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Seventy-eighth year

9296th meeting

Tuesday, 28 March 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Nyusi	(Mozambique)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil	Mr. Bicalho Cozendey
	China	Mr. Liu Yuxi
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Ms. Raponda
	Ghana	Mr. Akufo-Addo
	Japan	Mr. Ishikane
	Malta	Ms. Gatt
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Switzerland	Mr. Berset
	United Arab Emirates	Mr. Al Nahyan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism by strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and mechanisms

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/147)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism by strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and mechanisms

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/147)

The President: I would like to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres. I also wish to wholeheartedly thank the Heads of State, ministers and other high-level representatives for honouring this meeting with their attendance. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion and attests to their valuable support for Mozambique's efforts to rally the international community in defeating terrorism.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Rwanda to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Vincent Biruta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/147, which contains the text of a letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in Portuguese; English statement provided by the Secretariat*): I commend the Government of Mozambique for convening this timely debate.

(spoke in English)

Terrorism is the root cause and the result of many of the problems under the consideration of the Security Council. Terrorism tightens its grip by seeking out and exploiting weaknesses and instability in political, economic and security systems; by preying on the fears and vulnerabilities of people facing grinding poverty, hunger and famine; by exploiting inequalities and social exclusion to aggravate tensions; by trading in the timeless evils of prejudice and discrimination, targeting specific groups, cultures, religions and ethnicities; by engaging in criminal activities, such as money-laundering and illegal mining, as well as the trafficking of arms, drugs, precious minerals, antiquities and human beings; by promoting lies, hatred and disinformation in cyberspace; by keeping women and girls under a constant cloud of intimidation, as well as outright sexual and gender-based violence; and by flouting or ignoring the rule of law, from international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international refugee law and other international norms and standards to the values embedded in the Charter of the United Nations.

No age, no culture, no religion, no nationality and no region is immune. But the situation in Africa is especially concerning. Despair, poverty, hunger, a lack of basic services, unemployment and unconstitutional changes in Government continue to lay fertile ground for the creeping expansion of terrorist groups to infect new parts of the continent.

I am deeply concerned by the gains that terrorist groups are making in the Sahel and elsewhere. Community by community, they are extending their reach. The trail of terror is widening, with fighters, funds and weapons increasingly flowing between regions and across the continent and with new alliances being forged with organized crime and piracy groups. The online world provides a global platform for spreading violent ideologies even further.

Just as terrorism drives people apart, countering it can bring countries together. We see that across Africa,

which is home to a number of regional counter-terrorism initiatives, from the joint efforts in the Sahel, the Lake Chad basin, Mozambique and beyond to the renewed determination of African leaders to tackle that evolving threat, as seen at the recent Extraordinary Summit of the African Union on terrorism and unconstitutional changes of Government.

The United Nations stands with Africa to end the scourge. That includes the Security Council's policy guidance, technical assistance and support for sanctions regimes. It includes the Counter-Terrorism Committee's 65 assessment visits to ensure compliance with Security Council requirements, which resulted in thousands of actionable recommendations to Member States to improve responses. It includes our work, through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, to bring together diverse United Nations agencies, Member States, regional parliaments and civil society to support joint efforts across the continent. Above all, it includes our ongoing close collaboration with the African Union and regional and subregional African organizations.

We are delivering tailored assistance to African Member States, including in the areas of prevention, legal assistance, investigations, prosecutions, reintegration, rehabilitation and human rights protection. With Nigeria, we are co-organizing the upcoming African Counter-Terrorism Summit. We are strengthening our work together on important peace initiatives, such as the Independent High-Level Panel on Security and Development in the Sahel. We are tirelessly advocating for a new generation of robust peace enforcement missions and counter-terrorism operations, led by the African Union, with a Security Council mandate under Chapter VII and with guaranteed, predictable funding, namely, through assessed contributions. I urge Member States to support that vital work.

(spoke in French)

The eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in June, co-facilitated by Canada and Tunisia, will be a critical opportunity to strengthen our work in that area and find new ways to more effectively tackle the structural conditions that create fertile ground for terrorism. The review will also be an opportunity to recall that human rights should be at the centre of our efforts.

Terrorism represents the denial, and even the destruction, of human rights. We will therefore

never succeed in the fight against that scourge if we perpetuate that denial and destruction. Evidence shows that counter-terrorism efforts that are focused solely on security rather than human rights can inadvertently increase marginalization and exclusion and further exacerbate the situation. The New Agenda for Peace sets out a holistic and comprehensive approach to building more peaceful and stable societies, in which terror and violent extremism have no place, through prevention, by addressing the economic and social conditions that can lead to terrorism in the first place, and through inclusion, by ensuring that counter-terrorism strategies reflect the lived experiences of all communities and constituencies, particularly minorities, women and young people, and by always placing human rights and the rule of law at the core of all our work.

