



Security Council

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9036th meeting

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New York

Provisional

President: Mr. DeLaurentis/Mr. Hunter/Mr. Mills (United States of America)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Spasse
Brazil	Mr. Coraiola Yinde Kloss
China	Ms. Wang Yingtong
France	Ms. Lecoutre
Gabon	Mr. Mibissa
Ghana	Mrs. Hackman
India	Mr. Parihar
Ireland	Mr. Flynn
Kenya	Mrs. Toroitich
Mexico	Mr. Ríos Sánchez
Norway	Mr. Kvalheim
Russian Federation	Mr. Varganov
United Arab Emirates	Ms. Shaheen
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Jacobs

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Conflict and food security

Letter dated 12 May 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2022/391)

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The meeting resumed at 3.20 p.m.

The President: Before we begin, I would like 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 as expeditiously as possible. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphone will prompt all speakers to bring their remarks to a close after four minutes.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada.

Ms. Joly (Canada): I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Executive Director Beasley, Director-General Qu Dongyu and Ms. Menker for their insightful briefings.

I welcome this exploration of ways to break the cycle of conflict and food insecurity. We have made enormous inroads into hunger over recent decades, but all those gains are rolling back.

Climate change, the coronavirus disease pandemic and conflict have combined to create a hunger and humanitarian crisis greater than anything we have seen in recent years. Most recently, we are seeing how President Putin's invasion of Ukraine is directly accelerating that trend. And let me be clear — Russia's invasion is to blame, not the sanctions.

Russia's unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine is many things. It is a naked act of aggression by a nuclear Power against a neighbouring country. It is a blatant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It has also been the greatest shock to global food systems — already fragile — in the past 12 years. In attacking one of the breadbaskets of the world and seeking to cut off Ukraine's economy, Russia is destroying Ukraine's capacity to supply the world with food. It is blockading Ukrainian ports, displacing farmers and workers, ravaging its farmlands and attacking civilian infrastructure on a massive scale. Russia's reckless actions are leading directly to skyrocketing commodity prices and inflation. That makes them a direct concern to every Member represented here.

In my discussions yesterday with the Secretary-General and with World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley, I was impressed by the ongoing efforts to create a humanitarian sea corridor for food. There is no time to waste. Canada is ready to help in

making sure that Ukrainian grain gets out of Ukraine to those who really need it.

Turning to the wider issue, we know that food insecurity and conflict are part of a vicious cycle. Conflict leads to hunger, while underinvestment in agriculture and high food prices can cause political unrest and conflict. We must act quickly to save millions of lives. We must act in accordance with resolution 2417 (2018), which condemns the starvation of civilians as a tactic in warfare, and resolution 2573 (2021), to protect civilians and the goods and supplies that are essential to their survival.

In the face of historic and untenable levels of food insecurity, last year Canada contributed more than \$380 million to emergency food and nutrition assistance. Since 2020 we have spent approximately \$1 billion per year in gender-responsive humanitarian assistance to address rising global needs. We responded to the call to action from partners and friends in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and we will continue to support multilateral solutions.

(spoke in French)

Our partners can continue to count on Canada. We are already doing a great deal, but we must and will do more. Yesterday I spoke about what Canada can also do directly, and I reiterate today before the Council, as a major cereals exporter, that we are going to export them. We hope that that the season will be better than last year's and that Mother Nature will be generous.

We are one of the leaders in the manufacture of potash. Several of those present here have already asked to receive some, and we will do everything we can to send it to them, because we know how vital fertilizers are currently.

We also must tackle both hunger and conflict. We need to implement long-term solutions that break the vicious cycle of poverty, hunger and conflict. We know what needs to be done to fix the weaknesses of our global food systems. We need to invest in climate-smart agricultural solutions.

My grandparents were wheat farmers and millers, and I know how important it is to take care of our land. We must also strengthen our social security safety nets and promote healthy and nutritious food. It is also important that the decision table be more inclusive. Women's involvement is essential in order to find

lasting solutions for all. To break the cycle of conflict and food insecurity, we must absolutely include women.

Finally, we need all members of our society to build more resilient and sustainable food systems. We all have a choice to make. We need to choose to bring an end to conflict, and we need to choose to do more to fight hunger. For me and for Canada, the choice is clear.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Mr. Szijjártó (Hungary): Hungary, the country I represent, is a neighbouring country to Ukraine, so we are directly impacted by the war. Every minute, hour and day of the war in Ukraine represents a security risk for Hungary. Hungary is not only a neighbouring country to Ukraine but also a route for migratory flows targeting Europe, so we are also indirectly impacted by the war along with the direct impacts, since the foreseeable food crisis caused by the war in Ukraine could easily lead, unfortunately, to further migratory waves.

The Hungarian people did not want this war; the Hungarian people do not want this war. We want peace in our neighbourhood. We all know that the war represents a serious risk for the safe global supply of food. We all know that limited capacities to export basic foodstuffs from the countries at war cause a severe shortage for fragile regions in the neighbourhood of Europe.

Looking at the statistics, 38 regions that have been hit with starvation were the recipients of 34 per cent of Ukrainian wheat and corn exports. We also know that the countries suffering from the food crisis have been the recipients of 73 per cent of wheat exports from Russia. I guess that we are all aware of what this food supply crisis will cause. In already fragile regions, there will be a spread of extremist ideologies and a growing threat of terrorism, and we all know that those two are the major root causes of migratory flows. That is why we believe that the international community should make every possible effort to prevent such a supply crisis.

According to our understanding, that prevention could take two different directions. First, we could try our best to bring an additional supply, from alternative resources, to those areas that were formerly recipients of Ukrainian and Russian exports. We do not know whether there are enough alternative resources in the world. There might not be, so as a second step I think

that we have to ensure that Ukrainian farmers maintain their capacity to produce.

Here we, as a neighbouring country, are already contributing. We delivered 10,000 kilograms of corn seed, as the number-two exporter thereof globally, and 3,000 kilograms of potatoes and 500 kilograms of sunflower seeds, as the number-five exporter globally of sunflower seeds, to farmers in the western part of Ukraine who had no access to seed and could not plant. With the seeds we delivered to them, they will be able to complete their planting operations.

Again, reflecting on what Ms. Melanie Joly just said, we definitely have to take into consideration another aspect: the tremendous increase in the price of foodstuffs globally. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) price index has hit a record high — a 21 per cent increase within one year, which is enormous. There is therefore a special responsibility for Governments to ensure that those people who are not responsible for the war in Ukraine should not pay the price of the war. So we, the Hungarian Government, have already acted in a timely and efficient manner, introducing price caps on certain food products in order to keep prices relatively under control and also to keep inflation under control.

Last but not least, we believe that capacity-building in countries and regions where the standards level of the food industry is still low is extremely important. Hungary is taking part in those efforts as well. More than 300 experts from such countries have graduated from Hungarian universities in the framework of a joint scholarship programme by FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture.

I therefore you once again, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. We are ready to take further part in the international efforts to successfully address the food-security challenges that are ahead of us.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg.

Mr. Asselborn (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank the United States presidency of the Security Council for having convened today's open debate at the ministerial level on a matter of vital importance to conflict prevention and the fight against inequality.

Food insecurity, exacerbated by the negative effects of climate change, is a major threat to peace.

It risks further destabilizing fragile societies, pushing millions of human beings into poverty, thereby fuelling conflicts. In this respect, the issue of food security fully deserves to be taken into consideration by the Security Council.

We see this today in Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, which has plunged thousands of Ukrainians into misery and despair. By blocking millions of tons of Ukrainian grain for export, Russia is exacerbating the food crisis that is particularly affecting countries and populations in fragile situations in Africa as well as the Middle East, where harvests are already severely affected by the combined effect of climate change, conflicts and economic shocks. It is war that is causing the food crisis — not the sanctions that are the consequence of the war.

The crisis we are facing is complex and multidimensional: a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder and coordinated response is imperative in order to mitigate the impact of conflict on food security and to eventually achieve more sustainable production and processing systems. I agree with the Secretary-General that there should be no restrictions on food exports.

We fully subscribe to the principles of action on global food security put forward by the Group of Seven, and we welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to convene a Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance to identify short, medium- and long-term solutions. Following this logic, Luxembourg is participating in the efforts of the European Union and the international community by taking decisive steps to strengthen food and nutrition resilience. We support the vital work done in this area by our humanitarian partners, in particular the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and we allocate at least 20 per cent of our annual humanitarian budget to this end.

Luxembourg strongly supports multi-stakeholder development approaches, such as the "Team Europe" initiatives and the Global Network against Food Crises, which are in line with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the principle of leaving no one behind. We remain very committed to supporting the Sahel region, which is severely affected by food insecurity amplified by climate change as well as by the effects of the war in Ukraine. Through its support

for development cooperation and humanitarian action, particularly in the areas of sustainable agriculture, water and sanitation, and through its investments in human capital development, my country is continuing its efforts to strengthen food resilience, preserve social peace and, consequently, prevent conflicts in the countries concerned.

Immediate and collective action on a global scale is vital to avoid the largest food crisis in history and the social, economic and political upheaval that could ensue. The most vulnerable populations would be the first victims, especially women and children. Hunger must not be used as a weapon of war, neither in Ukraine nor elsewhere.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania.

Mr. Adomėnas (Lithuania): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three Baltic States — Estonia, Latvia, and my own country, Lithuania.

Let me start by thanking the United States for organizing today's open debate and the briefers for their briefings. On behalf of our countries, I would also like to express the gratitude to the Secretary-General for his consistent focus on the destructive consequences of the Russian war against Ukraine, including the threat it poses for global food security.

This unjust and unprovoked war has, first and foremost, caused unimaginable and immeasurable suffering in Ukraine. The people of the city of Mariupol have been kept under siege for almost three months. The Russian army turned Mariupol into rubble, leaving thousands dead and depriving the city of food, water, electricity, and medical assistance.

The starving of civilians and the unlawful denial of humanitarian access as methods of warfare are prohibited by international humanitarian law and were condemned by resolution 2417 (2018) adopted unanimously by the Security Council in 2018. Yet the Russian Federation, a permanent member of the Council, behaves as if it were above the law.

The Azovstal steel plant became the final holdout and a symbol of resilience in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. We welcome the life-saving humanitarian action of the United Nations on the ground at the Azovstal complex, which helped to escort hundreds of civilians who had taken refuge in the plant to safety.

The effects of Russia's war are reaching beyond Europe. If Russia does not stop this war, the rise in food insecurity in 2022 and beyond could be catastrophic, and with far reaching consequences. Russia blames the consequences of the war it itself started on sanctions. This is a very poor attempt to distract attention and is inherently false.

Hunger and conflict are tragically interlinked. The Sahel region and East Africa have already reported alarming increases in levels of food insecurity. After his recent travels to West Africa, the Secretary-General reported that the worldwide implications of this war are now in full view. UNICEF emphasizes the vulnerability of children in the Middle East and North Africa. Not sanctions, but Russia's war on Ukraine is what is causing these devastating effects.

Russia is systematically targeting all aspects of Ukraine's agriculture: fields, farm equipment, warehouses and markets. In addition, the Russian Federation is blocking hundreds of ships filled with wheat in the Black Sea. We need quick and decisive action to ensure the food supply and minimize the effects of Russia's war on global food markets. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were among the first to propose to help the Ukrainian Government by shipping the wheat to global markets through our ports. The European Union is making efforts through the so-called solidarity lanes. However, it is impossible to ensure the same volume of exports by means other than seaports in the immediate future. We need Russia to unblock Ukrainian ports and restore the freedom of navigation. We need the safe passage for grain-carrying ships to Ukraine's territorial waters across the Black Sea.

Keeping Ukrainian grain blocked could result in 44 million people worldwide falling into starvation, to quote the World Food Programme. We encourage the Security Council and the relevant United Nations agencies to consider ways to prevent this scenario. Furthermore, the international community must also consider the possibility of providing assistance to Ukraine so it can resume agricultural production and ensure its harvest for next year. We call on the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance to closely monitor the situation and provide consistent reports on the effects of Russia's war on global food insecurity and concrete recommendations on how to manage them in a coordinated manner.

The international system, based on international law, including the United Nations Charter, must not tolerate deliberate attacks on global agricultural supply chains and global food markets. That is exactly what Russia is doing by intentionally crippling Ukraine's agricultural sector and blocking exports.

Finally, allow me to reiterate that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia firmly stand for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We stand for accountability. We stand for humanity. We will do everything we can to support Ukraine in its fight to defend the rules-based international order.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Odawara (Japan): I would like to thank the United States for convening this important meeting, as well as the Secretary-General and others for their briefings.

Japan attaches great importance to the achievement of global food security in realizing a "society where no one is left behind", reflecting the philosophy of human security, which Japan regards as an important pillar of its foreign policy. This meeting is timely given the dramatic deterioration of global food security caused by Russia's unprovoked and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has exacerbated food security globally, infringes upon Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and shakes the very foundations of the international order, which do not tolerate any unilateral change of the status quo by force. Russia has targeted critical civilian infrastructure, including that for agricultural production, transportation and storage, in clear denial of commitments made by the Security Council, such as in resolutions 2417 (2018) and 2573 (2021). Japan is gravely concerned by such attacks and condemns them in the strongest terms.

Japan stresses the importance of the following three points as rapid responses to the deteriorating global food security.

First, the international community must work together to expand emergency food assistance, especially in the severely affected Middle East and Africa. As a consistent partner of the World Food Programme, on 10 May Japan decided to extend \$10 million in emergency grant aid in response to the food crisis in

Yemen, where the humanitarian situation could further deteriorate due to the impact of rising food prices caused by the situation in Ukraine. The provision of food aid to Sri Lanka will also be decided shortly. Japan will continue to work with the international community to closely consider the necessary measures.

Secondly, it is important to treat Ukrainian grain exports as a humanitarian issue and create political momentum to enable the smooth export of food to those in need. Japan advocates for that approach and for the establishment of a humanitarian food passage, which would facilitate such exports. We would like to call on the countries concerned, including Russia, to restore the international distribution of Ukrainian food.

Lastly, it is important to ensure that measures that disrupt the global food trade and affect global food insecurity, such as export restrictions and excessive hoarding, not be taken. In that connection, it should be agreed at next month's Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization that food procurement for humanitarian aid by international organizations should not be subject to export restrictions.

Japan is determined to continue to make every effort, in cooperation with the international community, to address the negative impact of conflict on global food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala.

Mr. Búcaro Flores (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of Guatemala, allow me to congratulate the United States of America on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and on the initiative to convene this open debate on conflict and food security, which is an event of great importance, as it is an issue that, in our view, can constitute a threat to international peace and security if it is not addressed in a timely manner. I also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and the representatives of the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for their briefings, which highlighted the alarming situation of world hunger.

I wish to begin by expressing my country's deep concern about the impact of the Russian Federation's aggression against the sovereign territory of Ukraine, which represents a flagrant violation of the founding Charter of the Organization and is exacerbating

the humanitarian and human rights situation in the world, as well as having devastating consequences for the economy and the already record levels of food insecurity. We reaffirm our strong condemnation of that unjustified attack, and we express our support for the Ukrainian people and Government, while advocating respect for life, peace, sovereignty, territorial integrity and, in particular, internationally recognized borders.

We therefore call on the Security Council to uphold international obligations under international law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We particularly call for compliance with resolution 2417 (2018) and article 8 (2) (b) (xxv) of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which set out all the necessary provisions on the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, as well as the illegal denial of humanitarian access, as both are considered war crimes.

Our fight against hunger must not stop. As a country that is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, Guatemala underwent a severe hurricane season, lack of rainfall, drought and crop failures during the pandemic. That which affects poverty levels and household food security and drives irregular migration.

In that regard, Guatemala makes an urgent appeal to address the hunger crisis as a priority of the international agenda. It is necessary to protect the most vulnerable and act immediately to save lives, especially in emergency, disaster and crisis situations, by implementing humanitarian actions focused on building more resilient communities and pooling efforts to ensure a global food supply.

We believe it of the utmost importance that the Security Council support early-warning systems to provide Governments and humanitarian actors with timely, reliable, accurate and verifiable information to prevent and mitigate the effects of a food crisis in the context of armed conflict.

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to establish the Global Response Crisis Group on Food, Energy and Finance, which brings together relevant members of the United Nations system, including the Security Council. We support the recommendations of FAO on keeping trade in food and agricultural goods open, diversifying food supplies, boosting local production and expanding social safety nets. Furthermore, we recall that it is necessary to follow up on the Food Systems Summit and support

the implementation of the voluntary commitments emanating from it, in which our country played a highly active role.

I conclude by expressing the commitment of the President of the Republic of Guatemala, Mr. Alejandro Giammattei Falla, to prioritizing the protection of the life and health of the population, ensuring respect for all human beings and promoting international efforts that are aligned with our national priorities in the fight against malnutrition and hunger.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Ms. Ohlsson (Sweden): I will try to use my time wisely. We do not have a single minute to waste in halting the triple food, energy and financing crisis. My remarks are made on behalf of the five Nordic countries.

Four years ago, almost to the day, Sweden and three other elected Security Council members put forward resolution 2417 (2018), on conflict and hunger, which condemns the use of starvation as a method of warfare. The world was alarmed by the threat of famine and the 74 million people facing crisis-level food insecurity, or worse. Since then, the number has almost quadrupled to a staggering 275 million people. A majority of them live in areas of conflict, and, as always, women and children bear the brunt of the burden. If that is not argument enough for seriously stepping up our efforts, I am not sure what would be.

With the Russian aggression against Ukraine, supported by Belarus, the situation has deteriorated further. I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers both for making that very clear and for the work that they and their colleagues have been doing to alleviate the situation, often under extremely challenging circumstances.

The actions needed are both immediate and systemic. The skyrocketing humanitarian needs across almost all continents must be met with increased humanitarian funding. The humanitarian response plans for countries such as Somalia, Burkina Faso, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are only 5 to 15 per cent funded. Regrettably, the list of underfunded crises runs even longer. And those are not merely statistics but a question of life and death. Those underfunded, protracted crises create fertile ground for shocks to escalate into full-blown crises.

Life-saving assistance must reach people in need. Safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access must be ensured, and respect for humanitarian principles must be guaranteed. Equally urgent are measures to increase the supply of food. Russia must immediately allow the export of grain stuck in silos in Ukraine, which is enough to feed millions. Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine must stop. That is necessary for Ukraine to restart its agricultural production and exports. In all parts of the world, agricultural production systems should be developed to become sustainable and resilient to escalating climate change.

Similarly, there is an urgent need to end violent conflict everywhere. Building and sustaining peace improves conditions for smallholder farmers to access land, for communities to grow crops and diversify their livelihoods and for investment in sustainable and inclusive food systems, enabling agriculture to thrive rather than be destroyed. It contributes to ensuring access to basic services and universal access to social protection. Adequately financed peacebuilding can enhance food security and ensure longer-term development. We fully support the Secretary-General's work on the New Agenda for Peace and stand ready to contribute to its implementation.

Finally, the Nordic countries welcome the recommendations made in the report of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. We stand ready to engage in that regard, including through the Danish Prime Minister, who is one of the Champions of the Group. All of our countries will co-sponsor General Assembly draft resolution A/76/L.55, entitled "State of global food insecurity".

We agree that this triple crisis can be addressed only collectively and multilaterally. International financial institutions, humanitarian actors, local peacebuilders, regional organizations, the private sector, the scientific community, the United Nations as a whole and all of us Member States — all have roles to play and responsibilities to shoulder. I would therefore like to conclude by thanking you, Mr. President, for bringing us together today to commit to doing more together. We really need to do so, and we have no time to spare.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Matušić (Croatia): I would like to thank the United States for organizing this open debate. I also

thank the briefers for the information that they have provided today. It is important for the Security Council to keep this matter high on its agenda.

