preventive diplomacy is focused on a societal vision of conflict from a structural and systemic perspective, which somehow ignores the primarily State nature of the management of conflicts and the promotion and consolidation of peace — whether it involve international or intra-national conflicts. In that regard, it would seem essential to associate the ideas set out in the report with a more specific vision of preventive action, one that considers inter-State diplomacy as a negotiating process that is part of the capacity for collective action of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter, and of Secretariat itself in the context of its competencies powers.

Preventive diplomacy includes the principles, methods, capacities, mechanisms and resources aligned with the action that allows avoiding that conflicts, disputes or controversies arise between the parties; prevent disputes from turning into conflicts; limit their spread if they occur; and, if peace is achieved, consolidate it with social and national cohesion.

From that perspective, the issue is how to determine the strengths and vulnerabilities of the current structure and mechanisms for action of the United Nations system so as to prevent conflicts and disputes and to affirm the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the functional coordination of the various organs of the system and the provision of resources to fulfil three essential tasks.

The first task is to carry out, in a timely and efficient manner, the processes that the Charter itself provides to prevent and control conflicts, that is, good offices, mediation, negotiation and arbitration, and, obviously, at the level of decision by States themselves, resorting to activating the jurisdictional role of the International Court of Justice to resolve disputes that might turn into

conflicts. In that sense, the Court is also a conflict-prevention body.

The second task is to carry out, in a coordinated and integrated manner and while respecting the spheres of action and the mandate of each organ, the structural prevention of conflicts. That includes confronting social imbalances and divisions, inequality, exclusion and marginalization of vulnerable sectors of the population. And it includes bringing about results on the agenda that links conflict prevention with economic and social development and the fight against exclusion and inequality.

And the third task is to establish realistic and multidimensional agendas to consolidate peace processes and help national and sub-national Governments, the population and civil society to rebuild a peace based on a fair distribution of, and access to, public goods.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): Let me congratulate you, Sir, and the Mexican presidency for skilfully guiding the Security Council. I also thank the briefers who spoke today.

We are living in dangerous times marked by the unilateral use or threat of force, foreign intervention, foreign occupation, the suppression of legitimate freedom struggles, as in Jammu and Kashmir, the resurgence of the ideologies of hate, fascism, racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, growing poverty, inequality and environmental degradation, rising global tensions, proliferating military alliances and a destabilizing and dangerous nuclear and conventional arms race.

Addressing the root causes of conflicts and disputes must be the principal modality for preventive diplomacy. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Peacebuilding Commission all have important roles in addressing the root causes of conflict, especially a conflict between nuclear-armed States. In the final analysis, however, it is the Security Council that must utilize its primary authority under the Charter of the United Nations to secure the just and peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes in accordance with its own resolutions and decisions.

For the past two years, Pakistan has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to the grave and ever-present threat to international peace and security posed by the conflict over Jammu and Kashmir. There is considerable and credible evidence that human rights are being massively violated in the Indian-occupied parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Those violations escalated sharply after the unilateral measures taken by India on and after 5 August 2019 to forcibly annex occupied Jammu and Kashmir and change its demography, in violation of the Security Council resolutions that prescribe a United Nations-supervised plebiscite by the people of Jammu and Kashmir to determine the state's final disposition. Those actions constitute grave violations of international law, Security Council resolutions and the Geneva Conventions and could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Three wars have been fought over Jammu and Kashmir. Another war was narrowly averted in February 2019 owing to Pakistan's exercise of self-restraint. Despite the revival of the 2003 ceasefire, threats against Pakistan and the repression in Kashmir have not abated. A conflict could have catastrophic consequences for South Asia and the world.

It should be a high priority for the Security Council to prevent such a conflict by promoting a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with its own resolutions. It should be a high priority for the Secretary-General as well to fully utilize his broad authority under the Charter to promote such a fair and peaceful resolution of the dispute and end the massive human rights violations taking place in Indian-occupied Kashmir. That, surely, is the essence of preventive diplomacy envisaged in the United Nations Charter. No party should have the ability to veto the exercise of the endeavours of the Security Council or the Secretary-General for conflict resolution.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of India has asked the floor to make a further statement. I now give her the floor.

**Ms. Bhat** (India): We are forced to take the floor once again to respond to some frivolous remarks made

by the representative of Pakistan earlier. This is not the first time that the representative of Pakistan has misused platforms provided by the United Nations to propagate false and malicious propaganda against my country, while seeking in vain to divert the world's attention from the sad state of his country, where terrorists enjoy a free pass while the lives of ordinary people, especially those belonging to minority communities, are turned upside down.

Member States are aware that Pakistan has an established history and policy of harbouring, aiding and actively supporting terrorists. This is a country that has been globally recognized as, first, openly supporting, training, financing and arming terrorists as a matter of State policy. It holds the ignoble record of hosting the largest number of terrorists proscribed by the Security Council.

I would like to be categorical about India's position: the entire union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were, are and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. That includes the areas that are under the illegal occupation of Pakistan. We call upon Pakistan to immediately vacate all areas under its illegal occupation.

India desires normal, neighbourly relations with all countries, including Pakistan, and is committed to addressing outstanding issues, if any, bilaterally and peacefully, in accordance with the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore declaration.

However, any meaningful dialogue can be held only in an atmosphere free of terror, hostility and violence. The onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive atmosphere. Until then, India will continue to take firm and decisive steps to respond to cross-border terrorism.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

*The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.*