(spoke in English)

At every step, we commit to upholding the essential rights and dignity of terrorism's victims and survivors by supporting and helping to heal those who have been harmed and displaced. It is in their names and in the memory of those who were killed by terrorism and violent extremism that we will continue our work to end the scourge once and for all.

I thank the Security Council and all Member States for standing with us in such essential efforts in Africa and beyond.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Assoumani.

President Assoumani *(spoke in French)*: At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on having assumed the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. I am convinced that your enlightened leadership will enable us to move forward as we look for appropriate solutions to the many challenges facing the international community, particularly with regard to peace and security. I am therefore happy to address this high-level Security Council debate on a complex issue that requires a strong and comprehensive response. I would like to thank you, my brother, President of Mozambique, for your kind invitation.

One could rightly ponder on the relevance of the link between terrorism and violent extremism, as those phenomena seem to fuel each other, resulting

in families displaced from countries and the delayed development of our States. With regard to terrorism, I would like to recall that that phenomenon has raged for a long time. It is since the Libyan crisis in 2011 that it has really exploded, in particular in Africa. That crisis encouraged the arrival in the Sahel of thousands of foreign fighters and mercenaries. It led to the establishment of terrorist organizations in Africa and the uncontrolled circulation of weapons. And that is how terrorism gradually expanded in Africa. From the north to the south and the east to the west, the terrorist contagion continues to grow in almost all parts of Africa. I will therefore spare no effort to ensure that the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030, which I have had the honour of managing since February, becomes a reality.

Africa remains confronted by the continued disturbing incidence of terrorism, which has negative socioeconomic and political effects on the countries and regions concerned, as well as the continent as a whole. That is why the African Union's sixteenth Extraordinary Summit on terrorism, held in Malabo in May 2022, focused on the disturbing link between terrorism and violent extremism, on the one hand, and the advent of unconstitutional changes of Government in Africa, on the other. The Summit underlined the need for an urgent response to the threats posed by terrorism, whose consequences the Security Council has been seized of for several years. For its part, the African Union has already taken on initiatives in that regard, including the establishment of its Ministerial Committee on Counter Terrorism to support member States and regional economic communities in implementing the Summit's conclusions.

The continent is also continuing to make great strides in addressing its various security challenges, including through the deployment of major peacekeeping operations. Examples of that include the outstanding achievements made in Somalia through the African Union Mission in Somalia and, subsequently, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, in addition to the achievements of the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad basin. The success of those missions has helped to reduce violence, contain terrorist groups and protect the affected populations. The recent deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique, as well as the decision of the East African Community to deploy a

force in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, largely encouraged and supported by the African Union and the United Nations, deserve to be commended.

The ongoing security challenges, which greatly compromise our quest for sustainable development, require sustained and renewed efforts within the relevant regional and continental frameworks in a collective momentum for peace, security and stability on the continent. To that end, the sharing of relevant information and intelligence and the coordination of operations is essential to consolidate our gains in preventing and combating terrorism and other cross-border threats. That is why the African Union has put in place regional frameworks, such as its enhanced security cooperation process and the Nouakchott process. We are also ensuring the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahel-Sahara region and the Djibouti process at the continent level, as well as that of other regional fusion and liaison centres and units, such as the Accra Initiative. Some of those frameworks are currently having positive impacts but still require renewed commitment and support. And the United Nations and the African Union, as key instruments, have the ability to leverage those tools to combat terrorism and violent extremism.

One of the factors contributing to the continued spread of terrorism is the lack of attention given to primarily preventive approaches. I therefore urge the Council to redouble its efforts by strengthening United Nations-African Union collaboration in prevention, which is less costly in the long run. The United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, if provided with the necessary resources, would make a significant impact. In that regard, it is also important to highlight the planned African Union-United Nations Development Programme Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transitions (AFSIT) to support States in political transitions in order to build resilient local and national institutions. I therefore recommend the use of those platforms and call on partners to support the effective launch of that strategic project. On behalf of the African Union, I would like to assure the Council of our commitment to sparing no effort to support member States in achieving our common goal of preventing the spread and threat of terrorism and combating it on the continent by further strengthening collaboration with the United Nations.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize two important points in the fight against this scourge.

First, we must ensure the mobilization of the necessary funds for preventing and combating terrorism and ensure predictable, flexible and sustained funding for African Union peacekeeping operations, which are also intended to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Prevention is also important, and we need to focus on it more than we currently are. The Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism needs more concerted and decentralized implementation. Innovative programmes such as the AFSIT programme, co-funded by the African Union-United Nations Development Programme, should be strongly encouraged and financially supported. Establishing regional counter-terrorism centres to support national efforts to prevent and combat terrorism is a crucially important component of that. Those centres will help strengthen national, regional and continent-wide protective measures and ensure inter-regional cooperation and coordination in the prevention and detection of terrorist threats, as well as in combating terrorist acts, including in ports and at sea.