Croatia is deeply concerned about the current state of global food security and of malnutrition. According to the World Food Programme, conflict, climate shocks, the economic consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic and the spiralling cost of food and energy could drive at least 50 million people to the edge of famine this year. Conflict is the single-most important driver of hunger, with 60 per cent of the world's hungry people living in areas affected by conflict and violence.

The unprovoked war in Ukraine adds yet another dimension and has already resulted in serious global implications. Ukraine and the Russian Federation are both critical to global food systems. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has led to a dramatic surge in food, fertilizer and energy prices, with incalculable human consequences being felt most notably in societies that are already exhausted by conflict.

As we continue to provide full support to Ukraine and Ukrainians, we must also consider the global impact of the war. In that regard, we welcome the preliminary recommendations of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the Secretary-General.

Conflict and hunger are mutually reinforcing; food insecurity fuels conflict, and conflict exacerbates food insecurity. Generations can remain prisoners of that vicious circle. The Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2417 (2018) acknowledged the link between conflict and hunger and its impact on global peace and security. The resolution was conceived as an instrument to break the vicious circle of armed conflict and food insecurity.

However, what we are missing is more efficient action aimed at conflict prevention and resolution, as well as ensuring accountability for the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, which is prohibited by international humanitarian law. Croatia supports General Assembly draft resolution A/76/L.55, on the state of global food insecurity. In that regard, we sincerely hope that the adoption of the draft resolution will contribute to improving coordination among all relevant stakeholders in support of the countries affected by the food security crisis. Today no one needs to go hungry. Doing nothing in the face of harm and

hunger is not a sustainable option. We must take a strong and principled stand to protect vulnerable populations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Panama.

Ms. Gordón-Owen (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine is claiming a massive number of lives, destroying critical civilian infrastructure and causing a humanitarian crisis on a scale not seen since the end of the Second World War, including the internal and external displacement of millions of people.

One of the most visible consequence of this situation has been a rapid deterioration of food security globally, owing to the importance of both countries as producers and exporters of essential raw materials. Food production, access to energy and essential agricultural inputs have all declined significantly. Supply chains and prices have been affected. The impact of the conflict has spread, with the consequences being felt most strongly by low- and middle-income developing countries and the most vulnerable segment of populations, women and children. There was already a critical food security situation before the conflict emerged, in connection with the coronavirus disease pandemic, from which we are still recovering.

Food insecurity has deepened as a result of the conflict. It is crucial for us to act quickly and jointly to identify actions to strengthen food production development in our countries, as well as financial and technical cooperation in countries with a higher degree of technological development in the food industry, including in international organizations and the private sector.

We support the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Committee on World Food Security in their initiatives to maintain market access and establish mechanisms for dialogue with different social groups as an agile way to develop joint actions to counteract risk situations.

Four years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 2417 (2018), which noted the link between armed conflict and food insecurity. The resolution also highlighted the importance of responding effectively to the humanitarian needs that emerge as a result of such situations, ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. Armed conflicts do not help efforts to mitigate food insecurity, especially when the parties

to the conflict do not fulfil their responsibilities with regard to the protection of civilians, ensuring that civilians receive the care they need and that the parties respect their obligations under the universal instruments of human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Panama reiterates that the only way to restore international peace and security is through dialogue and negotiation based on respect for the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and in the interests of peaceful coexistence and respect for multilateralism. We reaffirm our support for the joint call from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the World Food Programme to develop coordinated action to supply food and provide financial support to increase agricultural production and keep trade open, as well as the call of the Group of Seven to form a global partnership for food security. Finally, we thank the United States for convening this much-needed open debate.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Alam (Bangladesh): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely open debate on conflict and food security. I also want to thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers for their insightful remarks on this very important issue.

The global efforts to achieve a world without hunger have gone seriously off track. The coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19) has reversed decades of progress. The Food and Agriculture Organization's most recent report on *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World* provides a sobering picture. Staggeringly, at least 720 million people in the world faced hunger in 2020, approximately 118 million more than in 2019. The war in Ukraine has made the situation worse. It has disrupted exports of food grains from Ukraine and Russia and fuelled an alarming rise in food prices in the global market.

Nearly 14 per cent of Bangladesh's gross domestic product comes from the agricultural sector, which also employs the biggest share of our labour force. Our Government has adopted many bold policies to transform the agricultural sector and achieve food self-sufficiency. In turn, it has helped to promote rural development, empower marginalized people and protect smallholding farmers. And that has had a transformative impact in terms of creating diversified value chains

in the food industry, generating employment and eradicating poverty. My Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, is one of the Champions of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, set up by the Secretary-General. We stand ready to share our good practices in agriculture and food security with countries that are in a comparable situation.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promises a hunger-free world. We must work together to fulfil that vision and ensure that everyone everywhere has access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Allow me to share some specific thoughts in that regard.

First, we need increased investment and targeted technology support from the developed countries in the agricultural sector to enhance productivity and ensure an effective food storage and distribution system. To achieve that, it is crucial that we leverage existing international cooperation frameworks, including science, technology and innovation collaboration and effective South-South and triangular cooperation.

Secondly, we need global solidarity to keep critical food-delivery infrastructure, such as farmer's markets and food-processing and storage facilities, out of harm's way during conflicts. We encourage a cross-pillar approach within the United Nations system involving peace, development and humanitarian actors to advance that agenda. The Peacebuilding Commission, with its overarching mandate, as well as its convening and advisory roles, can play a critical role in that regard.

Thirdly, we must create a more efficient and reliable global food system that can deliver safe, nutritious and affordable food for all. It is imperative for developed countries to eliminate trade restrictions and export subsidies in order to foster an open, functional and rules-based trading system.

Fourthly, climate change and environmental degradation have detrimental effects on agricultural and nutrition sectors. It is therefore imperative to fulfil our climate commitments with a view to creating a more resilient agriculture and food system.

Finally, we support the provisions in resolution 2417 (2018) condemning the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare and ensuring unimpeded access for humanitarian personnel, including during armed conflict. It is now more important than ever for us to demonstrate global solidarity through real

action to tackle the triple crisis of COVID-19, climate and conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland would like to thank the United States for convening this debate as part of an important week dedicated to this topic. We also want to thank the briefers for their valuable contributions.

Conflicts, the climate crisis, the coronavirus disease pandemic and soaring food and fuel prices have created a perfect storm. Those were the words that the World Food Programme used to sound the alarm in its 2022 *Global Report on Food Crises*. And this crisis will affect us all. The number of people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance could reach 323 million this year. Switzerland is particularly concerned about people living in the most precarious circumstances and who are exposed to global market shocks.

Armed conflict remains one of the main factors for hunger and malnutrition. The global projections for food insecurity resulting from Russia's military aggression against Ukraine should therefore be a greater incentive for us to end that armed conflict and others around the world, all of which bring death, destruction, forced displacement and hunger. We fully support the Secretary-General's efforts and use of his good offices to silence the guns. To that end, Switzerland would like to highlight three areas for action.

First, it is urgent that we redouble our efforts, including within the Security Council, to facilitate humanitarian access without delay or hindrance, ensure respect for international humanitarian law and prevent armed conflict.

Secondly, the international community must speak with one voice on food security. The Council has been united on the fundamental humanitarian norms and principles outlined in resolutions 2417 (2018) and 2573 (2021), which should be implemented in all the situations on the Council's agenda and translated into legislation for all States.

We hope that next week the General Assembly will adopt draft resolution A/76/L.55, on the state of global food insecurity, which Switzerland has sponsored. We also welcome the recommendations of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, launched by the Secretary-General to respond in a

coherent and coordinated manner to the consequences suffered by the most vulnerable countries as a result of the aggression against Ukraine. We look forward to listening to the second briefing on local actors. Valuing the skills of local actors, especially women and young people, is key to addressing the causes of food crises.

Thirdly, accountability is essential for deterring potential violators and rendering justice to victims. The Council can now refer situations of internal or international armed conflict to the International Criminal Court when crimes involving famine appear to have been committed. Switzerland encourages the States parties to the Court to ratify the relevant amendment and United Nations Member States to criminalize such acts in their national legislation.

While the world produces enough food to feed everyone, equal access to it is lacking and hostilities and violations of international humanitarian law make that worse. Finding political solutions to armed conflict must be part of our overall approach to ending hunger, ensuring that all people have access to sufficient and adequate food and promoting resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems. As a candidate for the Security Council, my country remains committed to preventing and resolving conflicts in order to break the vicious cycle of hunger and armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Jordan.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the United States on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and thank it for convening this important open debate.

Food security is one of the major challenges facing the Middle East, particularly in the light of the ongoing conflicts, which are worsening human suffering and hampering access to food and medicines. In addition, these conflicts greatly hamper humanitarian agencies and make it difficult for them to access people in need. The issues of food security and conflict are closely interlinked. Therefore, they need solutions based on a coordinated international approach for preventing a global food shortage crisis, which could occur if we are not prepared to face upcoming epidemics and challenges.

The repercussions of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have led to a significant rise in

food insecurity, particularly in the poorest and most vulnerable countries. There are also a number of serious challenges facing food security that existed before, such as climate change, potable water shortages throughout the world, global economic crises, regional troubles and an unprecedented migratory crisis worldwide. All of that has affected food supply for refugees and vulnerable communities alike, a challenge that is well-known in Jordan.

The crisis in Ukraine has revealed the extent to which the food security situation and the supply chains are also weak. It has also multiplied the already existing difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the world, particularly in the Middle East. Indeed, the effects of the pandemic have multiplied and affected the economic performance and social welfare of countries in the region, especially because of an increase in food prices, particularly for wheat and grain, and an increase in local production costs in the agricultural sector.

A World Bank report has also explained that this crisis will have disastrous repercussions on certain countries if humanitarian and development aid is not increased. It is worth noting that, while the Middle East represents only 6 per cent of the world's population, the region is home to 20 per cent of people facing acute food insecurity. It is necessary that food security be addressed in volatile and conflict situations where certain factors are intertwined and hamper development, such as reducing the risks of conflicts, strengthening social cohesion and developing the private sector and the job market. That would further improve food security. It is also necessary to focus on climate change while also working to address the threat of global food shortages, which has been a permanent threat since the pandemic began.

Jordan's agrifood sector provides sustenance for about quarter of the population, and it is also one of the largest sources of employment for refugees and women in rural communities. Since the beginning of the pandemic, that sector has been heavily involved in the global supply chain, and thanks to greater investment and improved technology, there is a possibility for it to expand significantly. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan reiterates its readiness to employ all its capabilities in food and pharmaceuticals sectors to become a regional hub for supply and storage.

In conclusion, we cannot return to a pre-COVID-19 situation. We should seize this opportunity to build a

better, more efficient and more united global system. We must work together to promote the adoption of sustainable farming technology. In turn, that could increase the resilience of our global food systems in order to ensure access, reduce costs and improve quality, while also protecting our environment. We also need to protect the resilience of supply chains and support developing countries in these efforts. Farmers in developing countries must be supported so that they can access better funding and training to serve their communities. We must cooperate to address all the drivers of food insecurity, namely, conflict, climate change, poverty and inequality.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Ms. Ache Batlle (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay welcomes this opportunity to consider the relationship between armed conflict and food crises, as well as the possible measures to be taken by the international community to alleviate the circumstances that we all currently face. Nevertheless, we must not forget the health and economic crises that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has caused, from which we have yet to recover. In addition to that, we must also take into account the conflicts persisting in various parts of the world, especially in the Middle East and various parts of Africa, as well as the recent conflict in Ukraine, which has caused unprecedented upheavals in global supply chains and trade relations between countries, testing the limits of global food supply lines.

Uruguay views that situation from the point of view of a food exporting country. With a population of 3.5 million people, our country produces food for approximately 30 million people and trades with more than 160 countries around the world. And since we produce significant amounts of certain foods among global suppliers, we can therefore contribute to mitigating the effects of the world food crisis through our exports.

Most significantly, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and the conflicts I have mentioned, especially the one between Russia and Ukraine, there have been disruptions in food and fertilizer supply chains, and food commodities prices, especially those of grains, have increased exponentially, endangering both food security and sustainable development. Rising prices and supply chain problems put at risk countries that

depend on imports to meet their food needs and create situations of extreme vulnerability for those that depend on food aid. Moreover, although the current situation may favour exporting countries, to respond to the rising prices resulting primarily from higher fuel and fertilizer costs, they may have to alter their public policies to increase production costs — mainly due to fuel and fertilizer costs — in order to control inflation and its impact on people's purchasing power.

According to the most recent report of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, submitted to our Organization on 27 April, several countries in our region share the same challenges. In that regard, we believe it is imperative that we deepen international cooperation, whether North-South, South-South or triangular cooperation, so that together we can prevent the food crisis and hunger in general from worsening and enable the free flow of food around the world.

Facing this crisis will require us to take every necessary effort to put an end to ongoing situations of conflict, especially through the appropriate use of the mechanisms and powers of the Security Council. But it will also require that all countries act collectively to keep trade flows for food and other supplies open, keep supply chains running and avoid applying sanctions and banning trade, while also working in cooperation with the entire international community and the international financial institutions to provide the necessary assistance to developing countries in the direst circumstances.

Regarding my point about keeping trade open, in terms of policy, history has taught us that resorting to applying trade restrictions exacerbates situations and leads to deeper economic and political crises. That is what happened in the 1930s and on several other occasions during other periods. Our region of Latin America and the Caribbean has resorted on several occasions to such policies and the outcomes were tremendously negative in terms of the development and welfare of our populations. We must therefore learn from our past experiences and not repeat them.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): Starvation and hunger have no place in today's world. Some seven decades after the Charter of the United Nations committed us to better standards of life and greater

freedom for all, humankind has the technological and financial means to help ensure better food security, but that has been difficult to achieve.

That is, in part, because we live in a time marked by compounded crises, with food insecurity being just one of them. Global food prices are being pushed upwards as a result of rising agricultural prices, in tandem with rising energy costs; the challenges of climate change and their impact on the environment, including water scarcity; trade disruptions owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; and geopolitical tensions and conflict in various parts of the world. That has impaired food security and is jeopardizing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The most affected countries are low-income, food-deficit countries, and the most vulnerable groups are women and children, particularly girls.

As several delegations mentioned earlier, 1.7 billion people in 170 economies are severely exposed to one of the three crises, including rising food prices, as referred to by the Secretary-General. Meanwhile, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations have identified organized violence and conflict as the primary drivers of hunger, both in hunger hotspots and globally, with weather extremes, including drought and floods, being another driver.

Against that backdrop, Thailand believes that some actions could be considered as part of multi-stakeholder efforts to help ensure better food security. Those actions are anchored on three ideas: sustainability, supply chains and science and technology.

The first idea is to take action on sustainability by encouraging sustainable agriculture and food production in order to generate sufficient food supplies for the long term, both regionally and globally. As one of the world's leading food producers, Thailand pursues a food strategy based on food safety, food security, the sustainability of natural resources and agroecology. That is part of our bio-circular-green economic model, which seeks to promote sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth and development. And because sustainable development with food security is so critical to sustainable peacebuilding, our peacekeeping contingents provide training in sustainable agriculture to local communities.

The second idea is to take action on supply chains, promoting secure and resilient global and regional

supply chains and distribution channels, especially for agricultural and food products. An economic landscape conducive to such supply chains is necessary to promote world food security. The relevant rules and regulations under multilateral trade forums need to be more supportive and facilitative towards international trade in food products. Meanwhile, in countries and regions affected by disaster and conflict, priority should be given to transporting humanitarian supplies, including food, to people in affected areas. And as some delegations have mentioned, food should not be part of United Nations sanctions.

The third idea is to take action by mobilizing science and technology to help increase supplies, improve food storage and minimize food waste. To that end, leading Thai food companies, academic institutions and local farmers have been cooperating with international partners to develop alternative seafood and meats, including plant-based proteins, which have high-feed conversion efficiency, emit relatively few greenhouse gases and have innovative storage capabilities.

International cooperation in that area should be further advanced. An example of that is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-United States Special Summit, recently concluded in Washington, D.C., at which partners committed to enhancing collaboration in both precision and climate-smart farming, smart agriculture and food science, among other things.

In conclusion, it is vital to enhance practical, regional and multilateral cooperation, backed by strong political will. That is why today's Security Council meeting is so timely. We commend the United States announcement this morning on increasing its food assistance. Thailand therefore looks forward to the General Assembly's adoption of a draft resolution to address global food insecurity in the near future.

For all those reasons, as host economy of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) this year, Thailand is committed to achieving APEC's goal of sufficient, safe, nutritious, accessible and affordable food for all through the APEC food security road map and developing an implementation plan in that regard.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Denktaş (Turkey): I wish to start by thanking the United States for initiating this critical discussion on conflict and food security. I would also like to

thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers for their remarks.

In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we collectively committed to ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition. Yet multiple integrated factors have caused serious setbacks. Among them are the pandemic and related economic shocks, the climate crisis and extreme weather conditions, armed conflicts and now the war in Ukraine.

In adopting resolution 2417 (2018), the Security Council recognized for the first time the inherent connection between conflict and food insecurity. Since then, that resolution's effective implementation remains essential, particularly in humanitarian settings such as in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan and parts of Africa and in Ukraine.

Figures speak loud and clear in each setting. In Syria, the humanitarian situation is as grave as ever. Some 14.6 million people across the country are in need of humanitarian assistance. The use of starvation continues to be a frequent tactic of war in Syria. For too long, the Syrian regime has left civilians without access to food and made them suffer. Under those conditions, the United Nations cross-border mechanism has proven to be a life-saving instrument. The members of the Security Council have a job to do: renewing the Council's mandate on Syria. The Council should take action to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people.

Food insecurity in parts of Afghanistan has also reached catastrophic levels. Almost 20 million Afghans are facing high levels of acute food insecurity, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Conflict remains the primary underlying driver of hunger in Yemen. Some 17.4 million people in the country are now in need of food assistance. Across Yemen, 2.2 million children are acutely malnourished. Members can imagine what that means for the future of that country. As many as 15 million people in the Horn of Africa suffer from severe drought and need life-saving assistance.

And now, with the war in Ukraine the world is faced with a severe crisis. Our position is clear and firm: this war is an unjustified, illegal and illegitimate act of aggression against a founding Member of the Organization and a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, and it needs to end.

Since the outbreak of the war, we have been working on two tracks, the first of which involves actively supporting efforts to ease the humanitarian situation. We are working together with the United Nations on establishing a humanitarian contact group.

The second track involves facilitating the efforts for a negotiated settlement. Unfortunately, the atrocities in Bucha, Irpin and Mariupol have complicated the diplomatic process. The momentum has been lost, but the talks have not fully collapsed. We cannot give up on the hope of peace. Diplomatic channels need to remain open. Keeping dialogue alive is necessary to save lives and prevent further destruction.

The war in Ukraine is likely to lead to significant import shocks and disruption of global agricultural supply chains, further driving up food prices. Forty-five African countries import at least one third of their wheat from Ukraine or Russia, while 18 of them import more than half their wheat from those two countries. If the war drags on, many countries will face immediate food shortages, and we will all be affected by the rising food prices. And that is why we are discussing with the World Food Programme and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs how to move forward on the passage of ships carrying grain out of Ukraine.

Ongoing armed conflicts are a major cause of the current risks of famine. Global food insecurity, for its part, is planting the seeds for destabilization and unrest across the globe. We need to find ways to break this vicious circle.

First, we need to pursue all possible avenues of diplomacy to prevent and end armed conflicts. Turkey, with its trademark role in mediation for peace, aims to do just that.

Secondly, we need to respond to humanitarian needs, including through effective measures to combat conflict-driven food insecurity. That requires respect for international humanitarian law and unhindered humanitarian assistance.

Thirdly, we need to ensure transparency in agricultural commodity flows and combat protectionism. Preventing speculative food prices in marketing and trade and supporting the continuation of supply chains will be essential.

Fourthly, we must strengthen the agricultural capabilities of the countries facing hunger. We want

most to leverage science and technology to innovate our way out of food insecurity.

Fifthly, the international community must place global food security at the top of its agenda. That is why we welcome today's initiative. We also welcome and will co-sign the new global initiative that the United States launched yesterday. We will continue to back inclusive and multilateral efforts to find solutions to the worsening crisis. We have been supportive of the Group of 20 multilateral declaration as well as the Food Systems Summit. We also welcome the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the Secretary-General.

Finally, we support the strengthening of financial and in-kind assistance mechanisms for the benefit of vulnerable countries and conflict areas. Yesterday Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, announced a package of measures in support of the Global Food Security Call to Action. Turkey will continue to work to strengthen peace and eradicate global food insecurity. We look forward to working with our partners on delivering what needs to be delivered as the international community.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): Allow me, at the outset, to express my delegation's deep appreciation for the initiative of the United States, current President of the Security Council, to hold this high-level open debate on conflict and food security. Egypt is fully cognizant of the severe impact that hunger and the failure to achieve food security have on human livelihoods as well as their contribution to the increased risk of conflict, especially in countries that suffer from economic vulnerability. Hence, we stress the strong and deep links between food security and conflict.

The world is currently witnessing an unprecedented food insecurity crisis as a result of our failure to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, on ending hunger. That failure was exacerbated by the implications of the coronavirus disease pandemic as well as conflicts. Failure to achieve food security and end hunger will pose a threat to the security and stability of countries and will further fuel ongoing conflicts.

The challenges of achieving food security are further deepened by other factors, such as the ongoing impacts of climate change, which exacerbate risks related to

energy production, food security, the availability of water, economic development and social inequalities. Water scarcity in several regions in the world, especially in Africa, has a severe impact on agricultural activities and on efforts to achieve food security.

In the light of what I just mentioned, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, it is important to address the challenges facing countries affected by, and emerging from, conflict. Special attention should be paid to food security and providing health care to the civilian population, based on the principles of international humanitarian law and in accordance with national sovereignty. It is also important to ensure access to food aid for the civilian population in conflict areas and to protect them from the risk of famine, including through the provision of food for forcibly displaced persons. We would also stress, in that regard, the responsibility of the Security Council to protect civilians at risk from armed conflicts, including the risk of famine.

Secondly, the United Nations system plays an important role. The Security Council should develop a proactive approach that enhances early-warning capabilities to monitor the regions that are most vulnerable to famine resulting from armed conflict. In that connection, we would like to highlight the importance of resolution 2417 (2018), which requests the Secretary-General to report swiftly to the Council when the risk of conflict-induced famine and wide-spread food insecurity in armed conflict contexts occurs.

Thirdly, I would like to highlight that Egypt is the most densely populated water-scarce country in the world. Currently, water scarcity affects 2.5 billion people around the globe, and it is expected that climate change will result in putting half of the world's population under severe water stress conditions by 2050. Moreover, water scarcity could displace up to 700 million people by 2030. Those figures are clear proof of the negative impacts of water scarcity on peace and security, the achievement of sustainable development and the fulfilment of human rights. In that context, we urge the international community to address the needs of the most vulnerable water-scarce countries and promote transboundary cooperation, in accordance with the applicable international law, to preserve water for life, agriculture, peace and security.

Fourthly, food security and conflict must be addressed in a holistic and comprehensive approach

that takes into consideration humanitarian and development factors. Immediate action must be taken to alleviate hunger, while also implementing plans to assist developing countries, especially food-importing developing countries, in achieving food security through sustainable agriculture.

In conclusion, we would like to stress the urgency of addressing the challenges of food security and its direct linkage to conflicts in a comprehensive approach that aims to achieve the sustainable development of developing countries while at the same time ensuring their stability and prosperity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Mr. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America, for having convened this important meeting on conflict and food security during the United States presidency of the Security Council.

The interest of the Kingdom of Morocco in the issue of international peace and security, the eradication of hunger and the promotion of sustainable agriculture emanates from a keen awareness of the challenges posed by food insecurity throughout the world, in particular on the African continent, as clearly stipulated in resolution 2417 (2018), on conflict and food insecurity.

Currently, more than 800 million people throughout the world suffer every day from food scarcity, and in Africa one out of every five individuals is affected by malnutrition — more than 281 million Africans. Thirty years from now, the African continent will have to feed double its current population. Unfortunately, the continent continues to import more than \$43 billion in net food products every year and remains dependent on imports to feed its growing population.

Food insecurity is also exacerbated by the effects of the coronavirus disease, climate change and armed conflict, which have a real impact on food supply chains at the global level. That situation has resulted in increased prices in international markets and has major consequences for the stability of the most vulnerable countries, since the scarcity of resources and sudden increases in food prices fuel civil unrest. A sustainable change in the global food and agriculture system is necessary if we want to be able to feed the 800 million people who suffer from hunger today, and the 2 billion additional people who will be undernourished by 2050.

It is also our responsibility to prevent conflict that might break out as a consequence of hunger and disruptions in food supply chains. In that regard, the Kingdom of Morocco has always invested in agriculture, specifically through South-South cooperation in Africa, which is home to more than half of the world's non-cultivated arable land. Under the direction of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, my country continues to strengthen its development strategy, the Green Morocco Plan, which was launched more than a decade ago. Food insecurity is a strategic priority for Morocco and lies at the heart of our new 2035 development model. A series of sectoral strategies, specifically the Generation Green 2020-2030 plan and the national blue economy strategy, also buttress that ambition.

Moreover, Africa has a young population and a vast continental market of more than 1 billion people. In that regard, we support the African free-trade zone, which has the potential to stimulate food product exchange among African countries at lowest cost, improve agricultural revenues, foster agroindustry and develop agricultural industry in Africa.

The Moroccan approach heralds an integrated method of rural socioeconomic development and investment in agriculture, a sector that generates tremendous opportunities for wealth creation and the employment of young people and women. In order to strengthen resilience, there is a vital need to invest in sustainable food systems and foster new opportunities for female farmers and young people in this sector. Strengthening the agricultural sector can generate employment, strengthen self-sufficiency, stimulate local production and ensure food security and sovereignty within each national context.

In that regard, Morocco has signed more than 38 agreements and conventions in the agricultural area with 18 brotherly African countries. The partnerships recently launched with Ethiopia and Nigeria for the production of natural fertilizers are testament to that.

My country has initiated rich and diversified triangular cooperation, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). A number of tripartite agreements were signed in that regard, specifically with Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Eswatini and Cameroon.

It was in that same vein that, during the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change, the Initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture to Climate Change was launched, which to date has supported no less than seven countries in Africa and enjoys the support of 25 African countries as well as the Framework Convention and the FAO.

The Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security, which was launched in 2016 with the Republic of Senegal, also aims to support sustainability, stability and security in Africa through agriculture.

More recently, Morocco and the United Nations jointly organized the Africa regional dialogue prior to the United Nations Food Systems Summit, bringing together more than 40 African ministers and decision-makers to shed light on priorities, opportunities and paths of action for a successful transformation of food systems in Africa in a manner that reflects the constrained global context.

In conclusion, Morocco remains convinced that innovative partnerships in this area can help to deepen and build promising synergies. Effective cooperation among the United Nations, Member States and the private sector is vital if we wish to achieve that goal. It is through innovative partnerships among all those stakeholders that we can aspire to eradicate hunger throughout the world, strengthen agricultural sovereignty within countries, generate quality food locally, effectively and sustainably, and confront the multiple, interdependent challenges to food security and international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Takht Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Food insecurity and conflict are inextricably linked. Disruption in supply chains, mass displacement of people, increased pressure on limited natural and economic resources and decreased resilience of affected populations constitute long-term effects of conflicts.

According to the *Global Report on Food Crises* for 2022, acute food insecurity has increased significantly over the past six years. In 2021, nearly 193 million people in 53 countries were acutely food insecure and in need of immediate assistance, including nearly 40 million people in 36 countries who were in emergency or worse conditions. According to the same report, conflict is still the leading cause of food insecurity for 139 million people in 24 countries who faced a crisis or worsening

conditions in 2021. Those figures point to a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation around the world.

Food insecurity, climate change, the coronavirus disease pandemic and the negative effects of various international conflicts all affect many countries, including Iran, which has also been suffering from United States sanctions for more than four decades. Furthermore, hosting several million refugees has put a strain on Iran's economy, including its food supply. It is incumbent upon the United Nations, the international community and international donors to honour their commitments and provide refugees based in Iran with the required technical and financial assistance.

The entire world is being affected by food shortages; however, there is no doubt that Africa is suffering very much from food insecurity.

Let me say a few words about the situation of food security in our region. In Afghanistan, there are 22 million people who are food insecure and in desperate need of assistance. Iran is collaborating with international organizations to address Afghanistan's specific food security situation. Under the current challenging circumstances, the international community is expected to assist the Afghan people in overcoming its current difficulties.

In another hotspot in our region, acute food insecurity in Yemen worsened in early 2022, with an 8 per cent increase in the number of people in need as compared to early 2021. Equally important is the humanitarian situation in Palestine, which has deteriorated due to decades of occupation and apartheid policies under the Israeli regime. The illegal blockade of Gaza, which severely limits the Palestinian people's right to food, must be lifted as soon as possible.

In Syria, continuing occupation, terrorism and unilateral sanctions have displaced millions of people, disrupted trade and the supply of food and agricultural inputs, damaged infrastructure and limited access to vital resources.

Unilateral coercive measures violate basic human rights, including the right to food, resulting in food insecurity. Unfortunately, certain States continue to use those unlawful actions, prohibited under international humanitarian law, as a weapon to starve the population of targeted countries. We believe that food supply and chain processes must not be disrupted in any way, even during armed conflicts.

In that context, full adherence to international law, particularly the 1949 Geneva Conventions, is essential. Furthermore, United Nations sanctions should not be imposed in such a way as to jeopardize global food security. All parties to a conflict must respect and protect all medical and humanitarian personnel. When providing humanitarian assistance, the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence must also be observed.

Finally, we support the efforts and leadership of the United Nations in addressing the problems related to food insecurity. We stand ready to assist in those efforts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Ms. Oehri (Liechtenstein): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely open debate on conflict and food security.

The growing attention being paid to this issue is indeed justified. Food insecurity is at an all-time high, and the number of people requiring urgent life-saving food assistance is rising at an alarming rate. On a planet where we have enough food to feed everyone, last year 193 million people were considered as being in crisis or as having a more serious food security designation by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Liechtenstein is particularly concerned about so-called hunger hotspots, including Yemen, Nigeria, South Sudan and Ethiopia, as well as the many countries at risk of an acute hunger crisis. Without concerted action, the devastating impact of hunger will soon be felt by millions more people.

The war in Ukraine continues to have devastating humanitarian consequences, not only for the people of Ukraine and of the region but indeed around the globe. The people of Ukraine, one of the world's largest food producers, have seen their lives and livelihoods destroyed. And although Ukraine's grain silos are full, as reported by the World Food Programme, their supplies cannot reach the millions of people worldwide who depend on them.

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Group of Seven to highlight the urgency of the issue and hope for a solution that unblocks food supplies while guaranteeing the safety of the port of Odesa. In addition to this acute crisis, the massive displacement and destruction of infrastructure, as well as rising grain

and fertilizer prices, are disrupting Ukraine's planting season, which will lead to even more catastrophic food shortages in the future.

The unprovoked, unacceptable aggression against Ukraine must end immediately, and the relevant General Assembly resolutions must be implemented, including with regard to the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian military forces from the territory of Ukraine as a matter of urgent priority.

Food insecurity is also a crisis in the area of the protection of civilians. While hunger is an appalling side effect of many armed conflicts, it is in fact often not just that. Starving people, and civilian populations in particular, into submission has become a shocking pattern of warfare. The intentional starvation of civilians is a grave violation of international humanitarian law and must be prosecuted as a war crime, including through the International Criminal Court.

The challenges the world faces today — food insecurity, climate disaster, displacement and conflict — are interconnected. Their causes and effects are interlaced and felt widely. Without immediate actions to address human contributions to climate change, extreme weather events will become even more frequent and bring further disruptions to the global food supply, displacement and social and political instability.

Relevant United Nations bodies and agencies must work together closely to reverse those trends. We welcome the establishment of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance and the publication of its first brief. However, more holistic action to uphold human security is needed by the international community. This is the time to work together urgently to ensure that no one starves today and to achieve zero hunger by 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Mr. Malovrh (Slovenia): This debate is being held in a particular setting, as the month of May marks the fourth anniversary of the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2417 (2018), which not only recognized the link between armed conflict and conflict-induced food insecurity, including the threat of famine, but also enabled the Council with the tools to respond and

act when conflict-induced famine or risk of famine is taking place.

Sadly, at this time we also observe a sharp increase in global food insecurity — a trend that threatens to even further destabilize societies that are already fragile, as well as to exacerbate armed conflicts and regional and global instability. We would therefore like to thank the presidency and the members of the Security Council for bringing the topic of conflict and hunger to the agenda of the Security Council.

Alarming reports from the United Nations system as well as civil society highlight the need for the international community to act and to reverse the current trends, which could turn out to be one of the most food-insecure years on the global scale. Food systems are complex and interconnected, depending on a variety of factors, including the environmental, social, economic and political surroundings, as well as the rising number of severe and protracted conflicts, such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Haiti, Yemen, Afghanistan and other places — to name a few.

Furthermore, the unprovoked Russian military aggression against Ukraine introduces yet another layer of extreme food insecurity on a global level, and it is crucial that that aggression end as soon as possible.

At the beginning of April, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimated that the potential direct damage to Ukrainian agriculture assets was about \$6.4 billion. The damage to Ukraine's agricultural capacities is increasing by the day. Slovenia is deeply concerned about the Russian blockade of Ukrainian ports, which prevents vital shipments of agricultural products from Ukraine. As a result, millions of people around the world who are already experiencing dire circumstances will also face the shattering consequences of food insecurity. Slovenia is ready to assist in the consideration of alternative logistics routes for the export of agricultural products from Ukraine.

Remembering the words of the Secretary-General — if you do not feed people, you feed conflict (see S/2021/250) — it is our hope that the international community will act together in order to halt and reverse global food insecurity and prevent even further destabilization of fragile environments, with the most vulnerable, including women and girls, often suffering the most. In that context, we welcome the efforts by the Group of Seven, the Group of 20 and the FAO. Slovenia

is actively supporting the variety of measures and help provided by the European Union and its member States.

We also support the whole-of-United Nations approach when discussing the causes and impacts of food insecurity. Each United Nations body has a specific role to play in solving this complex challenge. Improved coordination and response systems, better data and decision-making processes, as well as strengthened multi-stakeholder partnerships, are our collective targets. Including civil society can help not only to better understand local contexts but also to find better solutions. So can capacity- and resilience-building among the vulnerable. Immediate help to the most vulnerable should go hand in hand with resilience-building, wherever possible.

We will eventually all feel the consequences of the current conditions on the food markets. Yet the least developed and low-income food-deficit countries, as well as persons in vulnerable situations, will probably bear the heaviest immediate burden. Since 2014, Slovenia has doubled its contribution to food security. Addressing food insecurity and hunger presents a priority in our disaster risk reduction and resilience activities as well as our humanitarian activities in general. We support the efforts of the World Food Programme and the FAO in protracted and under-financed humanitarian crises in all regions — from Yemen and Afghanistan to the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

In conclusion, Slovenia is of the firm belief that effectively addressing the issue of hunger is a foundation for stability and peace. The interconnected nature of food security and the fragile state of the current global system demand that we all show solidarity and renewed commitment to multilateralism.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Larbaoui (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to the presidency of the Security Council for convening this open debate on food security and conflict, which undoubtedly is of extreme importance due to the state of malnutrition and starvation resulting from conflicts throughout the world. Millions of persons every day face the danger of famine in the light of the lack of immediate measures, which further diverts us from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, namely, to eliminate hunger by 2030.

In that context, I would like to express to you, Mr. President, and to the United States Government our sincere thanks and great appreciation for the announcement of additional aid that will be offered to African States through the urgent and comprehensive food aid pledged in order to alleviate the impact on recipient countries of the crisis in Ukraine and the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The alarming reality, as indicated by the report on the status of food security and nutrition in 2021, confirmed that the past 10 years have witnessed a notable increase in conflicts and their severity, as well as in climate impacts and economic decline, which worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All of that has led to an increase in the levels of hunger and has undermined much of the progress that was made in eliminating various forms of malnutrition, especially in low- and middle-income States.

There are disparities from one region to another. Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions, as most of its peoples suffer from the scourge of conflicts and related crises, placing many African States outside the category of those countries in which less than 25 per cent of their total population suffer from malnutrition. That was indicated by the World Food Programme for the period 2018 to 2020 and shows that malnutrition has become endemic in the region and requires a comprehensive approach.

Moreover, the instability in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa regions greatly impacts the food security of the countries of those regions and their populations and is the cause of rising food insecurity there, as attested to in reports of the United Nations. Those conflicts not only impact agricultural productivity but also limit the ability of institutions to deal with malnutrition and deliver the necessary humanitarian aid to those who need it. Algeria spares no efforts in offering the necessary food aid to neighbouring countries in the Sahel, and we are implementing development projects that aim to improve the living conditions of the population and guarantee their food security.

It is important to adopt comprehensive measures to break the link between conflicts and food insecurity by guaranteeing the delivery of food to everyone and addressing the root causes of food insecurity, especially those related to sustainable development and the elimination of poverty, as well as by strengthening production and supply chains. The suffering of a certain

region due to the escalation of violence makes the fight against starvation more difficult but at the same time more urgent. In that context, I wish to underscore the following basic issues.

First, we must respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law in preventing food insecurity and famine, while facilitating the safe and unobstructed access of humanitarian workers to those who need humanitarian assistance, in accordance with resolution 2417 (2018), which underscores the need to guarantee the delivery of food products to areas of conflict. Therefore, civilians must not be deprived of humanitarian assistance and basic supplies. The necessary funding for humanitarian operations must also be guaranteed.

Secondly, it is necessary to build lasting peace through permanent solutions that put an end to the vicious cycles of violence that some States are experiencing. That must be done in a manner that facilitates the establishment of strong governmental institutions that are able to meet the basic needs of the population, especially in terms of nutrition. Dealing with malnutrition requires the actions of many sectors, including the health care, education and water sectors, and also requires a coordinated response among all of those sectors in order to address the main points of weakness and remedy them in a comprehensive and sustainable way.

We must build partnerships to meet increasing needs by giving a role to all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations, in order to alleviate the humanitarian burden imposed by crises and deal with the factors that limit States' ability to guarantee food security. We must develop local agricultural and nutritional systems so that they become an engine for economic growth, while giving them due attention and importance.

We can build on this year's Food Systems Summit, and its recommendations could be a means to establish stronger and more resilient food systems that take into consideration the specificity of every State and guarantee collective food security. We must support developing countries, especially those in conflict areas, by offering them funding, technological assistance and capacity-building in order to enhance their food production abilities and to assist them in achieving as much self-sufficiency as possible, as a guarantor of security and stability.

All must meet their pledges to fight the impact of climate change, which is directly linked to, and one of the main causes of, food insecurity throughout the world. Therefore, it is important to implement all the obligations resulting from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Furthermore, we must enhance the capacities of countries, especially developing countries, to deal with the impacts of climate change and achieve food security.