Time is not on our side. We need to combat poverty and exclusion through a successful policy that includes capacity-building and ensuring equal opportunities, as well as boosting employment for young people, who are often the preferred targets of extremists. We need to dry up the sources of terrorist financing through hard-line legislation that enables the freezing of funds belonging to suspected terrorists or those who have been listed nationally or internationally. Above all, we need to take more comprehensive, stronger, coordinated, innovative, timely, sustainable and supportive actions if we want to eradicate that scourge and in turn achieve the African Union's Agenda 2063 for harmonious and sustainable development.

The President: I thank Mr. Assoumani for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the President of the Republic of Mozambique.

(spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation)

I begin my statement before this organ of the United Nations — the Security Council — by welcoming and thanking all those who have honoured today's meeting with their presence. On behalf of the Republic of Mozambique, the Mozambican people and myself personally, I greet all members of the Security Council. Since this is my first statement before the Council, I wish

to reiterate our deepest gratitude to all States Members of the United Nations for the trust they have bestowed on us. I extend my singular appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres for his commitment to strengthening multilateralism, in particular the international peace and security agenda — the tenets upon which the Organization was established.

On 1 March this year, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the 2023–2024 term, the Republic of Mozambique assumed the monthly rotating presidency. Among various themes, Mozambique elected for a signature event an in-depth debate on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. It is our understanding that, like climate change, terrorism is one of the serious threats to the security of our countries.

Under the current circumstances, terrorism represents the predominant face of the scourge of war that the United Nations aimed to eliminate from its inception, through the changes it brought about in different economic, geographic and social contexts. Countering terrorism continues to pose a challenge to consolidating the spirit of solidarity among peoples and States, due to its transnational nature and its unpredictability in relation to the locations and times in which it occurs and the targets it strikes. The expansion of terrorism is a significant threat and is driven by factors that vary from one context to another. On the one hand, radicalization is based on identity variables that are fuelled by intolerance, and on the other hand, the manipulation of socioeconomic factors has accelerated recruitment by terrorist groups, particularly among young people. The association of terrorism with transnational organized crime has contributed to the survival and spread of terrorist groups. In the context of the African continent, such groups have generally resorted to trafficking in mineral resources, in particular gemstones, as well as to trafficking in illicit drugs, in order to fund their activities through money-laundering. Such financial resources derived from illicit activities sustain the seduction and recruitment of young people to join their groups.

Although terrorism is a global threat, the situation in Africa is more critical. The 2022 Global Terrorism Index shows that approximately 48 per cent of terrorism-related deaths occur in Africa, with the Sahel region being the new epicentre of terrorist attacks. At the level of continental Africa, terrorist groups have acted with more frequency in North Africa, the Sahel,

Central Africa, the Horn of Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa. In the Southern Africa region, the Republic of Mozambique has been the direct target of terrorist attacks since October 2017. Those acts have caused death and destruction and slowed down the development agenda for the welfare of our peoples. Violent extremism conducive to terrorism is also sustained by a number of different approaches and narratives. As mentioned earlier, the exploitation of the development challenges faced by the majority of African countries, in particular with respect to youth employment rates, makes communities vulnerable to the phenomenon of terrorism. By proposing this theme, we aim to provide the Security Council with a moment for reflection, including on how to improve the cooperation framework among the United Nations, the African Union and African subregional organizations in the context of countering terrorism. The lessons gathered from such reflection could be useful and could be applied in other regions of the world that are affected by the phenomenon.

The Republic of Mozambique commends the efforts of the United Nations, through its Counter-Terrorism Committee, in coordinating Member States' efforts to fight terrorism, in particular by monitoring the implementation of its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and resolution 1373 (2001), on counter-terrorism, and prevention measures. The Republic of Mozambique also underscores the importance of the Delhi Declaration, which reaffirms the collective efforts of States through a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism. With regard to the multilateral approach underlined in a number of relevant documents, regional mechanisms are an option that should be seriously considered in countering terrorism. In addition, the Charter of the United Nations, in Chapter VIII, Articles 52 to 54, provides an appropriate framework for collaboration and the sharing of responsibilities among the United Nations and regional and subregional mechanisms in the area of international peacekeeping and security.

Moreover, institutional collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations has been referenced in various Security Council resolutions that emphasize the importance of international cooperation in countering terrorism, as well as the role that regional organizations can play in that regard. African countries, the African Union and regional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community

(SADC), the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, have accumulated relevant experience over the years on matters of conflict resolution. That experience has contributed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063 with respect to the objective of silencing the guns in Africa. For example, a SADC mission was established in Mozambique with an important military component that has been engaged in fighting terrorism in Cabo Delgado province since July 2021. That shows how the approach of African solutions to African problems is not merely pan-Africanist discourse or an empty narrative but rather a principle that seeks to capitalize on local experiences and local specificities in finding solutions. For Mozambique, that experience is vested with added value, as we are currently fighting terrorism by combining SADC's regional multilateral efforts with the bilateral efforts of Mozambique and Rwanda. Together, we are successfully fighting terrorism.