In conclusion, we believe that the only way to break the link between conflicts and food insecurity is by putting an end to crises and achieving sustainable development, as provided under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 2, on eliminating hunger. We call on the Council to work more closely with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in order to further promote humanitarian solutions that meet the basic needs of persons in situations of conflict. We also call for a comprehensive approach to deal with the real and root causes of these conflicts so that the United Nations can achieve its noble goals for lasting peace and sustainable development.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

Mr. Kuymizakis (Malta): Malta thanks the United States for organizing this timely debate on conflict and food security. We also thank Ireland for organizing the Arria Formula meeting in April, which gave us another opportunity to discuss this important matter. We are firm in our belief that the Security Council must continue to give this issue the attention it deserves.

As we have seen in various conflict areas around the globe, conflict has grave and lasting consequences for food security. Compounded by the coronavirus disease pandemic and the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events resulting from climate change, that can lead to serious long-term repercussions that can also spill over to other countries of the region and beyond.

Food insecurity reinforces and exposes inequalities that exist among and within populations. Up to 811 million people are known to be undernourished, with 60 per cent of the world's most hungry living in areas of conflict. This year alone may produce an additional increase of 13.1 million undernourished people as a result of war. A look at the situations in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia, Somalia, South

Sudan and Haiti clearly illustrates the gravity and urgency of the situation.

Food insecurity also highlights the evident disproportionate impacts borne by women and girls, especially in agricultural areas, where rural women account for nearly half the agricultural workforce in developing countries. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for children to find themselves becoming the head of a household and taking on the responsibility for acquiring food and water, which may be extremely challenging, including due to security issues.

The unjustified and unprovoked aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine continues to negatively impact food systems worldwide, with alarming cascading impacts on import-dependent countries. The sharp and sudden increase in the price of staple commodities threatens our collective achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 2, and more broadly the survival and livelihood of millions of people worldwide.

Malta is fully committed to coordinating efforts for mitigating the current food crisis, which is why we welcome the recent establishment of the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance upon the initiative of the Secretary-General. We believe that multilateralism, accompanied by a multistakeholder approach, is our best option.

Let us recall the importance of resolutions 2417 (2018) and 2573 (2021) to ensure that the narrative on the nexus between conflict and hunger remains on our agenda. Those tools must also be supported by our commitment and political will, based on the most up-to-date data and evidence-based policy recommendations.

Should Malta be entrusted to serve as an elected member of the Security Council for the period 2023 to 2024, we will continue to stress the importance of slowing and reversing the consequences of global food insecurity, especially in fragile communities and conflict-affected countries. We will also continue to call on all parties in conflict areas to ensure the rapid and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, including food, to those in need.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Mr. Espinosa Cañizares (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador greatly appreciates that the decision

was made under the current presidency to organize this meeting in an open and inclusive format, allowing concerned delegations to contribute to the debate on the maintenance of international peace and security, including civilian protection efforts, which the Security Council will also focus on next week.

During the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Quito from 28 March to 1 April, the Director-General of the FAO warned about the increase in hunger and food insecurity in my region. That brings me to a subject that requires greater efforts from the Council. According to the report of the Secretary-General of 15 February (S/2022/117), this year more than 40 per cent of Haitians will need humanitarian assistance, with 4.4 million experiencing food insecurity and more than 19,000 displaced by gang violence. That contrasts with the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/66) on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, which reflects a decline in official development assistance. The same report acknowledges that conflict-induced food insecurity and hunger are the main drivers of humanitarian needs, and that according to estimates by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 84 million people have been forcibly displaced because of violence or conflict. Desertification, drought and the loss of biodiversity also exacerbate food insecurity. The fact that those issues are interrelated means that they require a coordinated international response that includes the involvement of the United Nations system, Member States and other stakeholders.

Ecuador continues to be concerned about the situation in Yemen, Syria and South Sudan, to cite only a few cases. On 11 March 2021, owing to its global impact, the coronavirus disease pandemic added a new dimension to the issues before the Security Council and to the Council's discussions of them. And despite expectations created for humankind through so-called awareness-raising and the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, food security throughout the world continues to deteriorate because of protracted and new conflicts.

With the adoption of resolution ES-11/2, on the humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine, at the General Assembly's eleventh emergency special session, we recalled the links between conflicts and the threat of famine, while stressing that food

insecurity can lead to forced displacement and, conversely, that forced displacement in countries in armed conflict can have devastating effects on agricultural production and the means of subsistence. The impact of the military aggression against Ukraine has led to an increase in global food insecurity, and its repercussions are being felt in Ecuador, too. We call for an end to it and to all conflicts. We further condemn and reject the practice of starving civilians as a method of warfare. We reiterate the importance of protecting civilians in armed conflict, in line with presidential statement S/PRST/2020/6 of 29 April 2020 and resolution 2417 (2018), whose fourth anniversary we will commemorate on 24 May.

The protection of civilians and peacekeeping are two major goals that Ecuador would like to see achieved in the Security Council, to which we hope to be elected as a non-permanent member for the 2023-2024 term, and we will therefore prioritize the issue of hunger and food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Fiji.

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I am honoured to be delivering this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Pacific Islands Forum with a presence here at the United Nations. I want to express the Pacific Islands Forum members' appreciation to the United States and to Secretary of State Anthony Blinken for convening and presiding over this high-level open debate, and to thank our briefers from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme for their excellent contributions this morning.

The invasion of Ukraine has fuelled a grave humanitarian crisis. It has dangerously increased the pressure on global food markets, which were already struggling with soaring prices, supply-chain disruptions and an uneven recovery from the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Our Blue Pacific continent, of which we are all members, is already facing substantially higher fuel, fertilizer and food prices. All of that is contributing to a growing problem of food shortages. A prolonged conflict will derail our tenuous economic recovery and pose a significant threat to our sustainable development efforts. Most Pacific island countries are importers of food and energy. Rising prices for both inflicts significant hardships on families and communities that

are already suffering from the effects of COVID-19 and recent disasters, especially those who lost jobs during the pandemic.

The conflict in Ukraine is exacerbating supply-chain disruptions. The relentless increases in energy prices and shipping and manufacturing costs have hit small island States especially hard. Tonga, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and several other Pacific countries have seen the price of fuel and essential food products increase several times over since the beginning of the conflict. That hurts Pacific island countries in another way, through higher transportation and fuel costs and the impact on their fisheries, which many Pacific countries rely on heavily for food security and their economic development. The western and central Pacific Ocean accounts for almost 60 per cent of the global tuna catch, around two thirds of which is taken from the waters of Forum member countries — and on behalf of which I am making this statement — and makes a significant contribution to the diets of people in other parts of the world, as well as being a critical part of our island economies.

Our primary concern must be an immediate cessation of hostilities in Ukraine, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to the areas affected and a withdrawal of military forces in accordance with internationally recognized borders as soon as possible. We must make every effort to promote resilience in global food-supply networks. In doing so, however, we cannot afford to limit resources and attention to our other major challenges, including COVID-19 recovery and climate change, which remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods and security of Pacific island peoples.

I would now like to make a few remarks in my national capacity as the Permanent Representative of Fiji.

The world is facing a volatile cocktail of COVID-19, climate and food security crises. The skyrocketing prices of essential items are a gut punch to our import-dependent island State. The war in Ukraine is having an intense impact on small island States such as ours, and all of that is coming at a time when we are struggling with the devastating effects of climate and COVID-19. Since signing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Fiji has faced 14 cyclones that have collectively wiped out close to 50 per cent of our gross domestic product and decimated the livelihoods of a large proportion of

our population. We have used every fiscal resource we can muster to respond to those challenges, but the global food crisis has also exposed something we have known for a long time, which is that the global financial architecture is largely broken. It does not work for States. We need a global financial architecture that can respond at the speed and scale appropriate to a global crisis such as the one that we are discussing today.

Sadly, we are also witnessing fractures that are similar to what we saw in the early phase of COVID-19, when many countries locked in supplies, prohibited exports and added a slew of restrictive trade practices. Once again, those hit small States the hardest. As a reminder, with regard to climate change, even at an increase of 1.2°C, where we are now, large food exporters are facing devastating heatwaves that are having an adverse impact on food exports. We have been reminding the Security Council and the global community that a temperature rise above 1.5°C poses a threat to the global food supply, and that increases beyond that level could lead to irreversible changes in food security.

During earlier discussions on climate and security, many countries have argued that there is growing evidence that repeated climate catastrophes are transforming stable regions into ones that face heightened instability and fragility. We are witnessing new threats to peace and security, and this one comes from food. The way in which the Security Council takes forward the advice of so many Member States will shape the world's ability to come up with an effective, substantial response to more diverse security threats.

The United Nations cannot permit and must not accept the weaponization of food that is under way. It must be called out and condemned. Unfair trade practices that restrict a country's ability to access food and other essential commodities must be called out. We support the Secretary-General's efforts through the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, which we hope and expect will lead to a substantial, speedy and coherent global response at the scale needed to tackle this most urgent challenge of our time.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

Mr. Skoog: Conflict remains the main driver of food insecurity. Russia's war on Ukraine has caused

an unprecedented surge in global food prices, on top of the already devastating effects of the coronavirus disease pandemic and climate change. It is therefore crucial to put an end to Russia's aggression and to the suffering of the Ukrainian people, as well as to avoid the consequences for global food security of a protracted war. And we should be clear that blaming sanctions for increased global food prices is a weak attempt to conceal the truth and divert action from where it is needed. Our sanctions target the Kremlin's ability to finance the aggression against Ukraine and its people and are carefully crafted to ensure that they do not affect the agricultural sector. What we heard today from Russia about some supposed grain-for-weapons scheme by the West is yet another item to add to a long list of disinformation.

It is now more than ever time to show solidarity. The world can count on the support of the European Union (EU). Whenever and wherever our solidarity is needed, we will deliver. We support the work led by the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, and our 27 member States have sponsored the draft resolution on food security submitted by Lebanon (A/76/L.55) to draw the attention of the international community to the food crisis and identify ways to address it. We are taking a number of short- and medium-term actions to alleviate food insecurity.

First, we are doing everything in our power to ease the pressure on global food markets. Last week we launched an action plan on EU-Ukraine solidarity lanes to create alternative logistic routes and make sure that much-needed grain can be exported from Ukraine to the rest of the world while the Black Sea routes remain blocked by the aggressor. All alternative transport modes are being mobilized to maximum capacity. We support all efforts aimed at finding ways to unblock the sea routes. And restoring well-functioning markets is also key. Within the Group of Seven, we have committed to keeping our food and agricultural markets open and we urge other large producing countries to do the same. We advocate against export restrictions and for an open, transparent and predictable trade environment.

Secondly, we are ramping up our humanitarian assistance. Our responses are tailored to country and regional needs. In our efforts to help, we must ensure that local production and livelihoods are safeguarded. That is why, where feasible, we prefer cash-based programmes to shipments of food from other areas.

In April we pledged more than €1 billion to address food insecurity in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions, and €644 million to address acute food insecurity and strengthen resilience in the Horn of Africa.

For our Southern Neighbourhood partners, the EU foresees nearly €1 billion in grants to strengthen food security and social protection. Food affordability is another short-term priority, especially for middle- and low-income countries, 60 per cent of which are already in debt distress or at high risk of such distress. The impact of the war in Ukraine on food and commodity prices will further exacerbate that trend, which is why we need to identify solutions to address their situation as quickly as possible. The EU response will support the fiscal and macroeconomic stability of those countries and prop up their international reserves to enable them to pay for crucial food and energy imports, while providing the fiscal means and capacity to put in place adequate social transfers. More specifically, we are looking at rechannelling advanced economies' special drawing rights, making use of existing International Monetary Fund instruments.

Thirdly, in the medium and long term, we are supporting countries in developing resilient and sustainable agricultural and aquatic food systems. As part of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the EU will invest in family farmers and small-scale food actors, local and regional supply chains and ecosystem-based approaches.

We all have to step up our humanitarian assistance, but humanitarian aid alone is not a sustainable solution. It is an emergency step. For long-term recovery, the EU's development aid is ready to pick up the baton and address the root causes of food insecurity. The EU Green Deal and our farm-to-fork and biodiversity strategies continue to guide our response.

In conclusion, I want to stress again that the world can continue to count on our support. Our actions are anchored in the multilateral system. We strongly support the leadership of the United Nations in responding to the global food security crisis in a comprehensive way. Together with our partners, we will continue to ensure a coordinated and unified response.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cyprus.

Mr. Hadjichrysanthou (Cyprus): My delegation is grateful for this timely debate on the issue of conflict

and food security, and I would like to add some remarks to those made by the observer of the European Union.

While the conflict-hunger nexus is a long-standing one, with millions having been affected for decades by hunger resulting from conflict, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme have reported a significant increase in acute food insecurity in recent years, confirming at the same time that conflict is its main driver. The challenge before us is two-pronged. First there is hunger that threatens civilians in armed conflict, including as a tactic of warfare, and secondly there is hunger that affects populations beyond a particular conflict situation owing to disruptions in the food production and supply chains caused by that conflict.

Through its resolution 2417 (2018), the Council condemned starvation as a weapon of war, reflecting the relevant obligations of States under international humanitarian law, while other related developments include the 2019 amendment to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court that designated the intentional use of starvation of civilians as a war crime, including in non-international conflict.

The second challenge remains unaddressed. The conflict in Ukraine, in addition to affecting its own population, has exacerbated food shortages in other conflict and non-conflict situations. It comes on the heels of the disruptions caused by a severe pandemic and the worsening impact of climate change, compounding disruptions to supply chains and increasing pressure on natural resources. In the first instance, the Council must act to stop the conflict while ensuring that its humanitarian impact on other conflicts is not exacerbated and that the food insecurity it generates does not create new conflicts or unrest. Given the significant reliance on Ukraine's grain and wheat, we support efforts to reintegrate its agricultural production into world markets for the benefit of the producing country and the populations most at risk.

Our planning, however, must incorporate solutions for a scenario in which food production comes to a halt as a result of conflict — something that cannot be excluded. Contingency planning could also seek to align grain stocks with countries' needs, with particular allocations made to existing conflicts afflicted by food crises. In addition, the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, whose establishment and work we welcome, could go beyond the task of

alleviating the current crisis and extrapolate lessons learned to create a blueprint for a comprehensive strategy to prevent and tackle similar situations.

The Group's analysis that 1.7 billion people live in countries whose economies are severely exposed to at least one of the three crises — food, energy or finance — shows how precarious the global situation is. The fact that a third of those people are already poor and 215 million are already undernourished points to a particular failure to account for multiple vulnerabilities. We therefore support a global call for collective action on food security, based on solidarity and the primacy of humanism in international cooperation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Massari (Italy): While aligning itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, Italy would like to add a few remarks in its national capacity.

We appreciate the initiative of the United States presidency of the Security Council to convene today's open debate at a time of increased food insecurity, aggravated by the direct impact of conflicts and now, in particular, by Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine, with its clear global effects on the food security of so many countries in the most vulnerable regions or the world.

After decades of promising trends, progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 2, on zero hunger, has reversed and we now see millions of people affected by food insecurity, hunger and famine. We are far from reaching the goal of zero hunger. We need urgent action to reverse the trend and preserve our 2030 horizon.

Today, against the pre-existing incredibly fragile global context, challenged by the effects of the pandemic, climate change and extreme weather conditions on food systems, Russia's war against Ukraine poses an extraordinary and additional threat to global food security. The impact of the war on global food supply chains now directly threatens at least 50 million people in the most vulnerable countries, not to mention the wider effects of record high prices of food in the global markets. This situation requires urgent and decisive action on multiple fronts.

First, we need to ensure that food currently blocked in Ukraine can flow and reach its destinations, especially in Africa, the Mediterranean and Central

Asia. The blockade of ports, such as the port of Odesa, is a matter of a very serious concern, and we urgently need to find cooperative solutions to ensure the safe passage of food to the world. We condemn attacks on key infrastructure, the looting of food destined for abroad and attacks on agriculture and civilian facilities.

Italy calls for and supports the creation of food corridors to be agreed among the parties, with the support and coordination of the United Nations, including in the context of the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy, and Finance, in order to allow maritime and land routes to work and deliver in the interest of millions of people.

In same vein, we support the initiative of the European Commission to establish solidarity lanes in order to facilitate the shipping of Ukrainian goods to the rest of the world by using alternative routes through European Union member States. Starving millions of people in the world and risking further socioeconomic disruption or the destabilization of fragile countries and regions is in no one's interest.

Food security remains a fundamental priority for Italy and a key objective of our foreign policy and international cooperation action. Yesterday Italy's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Luigi Di Maio, announced an additional financial contribution to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Food Coalition to support Ukraine's food production capabilities. We also signed the Road Map for Global Food Security — Call to Action, in which we reaffirmed the commitment to acting with urgency at scale and in concert to respond to the urgent food security needs.

We are actively contributing to the Group of Seven initiative to launch a global alliance for food security, including building on pledges made at last year's United Nations Food System Summit and focusing on supporting the most vulnerable countries, including in particular in Africa and the Middle East. In that context, as announced yesterday, on 8 June Italy will convene a Mediterranean ministerial dialogue on food crises to engage all stakeholders and address key vulnerabilities within the region. We also need to work for long-term, sustainable solutions and solve the root causes of hunger and food insecurity. We need to forge effective partnerships with all stakeholders to address the short-, medium- and long-term effects of food insecurity.

We call on all relevant United Nations organs and entities to increase action on food insecurity, in particular along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and in close synergy with the leading action of the Rome-based agencies. We will continue to support the United Nations system and its multilateral action at this complex and challenging juncture. We stand ready to intensify our collective work in our capacity Chair of the Group of Friends of Food Security and Nutrition here in New York.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Venezuela.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The issue being debated today suffers from a structural contradiction caused by those who convened today's meeting. There is a clear contradiction in raising the issue of growing global food insecurity while also imposing unilateral coercive measures on more than 20 Members of the Organization, which represent a third of the planet's population. It is not possible to propose solutions to the global food crisis and at the same time contravene the Charter of the United Nations and international law, threaten international peace and security and violate the human rights of entire peoples, in particular the right to food.

Unilateral coercive measures are a planned and deliberate violation of human rights and the right to food. They are a policy of aggression that has worsened during the global economic recession and the humanitarian emergency caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Those measures are part of a hostile strategy that applies maximum pressure and is aimed at the economic suffocation and international isolation of States. The goal is to inflict the greatest possible suffering, exacerbate the living conditions of populations and cause internal upheaval that facilitates regime change within sovereign States. They are a tool used to achieve geopolitical domination to advance the selfish interests of a Power bloc with global ambitions.

Unilateral coercive measures are weapons of economic warfare that obstruct access to financial systems, literally steal the international reserves of entire nations, violate the supply chains of national and international food systems and increase global food instability. Contrary to what the offending States say, food and medicines are not exempt from so-called sanctions, and the so-called humanitarian exemptions are actually non-existent and ineffective, as independent

United Nations experts have acknowledged. In that context, we recall that, at its second International Conference on Nutrition, the World Health Organization acknowledged that

“trade is a key element in achieving food security and nutrition for all, through a system of fair and market-oriented global trade”.

Furthermore, it underscored

“the need to refrain from imposing measures that are not in line with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and that endanger food security and nutrition”.

The adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures on global food security is therefore clear.

Several countries can help increase the stability of international food security if they are allowed to fully develop their capacities. Venezuela is one example. The African continent is another example. Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents in the current crisis and, at the same time, has enormous productive potential that could be unleashed under the right conditions. However, that is an impossible plan under the oppression of coercive measures. The truth is that today there are at least eight countries in Africa on the list of States on which the Government of the United States of America illegally imposes unilateral coercive measures. It is impossible to promote the fight against hunger while at the same time punishing the economies of the most vulnerable countries to obtain geopolitical advantages. And neither is it possible to purport to express concerns about food security when at the same time food is disregarded as an inalienable human right.