Instead of the large investments that have been made globally over many years for the benefit of some countries, including African countries, we propose the consideration of the model I have described. It is simple to monitor, allows for easy communication and has achieved success very quickly. Therefore, as I mentioned, Mozambique has been engaged in countering terrorism with some success thanks to the combination of internal efforts and support from partners — including SADC, through its mission in Mozambique, and Rwanda — which have invested their scarce resources to the detriment of the social and economic development agenda. We therefore call for more support to be given to Mozambique and those countries so that terrorism can be eradicated from our country and the region.

Before I conclude my remarks, which are intended to share our vision, and basing our views on lessons learned in the African context, as well as on our understanding of the international structure of terrorism and violent extremism, Mozambique would like to humbly propose that the eighth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, scheduled for July, take into consideration the following. We need to establish a common mechanism aimed at promoting community resilience, which prevents the violent extremism that can lead to terrorism. That could be translated into the establishment of a fund to strengthen

local sustainable development initiatives promoting projects that can generate jobs for young people, especially in Africa and the Middle East. In addition, we would like to propose that the following policies and strategies be considered when coordinating with various multilateral mechanisms.

The first is strengthening cooperation among the Security Council, the African Union Peace and Security Council and regional blocs in order to stop the spread and consolidation of terrorism on the African continent. The second is prioritizing support for regional solutions arising from security pacts, as well as duly scrutinized bilateral mechanisms. The third is using information- and technology-sharing to build capacities for protecting critical infrastructure in areas where interests overlap, such as inter-State borders.

The fourth is coordinating priorities among various geopolitical regions, such as the West, Africa and the Middle East, while taking into account the spectrum of terrorism. The fifth is promoting a holistic approach that combines security, judicial and socioeconomic interventions in order to address fragile social factors that can often be seen as root causes of terrorism. The sixth is improving instruments and methods that will help us to distinguish between the types and modus operandi of terrorists in particular geographic regions so that we avoid trying to counter terrorism with global solutions alone.

In conclusion, I would like to make an appeal. The high indebtedness of many low- and middle-income developing countries not only reduces their ability to finance essential services and their economies, including responding effectively to the impacts of various shocks arising from climate change and human-made crises, it also makes them increasingly vulnerable to extremism, terrorism and other violent conflicts. In a recent study, the United Nations Development Programme estimated that 52 countries of that group, representing almost 40 per cent of the world's poor, are faced with that situation. In order to help them emerge from that crisis, we call on the international community to restructure their debts and facilitate access to affordable funding for high-risk countries. To that end, the international financial system must be transformed by reforming the multilateral financial institutions.

(spoke in English)

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to the other members of the Council who wish to make statements.

I call on the President of the Swiss Confederation.

President Berset *(spoke in French)*: First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's debate on such an important subject. I also thank the Secretary-General and the President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union for their briefings.

Despite the continuing efforts of the Council and the tireless commitment of international and regional organizations, terrorism persists. It is a serious threat to peace and security. It is also a threat that is ever-changing and adapts, if we can put it that way, to contexts that are themselves undergoing constant change. I believe that the Secretary-General reiterated in his most recent report on the threat posed by Da'esh (S/2023/76) that terrorism and violent extremism find fertile ground in which to reproduce in today's conflicts and instability of every kind. In those contexts, it is perhaps much easier for them to recruit, spread their hateful ideologies and incite violence, and while we can see that the risk exists everywhere, recently the trend has been manifesting itself in an alarming manner on the African continent.

You spoke about the situation in Cabo Delgado, Mr. President, which is still a source of concern for your country. I was able to see the situation for myself when I visited your country in February, and I thank you once again for the opportunity to accompany you on a trip to northern Mozambique and see the situation on the ground. We can see that new terrorist groups are emerging. We also see that existing armed groups are joining organizations that the United Nations has designated as terrorist, and that those threats continue to claim lives, tear societies apart and destabilize economies.

What can we do to change that? We must break that cycle of violence. How do we do that? We know what is needed — the rule of law and preventive efforts, as the President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union particularly emphasized just now, as well as partnerships and inclusion. We must first ensure full respect for international law, especially international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

What does respecting the rule of law mean? First, it means that counter-terrorism operations cannot be

used as a pretext for violating rules protecting civilians or removing political opponents. It also means that we must ensure that humanitarian aid reaches every person in need, without delay or hindrance. Lastly, it also means considering children associated with terrorist groups as victims. Switzerland supported the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in developing a manual containing guidance for policymakers and practitioners on the psychosocial assessment of children associated with criminal and armed groups, and it is a dimension that I believe is particularly important in discussions on the subject.