Climate change, economic crises, armed conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic are factors that exacerbate global food insecurity. The conflict in Eastern Europe is a new disturbing factor. The response to that new crisis must be to unleash the food production potential of the entire world, as well as to increase international trade, in order to reduce the risk of food shortages in the coming months and years. However, in complete contradiction to that aim, the largest set of unilateral coercive measures since the Second World War has been imposed. The planned isolation of the Russian Federation to worsen the living conditions of its people, with the aim of provoking regime change, is an unacceptable proposal from every point of view: be it moral, legal, economic, rational or simply human.

Worse still, the coercion exerted on the rest of the world to prevent legal trade with Russia and cruelly sacrifice its peoples is not only illegal, but also imposes unacceptable risks to the food, social and political security of hundreds of millions of people in developing countries. That is not the way to resolve the looming global food crisis.

Global food security is complex, and many steps must be taken to avoid the most pessimistic predictions. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that any plan to face the food crisis that overlooks the destructive impact of unilateral coercive measures and does not propose their complete and immediate elimination is neither sincere nor credible and, above all, doomed to failure. It will be yet another manoeuvre to take selfish national advantage of an international crisis.

For all those reasons the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela proposes the lifting of the unilateral coercive measures illegally imposed against States Members of the United Nations, as an urgent step and as part of the global plan that must be adopted to face the imminent food crisis that we are all going to suffer, whether as a result of shortages or inflation.

It is time to strengthen our national food systems as essential parts of a larger global economic fabric that allows access to capital, technology, energy, seeds, fertilizers, transportation and distribution to thereby increase our capacity to resolve this new crisis. It is time for cooperation, solidarity and joint action — without exception — to put an end to world hunger.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria.

Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to express our appreciation to the United States for the timely organization of this open debate on an issue of global significance, namely, food security. I would also like to thank all the briefers who, unfortunately, painted a reality that is so devastating that it defies even the worst nightmares. The statistics on affected people are so shocking that they stop making sense.

As it was highlighted, we have been facing the “perfect storm”, to use the words of Executive Director Beasley, for a while now — Yemen, Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria, Ethiopia — the list is not exhaustive — have all been experiencing food insecurity and, in some cases,

famine. Conflict, with all its devastating consequences, remains the key driver in exacerbating the food crisis, both as a cause and effect. Every conflict has a disruptive effect on vital infrastructure, including on agricultural infrastructure; limits the ability of people to move freely, to trade and to access markets; and forces people to flee their homes, their livelihoods and to abandon their land.

Climate change and the coronavirus disease pandemic have also significantly exacerbated food insecurity and have unfortunately left the most vulnerable furthest behind.

Against that already bleak backdrop, the unprovoked, illegal and unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has added a whole new dimension. In its war of choice, the Russian Federation has made food insecurity its weapon of choice. By blocking access to the ports, thereby preventing exports of Ukrainian grain, it is effectively sentencing to hunger several hundred million and is affecting the livelihoods of 1.7 billion people globally, according to the report of the Global Crisis Response Group. That should stop now.

As an immediate step, it is essential that the Russian Federation lift the blockades of the ports, so that Ukraine can export its grain and prepare for the next harvest. In that regard, we commend the Secretary-General’s efforts to ensure food corridors.

More broadly, food insecurity should be tackled by means of a significant increase in investment in agricultural production. Innovation and technological advancements coupled with the right allocation of resources would make the agricultural sector more resilient.

Supporting the most vulnerable is an essential element in fighting food insecurity. The speed and efficiency of emergency supplies to those at risk of hunger and malnutrition will determine whether political stability in many parts of the world will be maintained.

Last but not least, underpinning the global effort to avert a food crisis should be a multi-stakeholder approach. We need civil society and the private sector to work alongside public authorities in addressing the challenges associated with food insecurity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We welcome the presence of His Excellency the Secretary of State of the United States this morning. We commend the initiative to convene this important meeting. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for their valuable participation.

The factors affecting food security are multiple and varied. They include armed conflict, economic challenges, the energy crisis and the disruption of the supply chain, as a result of the coronavirus disease pandemic, in addition to the effects of climate change. The effects of conflict are not limited to conflict areas, but they extend beyond them, especially in the light of trade globalization.

Developing countries are always vulnerable in emergency situations, and that often leads to lower levels of food security. Currently, 69 developing countries are affected by food insecurity, as well as other factors, including the energy crisis and difficult financial conditions. Most of those countries are in the Arab region, where most of the population suffers from some form of food insecurity.

The State of Qatar is committed to meeting its humanitarian responsibility in response to famine and food insecurity. Hence, we have directed much of our international humanitarian assistance towards addressing hunger and lack of food. That is done through cooperation with the United Nations, as we believe the Organization plays a central role in addressing crises, including food insecurity. We also believe that those efforts will contribute to reducing risk of instability, lack of security and peace.

In November 2021, the Qatar Fund for Development signed an agreement with the World Food Programme to provide \$90 million in financial contributions for food security assistance to more than 7 million people in need of food in the brotherly country of Yemen.

In Afghanistan, the State of Qatar has contributed since August 2021 to the provision of urgent humanitarian aid, including food, through an air bridge from Qatar to Kabul transporting hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid. And we are currently working

on the rehabilitation of the Kabul airport, which will contribute to facilitating the entry of food commodities.

The State of Qatar has recognized the importance of ensuring food security and has given it the priority it deserves, both at the national and international levels, through deliberate and continued measures by the Government, including significant investment in food research, agriculture policies, irrigation infrastructure and market updates, as well as the rehabilitation of roads, ports and strategic storage reserves. Consequently, the State of Qatar ranked highest among the Arab States in the Global Food Security Index last year. And we have shared our experience with other countries. In February, Doha hosted the Strategic Commodities and Food Safety Forum in cooperation with the Islamic Organization for Food Security.

At the international level and within the framework of the State of Qatar's commitment to cooperation and collective action to face common challenges, His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, has launched an initiative to establish the Global Dryland Alliance, a mechanism aimed at filling gaps in research, strategies and policies to enable dryland countries to achieve food security and to share knowledge and best practices to help develop countries' abilities to prevent food crises and to exchange assistance. The Alliance was established in Doha in 2017, and the General Assembly has granted the Alliance observer status.

Recognizing the important role played by non-State actors in strengthening flexibility and addressing food insecurity worldwide, the Qatar Fund for Development and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced recently a strategic partnership, called "Nanmo", or "growing together" in Arabic. Nanmo invests in technologies and agricultural tools capable of adapting to climate change in order to find resilient food markets that help to provide nutrition, income and economic opportunities to small-scale productive farmers and their communities in African countries. Up to \$200 million have been pledged for targeted projects. In addition, the Qatar Fund for Development has signed an agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organization to help Somalia improve its resilience to climate change and take proactive and deliberate action to respond to crises.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar will continue to give priority to addressing challenges affecting

international peace and security and the factors exacerbating humanitarian crises, including the issue of dealing with food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Ms. Bassols Delgado (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

At the beginning of 2022, the world was facing multiple crises that made it difficult to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goal 2, on zero hunger. The coronavirus disease pandemic exposed structural deficiencies in the global food system and pushed 161 million people into extreme poverty. Distortions in supply chains, increased demand for raw materials and increased public spending triggered a worldwide price spike. That is coupled with major local and regional crises such as prolonged droughts, desert locust plagues, increased violence and terrorism and conflicts. Russia's recent war of aggression in Ukraine has exacerbated pre-existing crises and has provoked an increase in grain, oil and fertilizer prices. These essential Ukrainian products are of vital importance to third countries. Spain once again condemns, in the strongest terms, this unjustified aggression. Russia's actions are damaging the international order, security and the global economy.

It is a priority to facilitate the export of Ukrainian agricultural products and support the Ukrainian economy in order to help stabilize the international agricultural market, and thus global food security. This is vital for developing countries, particularly those that are 50 to 75 per cent dependent on grain imports from Ukraine and Russia — especially when the Food and Agriculture Organization's forecasts point to additional future food price increases of between 8 per cent and 22 per cent. Preventing speculative measures and a resurgence of protectionism, as well as ensuring an effective multilateral response to food insecurity, must therefore be a priority for all of us.

Famine is a humanitarian tragedy of the first order that recalls times we thought we had left behind. A new crisis should not divert essential contributions from other forgotten and prolonged crises. Food insecurity causes social and economic tensions that increase humanitarian needs. The case of the Sahel is paradigmatic. The number of food-insecure people has quadrupled in three years. Ethiopia's Tigray area,

Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, among others, are facing catastrophic levels of food insecurity due to armed conflict and violence.

Humanitarian action in response to the food crisis must be based on the principles of neutrality, independence, impartiality and humanity, without political conditions. In that regard, allow me to recall the need to renew the cross-border assistance mechanism in Syria to alleviate the acute food needs of the population in the north-west of that country.

Let us give priority to cooperation projects linked to food security and livelihoods. In 2021, Spain's humanitarian action allocated more than €15 million to food needs in contexts such as the Sahel, Syria, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Sahrawi refugee camps, in support of the World Food Programme, Action Against Hunger and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The triple crisis — food, energy and finance — has resulted in a "perfect storm" that requires coordination among the humanitarian, development, peace and security pillars. The Global Crisis Response Group can do a great deal in this area. We must act quickly, with emergency interventions that contribute to peace and preserve the structural work of strengthening the agricultural sector of the least developed countries. Coordination with the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, among others, is essential. So too is the strengthening of global governance of the crisis and the coordination of responses through the Committee on World Food Security.

The international community has the tools to reverse these trends. Let us use them. Let us agree on global solutions. Let us immediately support small producers and family farming using the instruments of the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Let us promote efficiency and innovation in the use of agricultural products. Let us work on transforming food systems to make them more sustainable, inclusive, resilient to climate impacts and less dependent on fertilizers.

Food insecurity and conflict represent a vicious cycle, in which the former exacerbates the latter and the latter, in turn, causes the former. Food insecurity continues to be used as a weapon of war in conflicts, despite it being a violation of the basic rules of international humanitarian law. Conflict-induced

famine deepens vulnerabilities and entrenches the cycle of violence, as recognized in resolution 2417 (2018). Spain supports the collection of reliable and impartial data to provide the necessary evidence for the proper implementation and enforcement of that resolution.

Finally, it is crucial to hold accountable those who violate international norms, not only as a means of prevention and pressure, but above all because of the need to repair the damage caused to the victims.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Dominican Republic.

Ms. Andújar (Dominican Republic): We are pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the members of the Group of Friends of Action on Conflict and Hunger — Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Niger, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and my own country, the Dominican Republic.

We would like to thank the United States for convening this meeting and our briefers for their presentations. As members of the Group of Friends of Action on Conflict and Hunger, we are committed to ensuring that the issue of conflict and hunger remains high on the Security Council's agenda and beyond.

In 2018, the Security Council showed clarity and solidarity by unanimously adopting resolution 2417 (2018). The resolution underscored the imperative of the Security Council to address conflict-induced food insecurity, including famine. Resolution 2417 (2018) asks the Secretary-General to report to the Council when the risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity is taking place. While the threat to international peace and security caused by conflict-induced hunger has dropped over the past year, the Council has not held an open debate on the topic since the United States presidency in March 2021.

At that time, 139 million people were experiencing a food crisis. Today, according to the 2022 *Global Report on Food Crises*, that number has jumped to 193 million, of which around 40 million people are facing emergency level or worse conditions across 36 countries.

Indeed, 577,000 people are facing catastrophe-level starvation and death. With conflict and climate change already increasing the price of agricultural products and causing upheaval in global food-supply chains, and with the world's most vulnerable economies recovering

from the coronavirus disease, Russia's aggression against Ukraine will exacerbate the already severe 2022 acute food insecurity and malnutrition forecasts, as highlighted in the recent report of the Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group. We are deeply concerned that the report highlights the fact that food and oil price hikes are increasing the Group's monthly operational costs by up to \$71 million each month compared with 2019, effectively reducing its ability to respond to hunger crises around the world.

In September 2020, the Council received a report and briefing, triggered by resolution 2419 (2018), concerning food security risks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Yemen, north-eastern Nigeria and South Sudan. We are deeply concerned that over the last 18 months, the United Nations has not issued any follow-up report despite worsening conditions. The Group of Friends called for an update on the September 2020 white note on food security risks and for a briefing of the Security Council by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, with clear information on where the risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity is taking place. We need to know the root causes of the recent deterioration in the levels of hunger driven by conflict as well as who is blocking access and how in conflict settings. That needs to be followed by decisive action to spare civilians from the scourge of conflict and hunger and to hold those driving it accountable.

We also call on all parties to armed conflict to ensure full, safe, unimpeded humanitarian access to uphold international humanitarian law and to protect the lives and livelihoods of all civilians wherever they are, wherever they are.

In addition, we welcome various international initiatives such as the Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission, which is a robust operational road map to avoid further spikes in prices, ensure market transparency, enable a robust and efficient solidarity mechanism and enhance sustainable production.

The current rise in conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity is a man-made, unjustified and preventable tragedy. Let us act now, before it is too late for too many, especially women and children.

(spoke in Spanish)

I would now like to say a few words in my national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to thank the United States for having convened this very timely debate. As we have heard today, we are facing a critical test. Evidence has shown time and time again that armed conflicts, violence, economic crises and extreme climate events are undeniable drivers of food insecurity and threats to international peace.

The Dominican Republic believes in multilateralism, concerted action and respect for international law. That is why we are here today. The Dominican Republic also believes in early intervention to mitigate the effects of conflict.

To prevent famine, we not only need to adopt an inclusive approach to policies and investments in food systems but also to act urgently to build peace. That is the responsibility not only of the Security Council but also of all the States Members of the United Nations.

We stand ready to work closely with all those involved to promote the necessary and coherent global response to this tremendous challenge.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Yoseph (Ethiopia): We thank the United States presidency of the Security Council for this month for having organized this open debate. We also thank Mr. David Beasley of the World Food Programme; Mr. Qu Dongyu of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; and Ms. Sara Menker of Gro Intelligence for their insightful briefings this morning.

Food insecurity is one of the biggest challenges to humankind and requires collective efforts to tackle its clear and preventable causes. Conflict undermines food security and exacerbates vulnerabilities, thereby curtailing the ability of people to have access to sufficient food for an active and healthy life.

As underscored by many delegations, peace and security is a necessary condition to alleviate that challenge. In that regard, the peaceful resolution of disputes and addressing the underlying causes of conflicts is imperative.

If we are to provide a sustainable solution to food insecurity, the risk of global trade recovery and increases in the price of food should not be confused with the more embedded problem of food insecurity. We raise this important distinction in order to encourage a

proper look at the broad spectrum of this grave problem by separating it from spontaneous incidents.

With the rise in the price of food, which is seriously straining our national capacity, we are compelled to engage in serious introspection as to its impact on our own national efforts to ensure self-sufficiency and minimize import dependency. We are confident that our tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to achieve our national development objectives will enable us to attain those goals.

But on a much larger scale, we believe that the situation calls for concerted action towards improving production and productivity; rectifying the prevailing unbalanced international trade system; providing urgent debt relief, restructuring and cancellation; eradicating poverty; and fostering resilience to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.

It is against that backdrop that I would like to underscore the following three brief points.

First, while we recognize conflict as one of the factors contributing to food insecurity, we believe that it is the primary manifestation of extreme poverty and underdevelopment. Accelerating economic growth and sustainable development and addressing the challenges surrounding the agricultural sector is extremely critical to overcome poverty and food insecurity and hence achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Secondly, it goes without saying that we cannot bring about sustainable peace without development and development without sustainable peace. Tapping into our potential through economic transformation is paramount to ensure sustainable development. Africa is a continent that is endowed with a vast amount of land, water and labour, the potential of which, if harnessed adequately and fully, can feed not only its population but also the world. With concerted national and regional efforts, supplemented by international support to enhance our ongoing initiatives to invest in and utilize our natural resources for the benefit of our people, we can achieve that lofty objective.

Thirdly, fair international trade practices that yield sustainable development and encourage African countries to enhance their domestic food production is critical. We believe that increasing productivity and production on the continent and strengthening intracontinental trade is imperative to make a dent in addressing food insecurity.

In conclusion, while we should scale up our efforts towards the resolution of conflicts, the timely and adequate provision of humanitarian support to those in need of food assistance is also critical. That should be coupled with our collective efforts in committing to address the effects of climate change, which is causing huge calamities. Providing the necessary support to African countries in their efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change is therefore extremely crucial.

We believe that the debate on food security at the level of the Security Council should take those important components into account if we are to enhance the impact and achieve results in tackling food insecurity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus has always been attentive and responsible when it comes to the issue of food security, at both the national and international levels. Modern Belarus is fully self-sufficient when it comes to food production and also contributes significantly to international food production.

The things that stand in the way of ensuring food security have been very well known to everyone for a long time. It is food waste — up to 40 per cent in developed countries. It also has to do with an ineffective distribution system and aggressive trade policy. These first two categories are very complex issues, which require time and coordinated efforts to be rectified, whereas for the issues of trade policy in the context of food security, there is a quick and effective mechanism, which is the kind of mechanism that unfortunately is frequently abused by countries when they introduce all kinds of sanctions and bans.

The Secretary-General, as well as such competent international bodies as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund do talk with one voice about the nefarious effect that unilateral restrictions and sanctions have on food security internationally. Already in November 2021 the World Bank was already talking about the negative consequences stemming from the sanctions by the European Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada against Belarussian potassium fertilizer. The President of Belarus, Mr. Aleksandr Lukashenko,

has warned the international community many times about the negative effects of sanctions against Belarus-produced food and potash, and we have voiced those warnings in both the Security Council and the General Assembly. But the sponsors of sanctions were not ready then, nor are they ready now, to listen to the international institutions or experts or the representatives of those countries where famine and malnutrition are a threat to whole nations.

As a result, the World Bank tells us that agricultural prices in 2022 are 43 per cent higher compared to last year, and each percentage point of increase in food prices will lead to an additional 10 million people finding themselves in abject poverty. Today the Secretary-General, in this very Chamber, talked about the 30 per cent increase in the prices of staple foods, which is a direct threat to people in Africa and the Middle East.

We regret the fact that even under current conditions, the sponsors of restrictions are busy looking for reasons for introducing ever-new sanctions, while in parallel they state that the conflict in Ukraine is a source of all the ills of humankind, forgetting the many conflicts in other regions of the world.

We recall that long before the conflict in Ukraine Belarus was subjected to sanctions imposed because the West did not like the outcome of our presidential elections, and one of the reasons offered was the alleged demand by the people of Belarus for sanctions. It was said that the sanctions would bring freedom to the people of Belarus because the “sanctions are freedom” and “sanctions liberate”. We had heard statements like that before when the word “work” was used instead of “sanctions”. It was said that work makes people free, and I am certain that this phrase, which was placed at the entrance of Nazi concentration camps is remembered by one and all in this Chamber; we certainly will never forget it. The sponsors of unilateral restrictive restrictions should give serious thought to their policies, which they should start to rectify in a comprehensive and flexible manner by giving up their political prejudices. We think that there is still time to make the right decision.

We agree with the appeal made by the Secretary-General to lift the sanctions and reintegrate into world markets food produced and fertilizer manufactured in Belarus. This will be an important step towards ensuring international food security.

We in Belarus stand ready to work with all interested parties and will consider any and all constructive proposals without any political prejudices. We will continue doing everything possible to support what was started by the President of Belarus, namely, a dialogue to make sure that the conflict in Ukraine ends as soon as possible, and we stand ready to contribute to ensuring global food security. We once again call upon the sponsors of sanctions to heed the voice of the international community and stop using this destructive mechanism.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): At the outset, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the United States for convening today's timely open debate.

Viet Nam understands first-hand the critical role of food security as a foundation of peace, stability and development. We are therefore deeply concerned about the sharp rise in food prices and other commodities in recent months, which resulted in the all-time high record in the March 2022 index of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The current drivers of food insecurity are manifold. While the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is still raging, economic shocks, disruptions in supply chains and extreme weather events have further aggravated strains in the world food system. Such interwoven challenges risk putting developing and conflict-affected countries into further instability and insecurity, particularly those on the agenda of the Security Council.

In the light of the current situation, we wish to emphasize the following points. First, it is high time that the international community commit to ensuring food security as a key element to guaranteeing sustainable peace and development. Along with strengthening the humanitarian response, sustained actions must be made to bolster the capabilities of developing and conflict-affected States in ensuring the food supply for their own populations, as well as in improving their living standards.

Securing and diversifying food supplies is also a way forward. In the longer term, food systems need to be transformed into green, sustainable and low-emission models that are resilient and responsive to food security challenges. Furthermore, resolving conflicts

and preventing their relapses are critical in breaking the vicious cycle between conflict and hunger. It is equally important that international partners, including the Security Council, look into further initiatives to help address the root causes of conflicts and promote peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

Secondly, global solidarity is needed more than ever to resolve the current crisis. The international community should work together in a more coordinated manner. Stronger cooperation and partnership between States, the United Nations, regional organizations and the private sector can also complement such efforts. We commend the tireless efforts of United Nations agencies, particularly FAO and the World Food Programme, as well as international donors, in combating hunger and delivering supplies to people in need during this challenging time. We encourage the United Nations and partners to provide timely, appropriate updates on food insecurity induced or exacerbated by conflicts, especially in areas on the agenda of the Security Council, so as to better ensure timely responses.

Thirdly, it is imperative that all parties to conflicts adhere to the United Nations Charter, international law and international humanitarian law. This includes the prohibition of attacks on and destruction of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, especially those related to food supply. These principles were stipulated in resolution 2417 (2018) and again in resolution 2573 (2021).

As one of the world's top exporters in major agricultural products, Viet Nam has actively contributed to efforts aimed at ensuring a stable food supply in order to safeguard food security of the region and of the world, particularly during the past two years in which the world faced the COVID-19 pandemic. We aspire to becoming a food-innovation hub in the region through innovative and sustainable agricultural models. To this end, we will continue to contribute meaningfully to joint efforts to address global food security challenges.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Kridelka (Belgium): Belgium thanks the United States of America for organizing this important debate at a time when the world is facing its most serious food security challenge in decades. I would also like to thank Mr. Beasley and Mr. Qu Dongyu, as well as Ms. Menker, for their compelling briefings this morning.

Resolution 2417 (2018) recognizes the link between armed conflicts and food insecurity — a link that, in the current context, cannot be understated. On the one hand, we are seeing food prices reach all-time highs in many parts of the world. Sixty per cent of the world's hungry people live in areas of conflict, and armed conflict has exacerbated hunger in many parts of the world, including in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. On the other hand, a sharp increase in global insecurity threatens to destabilize fragile societies and further exacerbate armed conflicts and regional instability. In an environment that is still recovering from the stress caused by the pandemic, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine has further disrupted tight food, energy and financial markets, with a long-lasting and adverse impact on global food security.

As stressed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on 8 April, nothing other than the immediate cessation of the Russian aggression against Ukraine will make it possible for markets to stabilize. Nothing other than the immediate cessation of that aggression will make it possible to avoid famine and restore hope for the millions of people on the brink of starvation in many parts of the world, including in Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan and Ethiopia.

In that context, Belgium is grateful to the Secretary-General for putting together the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. We welcome the recommendations issued by the Group and its comprehensive reports on the global impact of the war in Ukraine.

The international community needs to act without delay to break the cycle of conflict-induced food insecurity and make global food markets more resilient to crisis and systemic shocks. A coordinated and robust global response, under the leadership of the Global Crisis Response Group and relevant partners organizations, such as the World Food Programme and FAO, will be essential to stabilizing markets and avoiding further degradation of livelihoods and development gains. The humanitarian, development and peace dimensions of the food and nutrition crisis will need to be addressed to enhance the sustainability of food systems. Advancing the triple-nexus approach and strengthening coordination at the United Nations and country levels will also be key to ensuring resilient and sustainable solutions.

Furthermore, a renewed focus on anticipatory action will be critical, along with the diversification of stock concentration and production sources. Enhanced support to the most vulnerable, including through cash assistance, will also be instrumental in enhancing social protection and social cohesion and alleviating hardship.

Finally, it is important to stress that access to food is a human right. Belgium calls on all to raise awareness of this issue by supporting the work of civil society and social movements, including small-scale farmers, in claiming the right to food.

These are all emergency solutions to alleviate the crisis, but none will bring about robust and sustainable change if the international community does not start by putting a halt to Russia's illegal and unjustified war on Ukraine for the benefit of the millions of civilians on the verge of starvation today.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Ms. Oh Hyunjoo (Republic of Korea): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening us here today around this pressing agenda. I also wish to thank the briefers for their informative and comprehensive presentations.

Every day we now see dire new warnings about expanding risks from rising food and fuel prices, as well as the pressure for nearly every ordinary household worldwide. There are increasing fears that the world may be on the verge of a hunger catastrophe. Indeed, the war in Ukraine has created a crisis on top of a crisis, and that is a resulting in a massive setback for the global economy. This latest obstacle could not have come at a worse time when Governments were beginning to address the social and economic legacies of the pandemic.

Korea has already joined the collective calls for a coordinated and focused action to mitigate the impact of the current food shortages and higher food prices in a variety of forums. Today I would like to highlight the following three areas, which Member States and the international community, including the Security Council, should prioritize and actively engage with.

First, targeted assistance should be immediately provided to the most vulnerable people, who have been hit the hardest by surging food and fertilizer prices, along with the significant cuts in global supplies. Expediently improving access to emergency financing for farmers and small businesses would help.

International action to respond to the increasing risk of a food crisis in fragile and conflict-affected States is also critical.

My delegation welcomes the fact that United Nations and other agencies, alongside multilateral development banks, have developed real-time analysis to carefully monitor price developments and fiscal space and call for expanding support and mitigating balance-of-payment pressures for low-income countries. Korea will further coordinate with the international community to step up humanitarian and development assistance for the hardest-hit countries in that regard.

Secondly, Governments and the international community must ensure a sufficient and stable agricultural supply, both within and across countries. Financial tightening, high debt and the frequent and wide-ranging lockdowns in some countries have caused further bottlenecks in global and regional supply chains. In order to enhance resilience to future crises, it is essential to back up social safety nets to help ensure more seamless social transfers.

In the longer term, we must catalyse change to secure sustainable and balanced diets by transforming our agrifood systems. For its part, Korea has pledged to contribute \$900 million in special drawing rights to the Resilience and Sustainability Trust of the International Monetary Fund and has suggested that the Trust be established within this year to assist countries in need of better adapting agriculture to a world of more frequent and severe climate shocks.

Lastly, we must maintain open regional and global trade markets. My delegation has urged regional cooperation to ensure a free and rules-based trading system and to respond to the negative spillover effects caused by individual countries' export restrictions. That will help us build resilience to future shocks by raising predictability in the global food supply. My Government endeavours to do more to create an enabling environment with a view towards fairer and more resilient trade investment in order to catalyse the requisite boost in private financing for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our immediate hope must be for the war to end. That would have the single most positive and immediate effect on global recovery and fast-rising food prices. In the meantime, we must do everything that we can to help heavily affected countries. We need fast and well-coordinated actions now more than ever before.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Ms. Joyini (South Africa): We thank the briefers for their insightful remarks and for bringing these worrisome realities to our attention. Today's theme is closely aligned with the African Union theme for the year 2022, "The Year of Nutrition", aimed at addressing the scourge of malnutrition through political commitment and investment.

South Africa is deeply concerned by the increasing number of people suffering from malnutrition and food insecurity globally, including on the African continent and in other parts of the world. The global outlook on food insecurity is bleak, putting many millions of people at risk of malnutrition and hunger.

In conflict settings, hunger is a consequence of war. In some instances, it is used as a weapon of war, which is of great concern, particularly as that continues with impunity. We therefore call on all parties to conflict to comply with resolution 2417 (2018) and ensure that civilian populations have access to humanitarian assistance.

Civilians are the primary victims such vicious cycles of food insecurity in armed conflicts, particularly women, children, the elderly and disabled persons. We are concerned about the plight of internally displaced persons, refugees and migrants who are subjected to difficult living conditions during conflict situations and who are fully reliant on humanitarian assistance. It is therefore crucial to ensure the swift, unimpeded and impartial delivery of humanitarian aid to all those who require it, in line with the provisions of international humanitarian law, and ensure the safety and security of humanitarian workers.

Food insecurity is a human and economic development issue that necessitates the involvement of the relevant agencies of the United Nations, which have a better grasp of the gravity of the global situation and are best placed to identify sustainable solutions to the global food crisis. In that context, South Africa welcomes the Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, which is intended to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response to the current food crisis and is underpinned by multi-stakeholder partnerships.

We acknowledge that food insecurity is a reality that should be addressed. However, in terms of armed

conflict, where, as a consequence of war, global food supply chains are disrupted and where that may lead to food insecurity and hunger, it would be the imperative of the Security Council to address the root causes of the conflict and prevent food insecurity. Economic sanctions and unilateral coercive measures imposed on countries in conflict settings may inadvertently exacerbate hunger in conflict situations, as civilians may have less access to nutrition and medical supplies and be faced with higher prices for food items, owing to failing economies. We therefore reiterate our call for the lifting of such sanctions.

We reiterate and emphasize the importance of full compliance with the Geneva Conventions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law by all parties to conflict. States and parties to conflict have the responsibility to protect civilians. Therefore, those responsible for violations of such international law should be held accountable. Humanitarian assistance provided in conflict areas should be gender- and age-sensitive and remain responsive to the different needs of the population, while ensuring that they are integrated in humanitarian responses.

Let me conclude by restating what we said yesterday: that we all need to commit to finding peaceful solutions to conflict. Armed conflict has a devastating impact on livelihoods. It disrupts food systems, causes the displacement of people and triggers food insecurity. Working towards ending conflict by prioritizing political dialogue, rather than fuelling conflict by creating divisions and resorting, to war must be prioritized.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Schwalger (New Zealand): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of New Zealand, which welcomes the decision by the United States to choose conflict-driven food insecurity as the theme for today's open debate. We also thank Ireland for its work as the Security Council's focal point on conflict and hunger. New Zealand is committed to working with partners to advance international efforts to address food insecurity.

Hunger has no place in the twenty-first century. When the Council adopted resolution 2417 (2018), four years ago, it was amid a resurgence in global food insecurity, driven primarily by conflict. Resolution 2417 (2018) reminds us that conflict contributes to hunger

both directly through the effects of war and indirectly through the disruption of markets. Sadly, the situation we face today is even more dire. Conflict, the climate crisis, the coronavirus disease pandemic and surging food and fuel costs have created a perfect storm.

This year is forecast to be the most food-insecure year on record globally. We heard from today's briefers about the extreme scope of the insecurity. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has reported that 193 million people in 53 countries or territories will experience acute food insecurity at crisis or worse levels this year. That is a sharp increase of nearly 40 million people from 2020.

There is no question that conflict is a key driver of food insecurity. New Zealand has watched with concern as the prices of key food commodities and fertilizers have increased rapidly. Russia's unprovoked and unjustified attack on Ukraine is the primary driver behind those price spikes. Sanctions are not the cause of the price spikes or food shortages; Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is.

The impact of Russia's actions are being felt beyond Europe. They are hurting countries that already face dangerous levels of food insecurity. New Zealand is concerned about the potential domestic unrest in countries affected by price increases and shortages of essential items. The most efficient way to mitigate the worsening global food crisis is for Russia to silence its guns, withdraw its troops and end this pointless war.

New Zealand is collaborating with its international partners to respond to the growing food security crisis. That includes providing flexible and multi-year funding to the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross. We are also providing support to specific humanitarian crises to alleviate food insecurity. Now is not the time to lose focus on long-running conflicts or humanitarian crises. Now is not the time for Member States to reduce or divert their development or humanitarian funding.

New Zealand strongly supports the call for countries to resist actions that hinder trade in essential foods and agricultural commodities. Export restrictions, hoarding and similar trade-distorting measures only worsen global food security. More than ever, we must keep global agricultural markets open and trade flowing stably.

Earlier this month New Zealand signed onto the United Kingdom-led joint statement committing to open and predictable trade in agricultural and food products, delivered to the World Trade Organization (WTO). We urge Member States to ensure that any emergency measures not distort or restrict trade and are temporary, designed with the utmost restraint and consistent with WTO rules.

Climate change also contributes to food insecurity. This is a serious concern for New Zealand and our Indo-Pacific region. We are experiencing the effects of climate change on food security in our region, which is evident through an increase in extreme weather-related events, including drought, wildfire, extreme temperatures and flooding. Extreme weather-related events are predicted to increase in frequency and magnitude, threatening the safe production and distribution of food in our region and around the world.

We encourage the Council to take unified action on the worsening food security crisis and, in doing so, demonstrate collective leadership for the benefit of all in the international community.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Monsignor Murphy: The Holy See would like to thank you and your delegation, Sir, for organizing this open debate.

Today, among the more than 800 million people who face hunger, no less than 60 per cent live in areas affected by violence. That data underscores the timeliness and importance of this discussion.

In its resolution 2417 (2018), the Security Council rightly points to the link between armed conflict and violence and conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine, as well as to the fact that the impact of conflict on food security can be both direct and indirect. The ongoing war in Ukraine has vividly illustrated that reality, with rising hunger on the ground and several countries near and far experiencing shortages of cooking oil, fertilizers, corn and wheat due to reduced production and export. The situation threatens to destabilize States that rely on food imports. In States that are affected, many are going without their daily bread even as the world produces enough food for all. That is a genuine scandal that has the potential to trigger further conflict and violence. Escaping that cycle calls for a more integral approach to security. My delegation

would like to take this opportunity to highlight four points in that regard.

First, the dignity of the human person must be at the centre of all our efforts. That requires respecting and complying with international humanitarian law, which prohibits the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare and the creation of obstacles to humanitarian access. Additionally, we must recognize that treating food merely as a commodity supplied through the cold logic of the market will not be enough to ensure that everyone has access to safe, uncontaminated and sufficient food.

Secondly, committing to and advancing gradual and systematic disarmament remains crucial if we are to curb hostilities that contribute directly to increased social unrest and food insecurity.

Thirdly, other factors that further exacerbate conflict-induced hunger should be monitored and addressed. They include the effects of climate change, whose consequences are more than just environmental, as they affect the economic, social and political arenas, with significant repercussions for food security and food systems.

Finally, the Holy See continues to emphasize the proposal of Pope Saint Paul VI to establish a global fund to assist those most impoverished peoples, drawn partially from military expenditures. As noted by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, such a fund would contribute to putting an end to hunger and favour development in the most impoverished countries so that their citizens will not resort to violent or illusory solutions. In doing so, the fund would address the root causes of conflicts in order to increase integral security for us all.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. Tun (Myanmar): I would like to thank the United States presidency for organizing this timely and critically important debate. I also thank all of the briefers for their insightful presentations.

Ending hunger is one of the most fundamental development goals of humankind. Hard-fought gains in economic development and poverty reduction have recently been shattered by the coronavirus disease pandemic. The pandemic's devastating socioeconomic consequences, combined with the ongoing climate crisis, are worsening food insecurity, particularly

among already vulnerable populations around the world. However, conflict is the dominant root cause of food crises throughout the world, according to the World Food Programme's 2022 *Global Report on Food Crises*.

The ongoing aggression in Ukraine is now jeopardizing food-supply chains and has pushed food prices to record highs. Its negative impact is being felt globally, especially by developing countries. The adoption of resolution 2417 (2018) was an encouraging moment in the Security Council's efforts to counter conflict-driven hunger. But while such resolutions give us an opportunity to tackle the issues of conflict and hunger, what we need are collective efforts to seize that opportunity and take action now, together and in solidarity, to avert an even more unprecedented hunger crisis.

My country, Myanmar, has been experiencing the impact of the nexus of the key drivers of food insecurity, that is, conflict, climate change and poverty. As a country that is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, Myanmar had been undertaking climate-change mitigation and adaptation policies under its democratically elected Government. Economic recovery plans were under way at the time of the Myanmar military's attempt at an illegal coup, in which elected civilian leaders were kept incommunicado as hostages.

Since then, the illegitimate military regime has been inflicting great suffering on the people of Myanmar through repeated brutal massacres, torture and mass displacement. According to the United Nations Development Programme, half of Myanmar's population is now living below the national poverty line. Humanitarian organizations have estimated that 6.2 million of our citizens are now in need of life-saving support. Basic food prices have risen by 30 per cent. Millions of families have been driven into desperation and hunger. Internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially children, are being hit the hardest by the instability inflicted by the coup. People have lost their homes and livelihoods. That instability, the persistent threat of military violence and a lack of resettlement and rehabilitation assistance have confined them to IDP camps indefinitely and are preventing their return home. That has led to a significant disruption of their livelihoods and agricultural production.

Moreover, the junta has spared no effort in its attempts to control access to humanitarian assistance for those in critical need, in violation of international humanitarian law. The military's ongoing inhumane policy has directly impacted food security in the country. There will be no peace or stability in Myanmar as long as the illegal military junta's failing coup drags on. The people of Myanmar, with their elected civilian National Unity Government and National Unity Consultative Council at the forefront, have therefore been doing everything they can, and with ever-greater determination, to end the current military-made catastrophe and build a fairer, democratic future that ensures fundamental human rights for all.

What Myanmar's situation tells us is that the impact of conflict on food insecurity is not necessarily the inevitable result of collateral damage. In most cases, it is deliberate. Hunger and the blockage of humanitarian assistance are tactics employed intentionally to control a particular population in order to serve military objectives. That is exactly the case with the Myanmar military, which has enjoyed a sense of blanket impunity for past atrocities and has no regard for international human rights or humanitarian law. The Security Council should act whenever the tactic of deliberate starvation is used by any party to a conflict.

In conclusion, it is essential to respond to hunger everywhere. However, the ultimate answer lies in addressing the root causes of food insecurity. We must strengthen multilateral cooperation to tackle climate change and eradicate extreme poverty. In order to resolve conflicts, the key driver of food insecurity, or at least alleviate their impact, we must not only enhance the credibility and effectiveness of our multilateral institutions, especially the Security Council, but also promote strict adherence to international law, including international humanitarian law, without which we would be living in a very dangerous world.

I therefore urge us all to work together as we explore all available options to end hunger and conflict-induced food insecurity for the sake of all vulnerable populations — not only in Myanmar, but all over the world — as well as for international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Ruidíaz Pérez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the United States for convening today's important

debate, and we thank the briefers for their briefings and accounts.

As other States, Chile is concerned about the current global situation, marked by a clear spike in the prices of basic food items and other products and food shortages. According to the World Food Programme, there is the likelihood that acute food insecurity will worsen in 20 countries, and predictions are that this year we will see the highest levels of food insecurity ever recorded globally. We are concerned about the fact that, between 2018 and 2021, the number of people experiencing food insecurity, caused primarily by conflict, increased to 139 million people from 73 million. Food insecurity deals the heaviest blow to countries with the highest levels of poverty, more fragile political institutions or weak rule of law. Worsening conflict-induced hunger and the identification of conflict-related food insecurity crises, which either already exist or have the potential to occur, are key issues for the Council, as they all have a direct impact on the lives of the most vulnerable and on their livelihoods.

Addressing the issue of food security in conflict not only means that States must ensure that trade in food and fertilizer continues; it also means that States must not join others to impose sanctions or other measures that might hinder international trade or the movement and availability of or access to food, as that would violate food security principles.