Peace, security and prosperity are the best antidotes to ideologies that incite terrorism or violent extremism. That is why we must address the current and future global challenges without delay. In other words, we must address all challenges that create and perpetuate instability. And having mentioned the issue of children, which I especially wanted to raise in today's debate, I would also like to address the problem caused by climate change in that context. Extreme weather and desertification fuel disputes and conflict and trigger migration flows that are often uncontrolled. They can exacerbate conflicts and be exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups. I mention it here because Switzerland has been working with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the United Nations University on a project that shows the relationship between climate-related livelihood challenges and recruitment by armed groups in the Lake Chad basin. It would be good to bear that in mind.

The problems are linked in such a way that they fuel one another. That is also why I wanted to talk about climate change. As President Nyusi just said, our response must be global. It also has to be comprehensive. We cannot solve the problem by addressing only a small, isolated part of it. We have to look at the whole picture, which is what we are committed to doing. In that context, I also believe that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars, which I mentioned earlier, will provide a package of measures that, if implemented in a balanced manner, will afford us an excellent tool for moving forward together. The Strategy is also emblematic of our unity. In that regard, President Nyusi has just given us some pointers and food for thought in terms of its upcoming eighth review. I believe that one such key point is the fact that, for every review to date, we have been able to find consensus and move forward with consensus.

I believe that finding such consensus is one of the best ways for us to respond to those who seek to divide us, and we should strive to build on it during the current eighth review.

All of that must be done in collaboration, and we must not forget that regional and subregional organizations are particularly important for ensuring our understanding of the dynamics on the ground. We must therefore encourage closer cooperation with them, better coordinate initiatives in this area and underline that we must commit to addressing the root causes of the problem. We must not view a given problem as only a purely military or security issue; it must be considered holistically. In that regard, and given the great importance of prevention, as the President of the Comoros mentioned earlier, Switzerland has developed a training programme on prevention, together with the member States of the African Union and in partnership with the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism. And I can only reiterate the importance of prevention.

In conclusion, partnerships, inclusivity and the rule of law are all absolutely key elements in the fight against violent extremism and terrorism. In that regard, we must ensure that women, young people and civil society are acknowledged as actors to bring about change and peace, while always maintaining full respect for international law, since to do otherwise would be a betrayal of our own values and we would thereby risk losing the trust of our populations, which — let us never forget — is imperative for sustainably preventing terrorism from taking root.

The President: I now call on the Vice-President of Gabon.

Ms. Raponda (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I speak to members on behalf of the President of the Gabonese Republic, Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba. I would like to commend Mozambique on taking the initiative of convening this important debate on the threat that terrorist acts continue to pose to international peace and security. I thank the Secretary-General for his commitment to the fight against terrorism, and I also thank the President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union for his informative briefing.

The year 2022 was particularly deadly in Africa, owing to terrorist attacks. Between January and September 2022, 1,093 terrorist attacks were perpetrated on the African continent, resulting in 7,816

deaths and 1,772 injured persons. According to the statistics provided by the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism, each of the five regions of the continent has had to contend with casualties among their civilian population, security forces and officials. The ability of Da'esh to obtain resources that enable it to acquire stocks of small arms and light weapons, which fuel instability and violence on the African continent, is of particular concern, especially in the Sahel region, the Lake Chad basin, including the Great Lakes region, and Southern Africa.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/76) notes the relationship between the structural difficulties experienced by some countries at the security, social and economic levels, especially in Africa, and the dangerous progression of Da'esh activities. In that regard, the many challenges posed by terrorist movements to international peace and security require continued vigilance, and above all strengthened cooperation in order to increase the resilience of fragile States, especially in countering the new information technologies used by Da'esh to expand its criminal activities. That is imperative, as terrorist groups continue to establish their presence in regions in which State authority and capacity are inadequate. I take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitments that we made in the Delhi Declaration on countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, as well as the need to implement its relevant recommendations.

Terrorist networks are in a state of constant mutation and are resistant to the efforts of the international community. They clearly pose a transnational and formidable threat that no Government or organization can combat alone. Concerted action at the international, national and regional levels is vital. Governments increasingly feel the pressure of their people, who are fed up with their growing insecurity, especially as more political and economic measures increasingly seem to fall short of meeting the urgent need and resolve to fight the scourge of terrorism. It is a war that strains the limited capacities of States and destabilizes entire regions. On 28 May 2022, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted an important declaration in Malabo, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to combating all forms of terrorism and extremist violence on the continent. African leaders have also adopted a number of regional counter-terrorism initiatives, including that of the Joint Force Group of Five for the Sahel and the Accra Initiative.

We must ensure that the current polarization in the world is not allowed to weaken multilateralism, which could provide a dangerous benefit for terrorist groupings and their affiliates. We must above all prioritize a comprehensive approach in our fight that takes into account the precarious socioeconomic conditions that can turn many disillusioned young people into easy targets for radicalization and recruitment by terrorist organizations. I would like to stress the urgency of taking a three-pronged approach. First, we must adopt a zero-tolerance approach against all forms and manifestations of terrorism and extremist violence. Secondly, we must base our action on strict adherence to international law and respect for the rule of law and relevant international instruments and protocols. Thirdly, we must prevent our work from becoming politicized in any way.

We must pursue and strengthen our cooperation through information-sharing, the training of security and intelligence personnel, and providing support for operations to weaken terrorist groups. Our response to terrorism must be coherent, by combining a military approach with long-term actions that aim to address governance deficits. Above all, our response must be comprehensive and not fragmented so as to not fuel the interests of terrorist groups who exploit systemic weaknesses to create a breeding ground for violence. Among such weaknesses we would highlight humanitarian crises, which are becoming increasingly complex, owing to the unintended effects of climate change, which are correlated with growing poverty, inherent inequalities and recurring political and socioeconomic crises.

We must therefore centre our collective action against terrorism on dealing appropriately with the socioeconomic challenges of the affected countries, in particular the education and training of young people, the strengthening of the authority of States, in particular fragile States, and the improvement of living conditions, including for disadvantaged populations. We must also ensure that we eliminate the sources of funding for terrorist networks through strengthened partnerships in terms of intelligence on online monetary transactions and the illicit exploitation of natural resources.

The United Nations must redouble its efforts, increase the means it has at its disposal and resolutely support initiatives and operations to support peace, in particular African initiatives. We must present a united

front against terrorism, and everyone everywhere must be fully committed to it.

For Gabon, whose Head of State, Ali Bongo Ondimba, is the current President of the Economic Community of Central African States, the international community's efforts must be based on regional and subregional organizations, which know best the situation on the ground. However, they can be effective only if they have adequate and predictable financial resources. We must give those organizations the tools they need to strengthen their resilience.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the international community must be more determined and united in the face of the scale of the terrorist threat and terrorism. Just one weak link can undermine our entire security chain. In the light of that reality, our solidarity and the inclusive nature of our action must be in line with our interdependence as links of the same chain of humankind.

The President: I now call on the President of the Republic of Ghana.

President Akufo-Addo: I would like, first of all, to commend you, Mr. President, for your leadership of the Security Council at a time when the global order is being buffeted by severe headwinds. I applaud the Secretary-General António Guterres for his thought-provoking address on this very important subject, as I do the President of the Comoros and the Chairperson of the African Union, His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, for providing a valuable perspective on the matter.

The Security Council is familiar with the devastating consequences that terrorism and violent extremism have had on humankind. The international order is under threat as a result of the destabilizing actions being carried out by terrorist groups all over the world. The unsettling uncertainty of where the next attack will occur, the number of lives to be disrupted, lost or displaced, the annexing of national territories and the wrecking of economies are repercussions of that fight, except that this war has neither fixed boundaries nor an end date.

For a significant number of people in Africa, the threat to their peace is their daily reality. We are thus gravely concerned by the steady transformation of Africa into an arena for violent extremism and terrorism.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh to the international community (S/2023/76), which was released in February, as well as the 2022 Global Terrorism Index and the 2022 report of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, all speak about an increase in the incidence of terrorism and violent extremism across Africa with an attendant evolution in their modes of operation. Indeed, data on casualties on the continent is particularly sobering. It is for those reasons that Ghana reaffirms its condemnation of all acts of extremism and terrorism and urges the civilized world to do the same. Our common humankind and existence depend on it.

We see in the Sahel the reinforcement of the presence of Islamic State affiliates. Boko Haram continues to carry out assassinations, kidnappings and large-scale acts of violence against civilian populations in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and the Niger. Those acts have been ongoing for more than a decade. In Somalia, Al-Qaida-affiliated Al-Shabaab is under pressure, but not defeated; in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), the Islamic State and Al-Shabaab elements are being contained by the Government with the support of Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces and Rwanda; and in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, ISIS-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces and others continue to destabilize the populations.

Over the course of the past few years, there have been a number of initiatives and advancement at the global and regional levels to combat terrorism and violent extremism. We have proven through our combined efforts that we are able to cooperate with one another in order to enhance our capacity to combat the threat posed by terrorism in all its guises and manifestations, and as a serious crime that has no justification, regardless of its motivation or origin.

The Charter of the United Nations placed regional collaboration at the heart of the Organization's mandate. Our founders were wise enough to see that in today's complicated and fast-evolving world, there is no single organization that can guarantee peace, stability and growth on its own. It requires partnership across all levels, from the local to the regional and to the global. The effectiveness of the United Nations now more than ever rests on a cooperation that is both deeper and more robust with regional organizations.

In the light of that, I will highlight a few points.

First, the rise of violent extremism and terrorism underscores the urgent need for a collective response. No country, regardless of its might, is immune from the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism, nor can one country alone respond effectively to such threats. In a rapidly changing world, enhanced cooperation among the United Nations and continental and regional organizations is needed to combat those emerging threats to international peace and security. The partnership, outlined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, has always been an important factor in preserving international peace and security and reinforcing our shared aspirations for global peace and security.