Guaranteeing ongoing humanitarian access, protecting humanitarian workers and ensuring that parties to conflict are held accountable for depriving civilians of food or for attacking production or food systems are all essential. It is also crucial that parties to conflict respect international law and international humanitarian law. Chile condemns the use of starvation as a method of warfare and reaffirms that it is important for States to conduct comprehensive, independent, impartial and effective investigations, within their jurisdiction, on violations of that kind in order to strengthen preventive measures, guarantee accountability and address the grievances of victims.

Looking ahead, Chile believes that tangible solutions will be required to foster international cooperation among States and other specialized actors in the international system. For example, we can harness the knowledge of scientific groups that worked for the Food Systems Summit in 2021 in order to address the various aspects of the food crisis. We

would like to recall that we are in the United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 and the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025. We therefore underscore that action taken to address the global food crisis should have a direct impact on improving access to, as well as the availability and quality of, food provided to the most vulnerable groups, while ensuring that priority is given to children, women and the elderly, in particular those in humanitarian emergencies or conflict situations.

Multilateralism must provide joint and coordinated responses to the serious food, logistics and humanitarian crisis we now face. Global issues require joint solutions. The Council can count on the support and cooperation of Chile to achieve that goal.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Dvornyk (Ukraine): I recognize the representative of Putin's regime and the permanent seat of the Soviet Union.

First of all, I would like to thank the United States for organizing today's important debate and all the briefers for their briefings.

The looming food crisis was the focus of yesterday's ministerial meeting at the United Nations, and we align ourselves with the Chair's statement. As a reliable contributor to global food security and one of the main food suppliers, Ukraine fully shares the commitment to acting with urgency in this area. Over the past few years, the food security situation has deteriorated for the most vulnerable, in particular due to the coronavirus disease.

Regrettably, instead of recovery, the world emerging from the pandemic has faced a new threat — Russia's full-fledged war on Ukraine. Along with international law and the rules-based order, Russia has also dealt a hard blow to global food security, as approximately 400 million people throughout the world depend on grain supplies from Ukraine. Now, due to the blockade of Ukrainian seaports, exports of Ukrainian grain have almost stopped. In pre-invasion times, Ukraine exported 5 million tons of grain per month. In March, exports decreased to approximately only 200,000 tons; in April, to some 1.1 million tons. Large areas in the east and south of Ukraine remain places of combat action or are under occupation. That is why we expect the harvest in 2022 to be just 50 per cent of last year's yield.

Another threat is Russia's actions to seize Ukrainian grain for its own consumption or in an attempt to illegally sell it on international markets. The Russian occupiers have already stolen at least between 400,000 and 500,000 tons of grain. Ukraine has already warned consumer countries that grain consignments exported by Russia could contain stolen Ukrainian grain. Any country that knowingly purchases that grain will be considered complicit in the crime. We demand that Russia stop the grain stealing, unblock Ukrainian seaports, restore the freedom of navigation and allow trade ships to pass.

As was already said here more than once, this war is a war of choice — the choice of President Putin. It will also be his choice with regard to the food crisis. There should be no doubt about who will be responsible for the possible starvation of millions of people. We strongly reject any manipulative narrative that sanctions against Russia would make it impossible to effectively address the issue of agricultural exports. All required exclusions have already been made. As soon as Russia is compelled to stop the war, the looming threat of hunger will be over. Otherwise, the famine and suffering of millions will be blamed completely on President Putin.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Zellenrath (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made earlier today by the representative of the European Union, in its capacity of observer.

Conflict is still the single most important driver of humanitarian needs. The war in Ukraine is a case in point, as was so clearly explained by my Ukrainian colleague just now. In addition to causing displacement and disruption in local food markets, the war has ripple effects on humanitarian needs worldwide, driving up food and humanitarian needs in countries, such as Afghanistan and Somalia — countries that are already vulnerable.

Let me be frank: we continue to hear arguments that European and other sanctions are to blame for increasing food insecurity. That is simply not true. European restrictive measures are targeted in accordance with international law and, indeed, aim to uphold and strengthen respect for international law. It is large-scale armed conflict that disrupts food markets.

Besides the ripple effects of the war in Ukraine, there are deeply concerning reports from Yemen. Objects indispensable to the survival of civilians were attacked even when there were no military targets in the vicinity. Water wells were bombed, and agricultural land was extensively mined to the point of rendering it useless. Such actions further worsen an already dire humanitarian situation and may constitute violations of international humanitarian law.

We should take the following steps to help minimize the impact of conflicts on food security.

First of all, we must ensure reporting. Resolution 2417 (2018) calls on the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council in instances where conflict leads to severe food insecurity. We support the proposal made by the United States at the Arria Formula meeting held a couple of weeks ago to submit such reports twice a year, and we call on all members of the Security Council to give their full attention to those reports, as agreed under resolution 2417 (2018).

Secondly, reports of hunger-related violations of international humanitarian law should be taken seriously, and incidents should be investigated. Accountability is key if we want to put an end to grave violations of international humanitarian law.

Thirdly, we need to work towards more resilient food systems. Last year's United Nations Food Systems Summit laid the groundwork.

In conclusion, resolution 2417 (2018) was the first time the Security Council recognized the direct link between conflict and hunger. With humanitarian needs across the world increasing, we need to act, and we need to act together. The Netherlands stands ready to do its part and looks forward to the continued global cooperation to break the vicious link between conflict and hunger.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Rai (Nepal): At the outset, I thank the presidency of the United States for convening this timely debate on conflict and food security.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized the right to food as a human right. However, even today, hundreds of millions of people go to bed on an empty stomach each night. The report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations stated

that the coronavirus disease pandemic alone deprived 320 million people of access to food in 2020. Around 2.37 billion people do not have access to adequate food and, tragically, 60 per cent of the world's hungry people live in conflict zones.

Today the global Food Price Index has reached its highest level ever, accounting for a 30 per cent rise. The World Bank estimates that, for every percentage point increase in food prices, 10 million people are pushed into extreme poverty worldwide. The mounting food and oil prices have already hit the net food-importing developing countries, such as Nepal. In the face of the worst global pandemic, many developing countries are under the pressure of debt, eroding purchasing power, depleting foreign currency reserves and creating exchange rate stress.

Resolution 2417 (2018) recognized the links between conflict and food insecurity. Compliance with the resolution is necessary to mitigate conflict-induced food insecurity, as well as barring starvation as a weapon of war, alongside the importance of ensuring access to humanitarian aid.

While prioritizing conflict-affected zones, we need to address food insecurity by building a sustainable, resilient and inclusive food system at the national and global levels. In that context, let me submit the following points.

First, we need to advance political solutions for conflicts, thereby promoting peace and security and, in doing so, mitigating the food crisis. While short-term humanitarian relief is urgent for vulnerable populations, we need to promote a long-term sustainable agrifood system with the involvement of rural and small-scale farmers to ensure the food and livelihoods of vulnerable sections of societies.

Secondly, we need to strengthen regional and global cooperation to keep a rein on economic shocks, inflation and supply chain disruptions. We must maintain a seamless trade flow of food, fuels and fertilizers through open markets, while discouraging hoarding by one or few countries and checking speculation by big traders.

Thirdly, international financial institutions should support developing countries, which are facing fatal financial and monetary crises owing to inflation, limited fiscal space and depleting foreign currency reserves.

Fourthly, short-term solutions should lead to sustainable, inclusive, climate-compatible agriculture and food systems to deliver for people and the planet.

Finally, more than anything else, we, the Member States, should work as a collaborative community with a higher level of political determination to settle the conflicts and political differences to maintain peace and tranquillity and to avoid conflict-driven famine and food insecurity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Ugarelli (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): The report on the global impact of the war in Ukraine on food, energy and finance systems, published on 13 April by the Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group, has alerted us to the perfect storm on the horizon of the limited food availability and rising food prices, disruptions in energy production and upheaval in trade and finance. All of that is occurring in a world that has not yet recovered from the terrible economic and social consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

It is particularly alarming that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Food Price Index recorded a 34 per cent increase in April since last year, reaching its highest level since its creation in 1990. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is a factor that explains the increase, considering that both countries supply 30 per cent of wheat, 20 per cent of barley and 50 per cent of sunflower oil to global markets.

Several countries, including Peru, were already foreseeing and preparing to face that three-sided crisis. Consequently, on 19 March, the Peruvian Government officially declared a state of emergency in the agricultural and irrigation sector, precisely because of the adverse effects of COVID-19 and a series of external threats that have triggered a constant increase in fertilizer prices worldwide, among which the Russian-Ukrainian conflict stands out. Russia is our main source of fertilizers.

That situation has caused a 0.2 per cent reduction in planted land in Peru for the 2021 to 2022 agricultural year. That jeopardizes the smooth development of agricultural activities and their value chain, which has a negative impact on the agricultural sector and the Peruvian economy, with the consequent repercussions for end consumers and food security.

The situation in Ukraine also has a socioeconomic impact owing to the rise in food prices, which will have an increasingly severe effect on developing countries, especially on the poor, who spend most of their income on food. That, in turn, entails a risk of increased global conflict owing to widespread social unrest.

In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the primary responsibility of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security. Its States Members have the responsibility to fulfil that mandate. For that reason, the Government of Peru expressed its support for the presidential statement issued on 6 May by the Security Council regarding the maintenance of peace and security in Ukraine (S/PRST/2022/3). The statement recalled the obligation of all Member States to settle their disputes by peaceful means and expressed its firm support for the efforts of the Secretary-General in the search for a peaceful solution.

COVID-19 taught humankind that no one is safe until everyone is safe. No country has guaranteed peace and stability until we all live in peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Ms. Baptista Grade Zacarias (Portugal): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting.

As other colleagues have pointed out before, climate change, inequalities and conflicts are the biggest drivers of hunger. Food insecurity had been on the rise before the pandemic, but Russia's aggression against Ukraine has exacerbated the situation, destabilizing a region that is crucial to the global supply of agricultural commodities. That aggression has caused severe damage to storage infrastructure and agriculture processing facilities, prevented farmers from tending their fields and impeded the export of goods already harvested following the blockade of Ukrainian ports. And we must be clear that those disruptions are caused by war and not by sanctions.

The higher prices faced by global food markets put those most vulnerable at particular risk, namely, in developing countries. The people in the Mediterranean basin, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa are especially threatened by those effects. We must deliver immediate assistance to those in need, while supporting partner countries in their transition to sustainable agrifood systems. We should prioritize keeping trading food and fertilizers open, exploring alternative sources of

food supplies, supporting agricultural production at acceptable costs and promoting access to short-term credit and to markets. Yesterday, at the United Nations Global Food Security Call to Action, the Secretary-General acknowledged the importance of engaging in ongoing dialogue in that connection, and we welcome such discussions.

In the meanwhile, humanitarian actors have made extensive efforts to promote resilience among vulnerable communities, strengthening local production in countries at risk of food insecurity. We commend and support those initiatives. The private sector can also play a role in that regard, helping small farmers increase their productivity and improving sustainable value chains.

Food is a human right. It derives directly from the right to an adequate standard of living, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Food-related policies must be embedded in a human-rights approach. States have a core obligation to take the necessary action to mitigate and alleviate hunger in situations of conflict and are required to refrain from all discrimination in access to food, on any grounds. We encourage the Security Council to collaborate closely on the protection of human rights in this conflict with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

We all know that we can only be effective in tackling this crisis if we work together. That is why we support the General Assembly draft resolution promoted by Lebanon on the state of global food security, to be adopted on 23 May. It is also why we welcome the work of the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group and look forward to its next steps in accordance with other relevant initiatives like the Group of Seven Global Alliance for Food Security. The Group will be crucial — not only to addressing food-supply disruptions and spiking energy prices, but also to ensure that the measures that are now put in place do not undermine long-term stability.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): I would like to express our appreciation to all briefers for their valuable and thought-provoking remarks.

Poland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Let me start by saying that Poland is very proud to recall that, almost exactly four years ago, during Poland's presidency of the Security Council, the Council voted unanimously to adopt resolution 2417 (2018), mentioned so often today, on conflict-induced food insecurity. The resolution calls on all parties to armed conflicts to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and

“strongly condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare” (*resolution 2417 (2018), para. 5*).

It also strongly condemns

“the unlawful denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supply and access for responses to conflict-induced food insecurity in situations of armed conflict” (*ibid., para 6*).

Unfortunately, this particular appeal needs to be added to a long list of regulations that have been broken by a member of the Security Council itself — Russia — through its aggression against Ukraine.

In recent weeks, food security has been raised in multiple forums. Let me share three ways in which Poland works to counter this crisis.

First, the repercussions of the Russian aggression against Ukraine on international food insecurity was one of the main themes of the Regional Conference for Europe of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which took place in Poland this week.

The thirty-third session of FAO for Europe adopted a decision — almost unanimously — condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine. It called upon Russia to immediately cease hostilities in order to allow for the full resumption of agricultural production. It also requested FAO to prepare and implement recovery plans to ensure food security in the countries most affected by the conflict. In the adopted decision, the Conference expressed its solidarity and support for Ukraine, as well as recognition for the countries supporting Kyiv and accepting refugees. It also stressed its deep concern

about the threat of the Russian authorities to limit food supplies to countries supporting Ukraine.

Secondly, Poland, in close cooperation with Ukraine, works on facilitating the export of Ukrainian grain and food products by means of our transport infrastructure, including railroads and seaports. With that in mind, the agriculture ministers of Poland and Ukraine met this week in Warsaw, along with their United States counterpart, to sign an agreement on the transport of Ukrainian grain through Poland.

It is estimated that by using Polish transport infrastructure Ukraine can export up to 2 million tons of grain a month, while a capacity of 5 million is needed to avoid a severe crisis. We therefore remain open to further cooperation and will comprehensively support the Ukrainian side in this difficult situation.

Thirdly, we call on the international community to provide immediate support to Ukraine in its efforts to expand its storage and logistics capacities for agricultural and food products damaged by the Russian aggression. Meanwhile, we are convinced that arranging for additional storage capacities in countries neighbouring Ukraine could provide a temporary solution to that problem.

Poland is ready to continue its cooperation with the international community in the global fight against the food crisis through Polish development assistance. We are convinced that it is necessary to protect the countries most threatened by famine, namely, in Africa, the Middle East and Europe's neighbourhood. That is why Poland contributed financially to World Food Programme initiatives in Kenya and Syria in 2020 and to World Food Programme actions in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Yemen in 2021.

Poland is not only an important food producer, but it can also store and process large amounts of food and food products. We are ready to cooperate and share our experience, and extend an offer to help process, preserve and store food. The development and prudent management of such capacities worldwide is crucial in order to avoid food waste, another factor contributing to hunger and food shortages.

Poland also contributes to bilateral development projects that increase the food production capacity of local partners. In Kenya, we support a project that aims at creating an efficient irrigation system that is independent of weather conditions. Moreover, in 2021

Poland joined the School Meals Coalition because it understands that school meals programmes help to combat child hunger, poverty and multiple forms of malnutrition.

The current food security crisis is not the result of the sanctions imposed on Russia. It is a ripple effect of the ongoing Russian aggression that from day one aimed at disrupting the production and export of agricultural products from Ukraine. Russia might have hoped that the negative consequences felt by many countries would prevent the international community from providing support to Ukraine. The result they achieved was just the opposite, and once again the international community has proved Russia wrong.

In general, Poland is against imposing sanctions on food production, as in the past we were actually targeted by Russian sanctions in that area. On many occasions, Russia used such instruments as weapons in political conflicts, imposing prohibitive tariffs on Polish food products or simply banning them from their markets. Such methods are not acceptable in times of peace, let alone by a country waging a bloody war against its neighbour.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Fifield (Australia): I would like to thank the briefers for their update earlier today.

We are gathered for a clear reason — Russia's invasion of Ukraine is threatening global food security and is compounding the devastating impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic, the conflict and climate change. It has had a great impact on fragile food systems, causing further disruption to global food production and exports, inflating already high commodity and food prices.

It must be said that the numbers are alarming. Forty-three million people were on the brink of famine before the invasion of Ukraine. Now the World Food Programme estimates an additional 33 to 47 million people will fall into acute food insecurity as a direct result of the invasion. That demonstrates the causal effect of conflict on hunger crises, including in Afghanistan, Myanmar and Yemen, among other examples.

I should also like to call out yet again the disinformation that we have heard today and in recent weeks, and that is the disingenuous claim that the food security crisis that we are discussing has been

caused by Western sanctions. That is incorrect. The food security crisis is occurring because global food prices are now at record high levels — record highs as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine; record highs because Ukraine is preoccupied with defending itself against Russia's unprovoked, unjust and illegal invasion rather than shipping grain; record highs because more than 7 million Ukrainians have been displaced by the war and agricultural land and civilian infrastructure has been damaged, significantly disrupting the growing season and access to markets.

Let us be clear. One way to rapidly improve food security is for Russia to immediately end its war in Ukraine. Another useful response to growing food insecurity is to focus on humanitarian needs, including through organizations such as the World Food Programme. Famine can be averted with early action, but that requires unhindered humanitarian access and a well-resourced rapid response.

Australia calls on all actors to allow access for humanitarian agencies to reach those most in need. International trade should also support food security. The most critical short-term global response to curtail the food price increases is maintaining open, transparent and predictable agricultural trade. Experience and evidence clearly showed that domestic protections such as trade barriers and subsidies make economies weaker and more costly in the long run.

Despite that, the scale of the current restrictions being imposed on food and fertilizer trade surpassed those enacted during the last major food crisis of 2007 to 2008, according to the World Bank. Those restrictions will reduce the amount of product available for global trade, bringing up prices and causing supply chain issues as countries compete for alternative supplies.

Australia urges all countries to keep agricultural trade open, improve access to food, lower import barriers and cut export restrictions.

Our highest priority should be to ensure that food can make its way to the most vulnerable. Australia will always remain a reliable open supplier of food products to the world. But the greatest and most immediate improvement, and let us all say it again, will come from the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Maldives.

Mr. Adam (Maldives): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Gro Intelligence for their briefings and the invaluable insights that they have provided.

Nothing is more fundamental to our human existence than food, water and clean air. Yet multiple crises, from conflict to climate change, threaten the fish, forests and fields that we have relied upon to sustain us for generation upon generation. We welcome this opportunity to share our reflections on food security, conflict and the maintenance of international peace and security.

We live in extremely challenging times. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continues to pose a threat. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports on climate change are alarming. The state of our ocean is dire. Fires rage. Desertification intensifies. Farmers face unprecedented droughts. Those conditions had already created a significant increase in food prices, and conflict situations have intensified that already troubling situation.

Navigating the COVID pandemic required Maldives to make unprecedented State expenditures to secure vaccines and supplies and to provide support to workers, families and businesses. As we began 2022, we had a sense of optimism that the worst of the pandemic was behind us and that we could begin the work of stabilizing under this new normal. Instead, this year began with the challenges caused by rising energy and food prices.

That is a particularly acute problem for Maldives and other small islands that rely on imported staple foods, cooking oils and other agricultural commodities. Our Governments, which already face funding challenges associated with COVID expenditures, must now consider supports to soften and stabilize food-price shocks, creating further demands on fiscal space that is in already dire short supply.

There is little that Maldives can do alone to address the situation directly. At best, we can increase our stockpiles of foodstuffs, but that is no substitute for the free flow of food and goods through our global supply chains, which we have come to rely on to feed

and provide for our people. Changes to the system at this point would be imprudent given the significant investments necessary to re-engineer supply chains and ensure that the required storage and transportation infrastructure is in place.