Secondly, in Africa, we have decided to fill the void by addressing the limitations that United Nations peacekeeping efforts and national capacities have in dealing with the menace of transnational terrorist threats. In order to combat insurgencies in their respective regions, African regional organizations, such as SADC and the Economic Community of West African States, have developed their unique operations, which include both military and diplomatic initiatives. The Accra Initiative, which groups together Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Mali and Burkina Faso and hopefully soon Nigeria, is one such self-help security and intelligence mechanism designed to assist in the fight against terrorism.

Yet capacity limitations and a lack of financial resources have become significant obstacles in the fight against terrorists. Previous experiences with peacekeeping in Africa have shown us the difficulties in delivering ambitious but underresourced mandates. Defeating terrorist organizations and armed groups should be the Council's primary focus when addressing the security challenges currently facing Africa.

Thirdly, bolstering cooperation and collaboration between the United Nations and continental and regional organizations should leverage existing strengths in order to enhance the development of a preventive approach, based on regional early-warning mechanisms. Efforts in conflict prevention and mediation have demonstrated how working together increases our powers of persuasion to press parties to make peace and defuse tensions in localities.

Fourthly, it is important that partnerships with regional organizations be based on mutual respect

and do not attempt to impose preferred approaches on unique regional circumstances. Where that is forced through, it can only be detrimental to the work of regional organizations and the global effort to defeat terrorism. Indeed, our collective security demands that we find the will to act collaboratively and decisively, in line with the respective mandates, in order to defeat terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. The activities of the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Accra Initiative, should complement each other.

It is important that we reinforce the capacity of regional organizations for early warning and conflict prevention. That requires that we enhance cooperation in the areas of intelligence, logistics, capabilities, training and deployment, as well as innovative financing arrangements, for the highest impact projects on our continents with the quickest turnaround results, for peoples' lives and for sustainable development.

Finally, let me place on record my gratitude for your leadership, Mr. President, during this high-level meeting, which has established further the urgency needed to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in a meaningful way.

The President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of the United States of America and member of President Biden's Cabinet.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I want to thank Mozambique and particularly President Nyusi for convening this high-level debate on strengthening counter-terrorism efforts in Africa. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres and President Assoumani, Chairperson of the African Union (AU) for their briefings today. I want to welcome all of our high-level visitors who are present with us today.

I was grateful for the warm welcome I received during my visit to Maputo in January. In my meetings with Foreign Minister Macamo Dlhovo, we had a chance to discuss a host of shared priorities, including regional security, climate change and women and peace and security issues, as well as terrorism. I also had the chance to meet with students and women entrepreneurs and environmental activists. Their limitless potential was very inspiring, and the work that they are doing is so important because, after all, we know that change comes from engaging citizens. We also know that our partnership with civil society leaders will help us to

meet the complex challenges we face. And right now, we face a host of challenges, especially when it comes to the dramatic rise in terrorism in Africa. We condemn all acts of terrorism and are committed to fighting and supporting efforts to defeat terrorists wherever they are.

Today I want to outline my country's commitment to countering this great threat and discuss the critical role that the United Nations and respect for human rights play in this fight.

On the first day of the United States-Africa Leaders Summit, in December, Secretary of State Blinken co-chaired the Peace, Security and Governance Forum. At the Forum, the Presidents of the Niger, Somalia and Mozambique discussed how good governance, peacebuilding, international partnerships and inclusive development support peace and security.

Our commitment to peace and security across Africa is unwavering. The United States has provided nearly \$8 billion in security sector assistance since fiscal year 2019. And last Friday, President Biden transmitted to the United States Congress a 10-year plan for implementing the United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, including in partnership with Mozambique. Other partners in Africa include Libya and coastal West African countries — Ghana, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Togo. Those plans represent our commitment to a whole-of-Government approach to peacebuilding and supporting our partners' progress towards a more peaceful future. As we work towards that peaceful future, I want to stress the importance of incorporating the views of civil society, women, youth, victims of terrorism, community leaders, activists and the private sector. Taking a whole-of-society approach is the most productive and sustainable way to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

Today I also want to acknowledge African-led security efforts and pay tribute to the sacrifices that AU personnel have made in support of peace and security on the continent. One example, of course, that we heard about today is the Southern African Development Community mission in Mozambique, which has helped make security gains and has improved access for humanitarian assistance, exhibiting how African leadership for African problems can lead to solutions. We are proud to provide essential support to regional leadership initiatives across Africa and to troop- and police-contributing countries. We remain committed to exploring ways to further support AU peace operations

and look forward to engaging constructively in the upcoming discussions on the Secretary-General's report on the next steps to implement resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017). As the eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is under way in the General Assembly, we call for unity of purpose.