We must also heed the lessons from the COVID pandemic. That means that we should avoid situations in times of scarcity where we retreat inward when the moment demands greater global solidarity, engagement and support. We must avoid trade and other measures that disrupt the flow of food that is so vital to not just Maldives but to all countries around the world.

Conflict is nothing new. There are many parts of the world in conflict situations, and every effort must be made to bring them to an end through durable diplomatic solutions. Today's interconnected supply chains are such that a conflict anywhere in the world can have far-reaching consequences.

However, it is not just conflict that undermines our food security. Conflict exacerbates the situation, but climate change, unsustainable patterns of consumption and environmental degradation are foundational threats to our food security and our very existence. We must ensure that we work to address the root causes of food insecurity, conflict and associated challenges, as that is the only way to ensure enduring international peace and security.

Food cannot be weaponized as a tool of coercive diplomacy. For us to ensure international peace and security, we must work with all actors, including civil society, business and others, to address not only food security but also the wider system risks that undermine our planetary health and food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Niger.

Mr. Ousman (Niger) (*spoke in French*): The Niger congratulates your delegation, Mr. President, on having assumed the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I should like also to thank our eminent briefers, Secretary-General António Guterres, Mr. David Beasley and Mr. Qu Dongyu and Ms. Menker for their enlightening briefings. The participation of a high number of ministers in our debate today shows, as if it were necessary, the importance of holding a discussion on the impact of conflicts on food security.

While the world has just begun to see the light at the end of the tunnel in terms of the fight against

the coronavirus disease pandemic, at the same time, regrettably, we are seeing a growing number of conflicts and violence in various regions of the world, with tragic consequences, in particular for food security and nutrition for those peoples that are the victims of those conflicts.

It is not a mere coincidence that a study was published by the World Food Programme showing that 60 per cent of those who are suffering from food insecurity and malnutrition live in regions of violent conflict and insecurity, as is the case in Yemen, in Syria, in the Horn of Africa, in the Lake Chad basin and in my own region, the Sahel.

In all those conflict situations, the supply chains have been disrupted, as have commercial transactions between communities, as people had to flee their homes and abandon their livelihoods. In fact, violence in the Sahel, where agriculture is the main economic activity, has led to millions of people being displaced. They had to abandon their crops and their cattle and seek refuge in other communities or even in refugee camps.

With no crops to harvest, no animals to raise, and rural markets having become no-go areas, displaced people have found themselves food insecure and dependent on humanitarian aid for survival. Unfortunately, in many cases, access to populations trapped in remote areas or under the control of violent extremist groups is difficult and risky for humanitarian workers, who are themselves targeted, or taken hostage for ransom, by terrorist groups.

The adverse effects of climate change are another factor that exacerbates food insecurity. Indeed, even before the advent of insecurity and the intensification of the activities of armed terrorist groups, regions like the Sahel were already weakened by extreme climatic phenomena such as droughts, floods and soil degradation. With the resulting scarcity of natural resources, difficulties in accessing these resources have led to conflicts between farming and herding communities that had previously lived in symbiosis. This is why, during its recent Council mandate, the Niger constantly drew attention to the link between the negative impact of climate change, insecurity and food security.

If there are still sceptics as to the link between food security and conflict, the current crisis in Ukraine serves to prove them wrong. It is now clear that a conflict in any part of the world can affect the supply

and accessibility of food and such agricultural inputs as fertilizer, owing to the disruption of supply chains associated with that conflict area. My delegation calls on the international community to make every effort to end the hostilities in Ukraine in order to create an environment conducive to the free flow of goods to and from that area, in order to alleviate and eventually alleviate the current food shortage.

In conclusion, while urgent measures are needed to end conflicts and break the cycle of food insecurity and famine that they generate in affected areas, the Niger believes that, in countries facing the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism coupled with climate change, only sustainable solutions supported by significant funding can break this vicious cycle. To this end, the implementation of projects and programmes aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and land degradation on farming and herding will undoubtedly help boost food production. Building basic infrastructure to provide essential services and good governance will undoubtedly help to build the peace and resilience of populations in these conflict zones, particularly the Sahel.

As many of the speakers have said this morning, arable land exists and the world has sufficient funds to finance agriculture, especially with the help of science and technology. To refuse to feed people is therefore to choose to fuel conflict. We have the technical and financial capacity to change the course of history. Let us do it now. Let us do it while there is still time.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Nasir (Indonesia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate. We also thank the briefers for their comprehensive briefings.

For Indonesia, food security and national security are two sides of the same coin. From our own past experiences, uncontrollably high prices of staple food and supply-side constraints have resulted in great political instability. We therefore share the Secretary-General's view that if we do not feed the people, we feed conflict.

Today a combination of conflict, the coronavirus disease and climate change are contributing to food insecurity as well as humanitarian crises in many parts of the world. The war in Ukraine is exacerbating this situation, as it and Russia are important producers of

food, commodities and agricultural inputs. We reiterate our call for stopping the war.

Addressing global food insecurity requires both short-term and long-term actions. In the short term, and most immediately, we need to scale up humanitarian assistance to people living in conflict areas. Also important is humanitarian assistance for people whose food-commodity supplies have been disrupted, owing either to conflicts or such natural phenomena as droughts or floods.

The limited fiscal space of developing countries as a result of two years of pandemic requires us to increase support for humanitarian aid and United Nations humanitarian agencies. A key strategy in the short term is to bring available stockpiles of food commodities and agricultural inputs from Ukraine and Russia to market. While agriculture products are not subject to sanction, this understanding must be well coordinated with the international banking system so that product delivery is not delayed owing to payment issues. We also welcome the Secretary-General's effort to work on an agriculture corridor in Ukraine and Russia.

In the medium and long term, there must be a global strategy that supports agriculture, production, trade and governance and which allows countries to achieve resilience in staple-food commodities. For this, we must invest in innovative and sustainable farming, climate-resilient crops and an agile supply chain that can quickly adjust to disruption.

Food security must also be given a special place in international trade agreements. Indonesia has long been a strong advocate for food security and special agricultural products being given special treatment by the World Trade Organization.

Developing countries must also be given the ability under international trade rules to support smallholder farmers that produce food-security-related commodities. This is important not just for the food security and the livelihood of the smallholder farmers, but also for the rural development of regions. Furthermore, strong cooperation and collaboration with the private sector is crucial. They are key partners in ensuring greater food access to the public.

On Indonesia's palm-oil-exports policy, which was mentioned in the briefing this morning, we emphasize that this was an emergency temporary measure. It was a temporary response to the spike in price and to the

scarcity of cooking oil in our domestic market. It was a temporary policy designed to safeguard the food security of around 270 million people in Indonesia. It has been announced that this temporary response will be lifted on 23 May, which is next week.

Finally, everyone has the right to access to safe and nutritious food and to be free from hunger. For this, we cannot afford division, nor can we afford a "take it or leave it" attitude when addressing a life-or-death issue such as food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): I thank the United States for convening this important meeting and our briefers for their excellent briefings.

Germany aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

I refer to Foreign Minister Baerbock's statement at the Ministerial meeting on global food security yesterday: by blocking Ukrainian ports, by destroying silos, streets and railroads, and especially farmers' fields, Russia has launched a grain war, stoking a global food crisis.

This aggravated global food crisis is not as Russia wants us to believe, namely, the consequence of sanctions that target those responsible for Russia's war of aggression. The responsibility, in fact, lies with Russia, whose military actions have destroyed part of Ukrainian agriculture and whose Government deliberately blocks the export of grain much needed in other parts of the world. Together with its partners, Germany will support Ukraine in exploring alternative ways of exporting its grain to where it is so badly needed.

Russia's war of aggression exacerbates an already dire situation, as we all know. Even before Russia started its war against Ukraine on 24 February, the year 2022 had been forecast to be the most food insecure year on record. The first victims are, as always, the most vulnerable ones — women, children and the elderly, especially in less developed countries, in particular in the global South. These people have our full solidarity and support.

The interlinkages between hunger and conflict are clearly recognized by resolution 2417 (2018). As members of the Security Council in 2019 and 2020,

Germany and the Dominican Republic consistently put this topic high on the Council's agenda and called for more decisive action. In our view, the Security Council should use the means of its resolution 2417 (2018) more often. Building on resolution 2417 (2018), we must become better at preventing conflict, on the one hand, and at addressing the alarming incidence of hunger and global food insecurity, on the other. I must stress three points.

First, we must increase humanitarian assistance to the World Food Programme and other humanitarian organizations, particularly with flexible funding, in line with the Grand Bargain commitments. Germany has already announced substantial additional funding for this year in the area to support the Sahel region, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and Syria. At the same time, we must also help to increase the long-term resilience of vulnerable countries. We must strive for a coordinated triple-nexus approach among the different pillars of peace and security, humanitarian assistance and development cooperation.

Secondly, we must strengthen the resilience of populations and food systems to climate-induced shocks in conflict-affected areas, including through early and anticipatory action. That is also a key priority during our presidency of the Group of Seven (G-7), as the G-7 Foreign Ministers' statement of 13 May underlines.

Thirdly, we all have to step up our commitment to helping to counter the devastating global repercussions of the war in Ukraine. In total, the German budget plan foresees providing more than €4 billion for food security-related activities in 2022. Our Global Alliance for Food Security, launched at the meeting of the G-7 development ministers this week, is open to the participation of further actors. It reflects the need to redouble efforts for resilient, sustainable and diversified food systems in the medium- and long-terms.

Hunger is human-made. It is therefore our choice to prevent it. We are convinced that, together, we can achieve that goal. For that, we must do better and take concrete steps to collectively tackle the root causes of conflict and hunger.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mauritius.

Mr. Nayeck (Mauritius): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's meeting on conflict and food

security — an issue that is of the greatest importance to many of us.

Mauritius is a small island developing State, a pluricultural nation, with a strong belief in the peaceful coexistence of all societies and countries. It is, however, highly dependent on the import of food and commodities for the survival of its people. Surviving the pandemic during the past two years was a challenge in itself, during which we saw a race for protective equipment and vaccines. With long-lasting conflicts, especially in regions that are primary producers of basic commodities, we run the risk of seeing a similar situation. We are already witnessing a hike in prices, causing social unrest in some countries. If there is no food, no peace can prevail, and there will be no future for any one of us.

Food insecurity affects the lives of millions. It does not exist in isolation and should not fall under the influence of global geopolitics. The spectre of famine caused by climate-induced droughts has resurfaced in some parts of the world and has increased the number of people living without enough to eat. Small island developing States, such as Mauritius, which have inherent vulnerabilities due to their geographical dispersion and distance from main markets, find themselves in a yet more difficult situation. Climate change is already threatening our food security by reducing crop use and disrupting the systems and infrastructure that our people use for access to food. We are struggling with inflation, rising interest rates and debt burdens, which were already affecting the fragile economies of small island developing States. Restrictions will only have a multiplier effect that accelerates food inflation. This is not the time to impose protectionist trade policies.

We should promptly address the causes of conflicts and find creative ways to resolve them peacefully through diplomacy and mediation, while respecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all parties concerned. Otherwise, we will allow a bad situation to only get worse, thereby having a much bigger and more serious crisis. In this new era, where space tourism is hitting the headlines, poor and vulnerable people should not have to face a burden of anxiety created by food shortages. Food insecurity perpetuates poverty, and we should not let the virus of indifference afflict us. We need to uphold, promote and respect international law, which is a bedrock of our universal values, to achieve freedom from fear or want. It is only through greater global cooperation and a peaceful world free from

conflicts that we will also be able to ensure and attain our Sustainable Development Goals of zero hunger and achieve food security.

We all know that global problems require global solutions. There is no more representative entity than the United Nations. Let us therefore join hands and redouble our efforts to eradicate all conflicts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Namibia.

Mr. Tughuyendere (Namibia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important open debate on the maintenance on international peace and security, with an emphasis on conflict and food security. Conflict and food security are key factors affecting the maintenance of international peace and security.

Today the international community is confronted with a plethora of drivers of fragility. Chief among them are the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, climate change, ongoing global conflicts, including the unresolved conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and coercive economic measures, such as sanctions. As a result, the lived experience of many of the world's citizens, especially in the developing world, is characterized by crisis levels of food insecurity, coupled with rising unemployment, the loss of income and increasing poverty. That is on the back of widened gender inequalities and a climate crisis, which only deepens the vulnerabilities of local and global food systems.

These are profound consequences of the drivers of fragility, which do not only pose serious security challenges to the entire world, but also deepen inequality and erode the global gains towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conflicts have increased inflation in many parts of the world, thereby increasing the vulnerabilities of those who need assistance the most, namely, children, the elderly, women, girls and the disabled. Today food prices are on the increase, especially in developing countries, partly due to the ongoing wars and instability. That could make food unaffordable and cause famine and extreme hunger, which could eventually trigger political riots and further conflicts. In addition, it also significantly increases the global need for humanitarian assistance to reduce food gaps and prevent acute malnutrition.

Every effort must therefore be made to invest in preventive diplomacy and in seeking the amicable resolution of conflicts. To do that, however, flexibility, political commitment and boldness are required.

It is a reality, under the current raging conflicts, that global food supply chains are severely disrupted due to challenges in production, transportation and other logistics. Furthermore, it compounds the impact on developing countries, as many rely on many external markets for food consumption. The imposition of sanctions also affects global food supply chains and destabilizes the targeted countries, thereby impacting the lives of the most vulnerable. A great deal of fortitude, with good intention, is therefore needed to address this issue. Conflict early-warning systems must not only be designed, reviewed and strengthened, but must be embraced and taken seriously.

The link between climate change and security cannot be denied; neither can it be relegated to mere discussions in the Security Council. It is real in many parts of the world, especially in Africa. One of the effects of climate change is drought, and that affects the livelihoods of many people. Competition for water and land has increased, and it often generates an unhealthy social atmosphere that only foments conflicts.

Namibia, a country with 30 per cent of its land surface covered by two deserts, remains one of the most arid sub-Saharan countries; 92 per cent of its land mass is considered semi-arid, arid or hyper-arid. Over the past six years, we have experienced three devastating droughts. One of them was recorded as the most severe in the past 100 years.

Since Namibia's independence in 1990, we have experienced at least 12 years during which half of the country received below-average rainfall, resulting in droughts and land degradation. During those years, many farmers lost their livestock and experienced poor crop harvests. In some instances, droughts are followed by floods, compromising food security and the livelihoods of farming communities. For Namibia, therefore, land degradation and desertification, which are further compounded by climate change, are critical areas of concern.

That reality imposes a huge responsibility on us to promote policies that focus on combating desertification and promoting land restoration, as part of our sustainable agriculture and food security strategy. For that reason, Namibia has been a consistent

participant in the proceedings of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, including the ongoing fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is being hosted by Côte d'Ivoire.

In conclusion, the global community must exercise more restraint in the use of trade restrictions as a political tool. It is all too often innocent bystanders, including women and children, who become victims of such punitive measures. We must guard against having good intentions that may have bad consequences on the lives of the vulnerable in our societies. We must resist unnecessary trade restrictions, not only to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic but also to shore up macroeconomic stability, maintain peace and security in fragile States and ensure global food security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Greece.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): At the outset, I would like to echo previous speakers in commending the United States on convening this timely and important open debate.

Greece aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (EU), and I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

The unprecedented surge in food prices — the highest in the past three decades — the rise in fertilizer prices, which threatens the future production of essential food, the disruption in supply chains and surging shipping and transport costs, coupled with the spike in energy and fuel prices, are snowballing. It is a trend that reverses years of progress in reducing hunger and efforts to accomplish Sustainable Development Goal 2 — a trend that undoubtedly exacerbates inequalities and could aggravate social and civil unrest and instability.

As the world is struggling to recover from the coronavirus disease pandemic in a responsible and resilient way, we are facing a future we cannot accurately predict. Yet we can surely estimate that it will be bleak unless we act collectively and in solidarity. In that vein, we have co-sponsored the General Assembly draft resolution on the state of global food insecurity, submitted by Lebanon. We welcome the Secretary-General's call to action through the establishment of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and

Finance, as well as the other recent initiatives, and we are actively engaging with the EU to identify and take advantage of all alternative routes to make Ukrainian grains available to the world. The disruptions caused by the conflict have ramifications that go far beyond its borders, food shortages being only a part of them.

War and hunger have been loyal companions since antiquity. At the end of the great Peloponnesian War, just before the city of Athens yielded, it had endured more than 30 years of deprivation and exhausting circumstances, including a famine that claimed the life of its most glorified leader. History has demonstrated how conflicts worsen food and nutrition insecurity, affecting and even taking millions of lives.

The subsequent destruction of infrastructure, the disruptions in market access, the lack of resources in a globalized economy and the humanitarian tragedies are all factors that lead to a steep rise in the prices of basic foodstuffs, making them practically unavailable to those who need them. That is a recipe for starvation. Unfortunately, food insecurity is also a cause of tension, as many cases involving civil conflict have shown.

However, in our modern, interconnected era, crises reverberate much louder than ever, and the current pressure will eventually reach all corners of our world. What is happening in Ukraine today is having an unprecedented impact on food security worldwide, not only because Russia and Ukraine represent a considerable percentage of global wheat and grain production but also because of the disruption caused in transport lines, markets and food production internationally.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, the situation is far from building back better. It sows the seeds of further tensions, jeopardizing peace and potentially fostering political instability in vulnerable regions. That is why Greece has repeatedly called for an immediate ceasefire and the swift creation of humanitarian corridors to scale up humanitarian operations and supply-chain capacity.

Our call is for peace and dialogue to prevail. Our call is to stand up for international law, the fundamental norms of international relations and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Greece, together with its partners, will spare no effort to address the issue at its root. This is our collective responsibility.

The President: The representative of India has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Parihar (India): I am constrained to take the floor once again at this late hour. In the interest of time, I will be brief.

The representative of Pakistan made unwarranted remarks that symbolize nothing other than a Pavlovian response aimed at misusing any forum and every topic to propagate false and malicious propaganda against my country. The Union Territories 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. No amount of rhetoric or propaganda from any country can deny that fact. The only contribution that Pakistan can make is to stop State-sponsored terrorism. With regard to his other remarks, we will treat them with the contempt that they deserve.

The President: The representative of Pakistan has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Mohammad Aamir Khan (Pakistan): My delegation is obliged to take the floor in response to the false and misleading comments made by the representative of India.

Jammu and Kashmir is not, and has never been, a part of India, as can be verified by any official United Nations map. Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory. As stipulated in resolution 47 (1948), the final disposition of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is to be decided by the people of Jammu and Kashmir through a fair and impartial plebiscite to be held under the auspices of the United Nations.

India accepted the relevant Security Council resolutions, which remain to be implemented. India is obliged, under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations, to implement those resolutions. India's refusal to do so for over seven decades now constitutes a

flagrant and continuing violation of Security Council resolutions, the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The Indian Government's unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019 — robbing occupied Jammu and Kashmir of its identity, oppressing its people with 900,000 occupying troops and changing Jammu and Kashmir demography from a Muslim majority to a Hindu majority state — narrowed the space for dialogue on Jammu and Kashmir.

India's allegations regarding terrorism are nothing but a smokescreen to conceal State terrorism against the Kashmiri people. History bears testimony to the fact that colonizers and occupiers often attempt to justify their suppression of legitimate struggles for self-determination and freedom by portraying them as terrorism.

But mark my words: nothing will dampen the indomitable spirit of the Kashmiri people to seek their inalienable right to self-determination. Pakistan will continue to expose India's State terrorism and its oppression against the people of illegally Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. We will continue to call for a just solution to the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

Before adjourning this meeting, I would like to take a moment, on behalf of the Council, to thank our United Nations staff colleagues who have worked late this evening to make this meeting possible. Specifically, I want to recognize the interpreters who worked tirelessly throughout the day to ensure that we could hold this meeting. I thank them all.

The meeting rose at 8.05 p.m.