As the Council has reaffirmed in many resolutions, the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law are essential components of countering terrorism. Effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are not conflicting goals, but complementary and mutually enforcing. When Member States use counter-terrorism as a pretext to silence political dissent or interfere with the activities of civil society, they only promote radicalization to violence. And let us be clear, the human rights abuses committed by private paramilitary organizations on the continent stoke grievances that enable terrorist recruitment and activities. We know that actors like the Kremlin-backed Wagner Group undermine peace, plain and simple.

In conclusion, the United States calls on the Council to use all the tools at its disposal to advance peace and security and fight terrorism in Africa and internationally. Let us unlock the full potential of the United Nations and of the African continent as we work to build a more peaceful and secure future for all.

Mr. Al Nahyan (United Arab Emirates): I would like to thank Mozambique for organizing this valuable discussion today and you personally, Mr. President, for presiding over this meeting. Mozambique has had to endure these threats, specifically in Cabo Delgado, where the Southern African Development Community mission has been present since July 2021. Your initiative to hold this meeting, Sir, speaks to the urgency of addressing terrorism and its transnational dimensions effectively. I would also like to thank His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union, as well as Secretary-General Guterres, for their valuable insights.

The last time I was in this Chamber I spoke about the corrosive nature of terrorism and extremism in the world (see S/PV.9188). The newest edition of the annual Global Terrorism Index demonstrates just how corrosive these threats remain. In 2022, Terrorists killed a greater number of people on average per attack than the year before, and sub-Saharan Africa recorded the largest increase in terrorism deaths globally.

Terrorism is a complex and, above all, context-specific phenomenon. The United Arab Emirates therefore believes that regional counter-terrorism initiatives play an integral part in supporting Member States in combating this scourge. It is the responsibility of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security, though it must do more to adequately support African-led efforts in the fight against terrorism. Today I wish to share three recommendations on this front.

First, siloes should be broken down even further when it comes to the terrorism challenge. Often transnational in nature, the threats of terrorism and extremism do not respect borders because extremism specifically undermines the social fabric within and across communities. This is a fundamental threat to resilience and peaceful coexistence. It is also a root cause of terrorism.

Accordingly, African initiatives that seek to counter extremism must be supported if we want to prevent terrorism from taking hold. African-led initiatives are by no means starting from scratch with this transactional approach; both regional and subregional actors have been sharing data and intelligence on terrorist and extremist threats. We have already seen this at work, with mechanisms such as the Nouakchott process, the Accra Initiative and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa. Each one is proof positive that greater integration, information-sharing and joint assessments lead to better strategies and improved policy coherence.

But we must go further. We look forward to the counter-terrorism summit that will be co-hosted by Nigeria and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism in Abuja this October. This summit will be an excellent opportunity to showcase how closer regional cooperation can address the growing terrorism threat in Africa.

Secondly, counter-terrorism solutions should look beyond the military lens. The root causes of terrorism and extremism are multifaceted. Good governance, sustainable development, securing basic services and the wholesale rejection of intolerance will contribute to addressing the challenge. A two-pronged approach must be the way forward. First, adequate prevention demands the development and implementation of counter-terrorism strategies from the ground up, where community actors, religious leaders, women

and youth are part and parcel of the solution. Secondly, it is important for the international community to support States affected by terrorism and extremism to develop strong institutions that effectively prevent and counter these acts in accordance with international law. Developing more resilient institutions goes a long way towards inspiring the trust and confidence of the population.

The ousting of terrorist groups where they exert control over territory is not enough. It must go hand in hand with supporting States to regain and retain control of those areas. When this succeeds, it is imperative to fill the socioeconomic gaps left in society before they can be re-exploited by terrorist groups. Providing an alternative route for the future — access to education and eventually the job market — is one way. With respect to this element, we take note of and welcome the proposal you have just put to us, Mr. President, on the need for the establishment of a common mechanism for community resilience to counter extremism, particularly in relation to youth in Africa and the Middle East.

Thirdly, we must follow the lead of African stakeholders. Too often the Security Council has appealed for action that fell on deaf ears because it failed to adjust to the nuances of the realities on the ground. Or the Council has expressed overall support without the means — political and financial — to actually make a difference. This disconnect is an obstacle to evaluating the “what”, the “how” and the “when” of effective counter-terrorism responses. Governments in Africa are making strides in the fight against groups and individual actors that are persistent and remain a destabilizing force in many countries. African stakeholders possess the knowledge and the experience. The time to listen and to support them in this endeavour is long overdue.

It is critical for the Security Council to heed the message that Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed delivered in this Chamber last November (see S/PV.9188). Against the backdrop of numerous regional initiatives countering terrorism in Africa, she stressed that those arrangements require full support and a durable commitment from the international community.

In conclusion, the African people plagued by terrorism deserve the freedom to live in peace and prosperity. The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its

full support for all regional and international efforts aimed at combatting terrorism and extremism, most importantly, those guided by African actors themselves.

Mr. Bicalho Cozendey (Brazil): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to say that I am proud to participate in today's debate under your presidency of the Security Council. Mozambique calls our attention to the important contribution of regional and subregional organizations in the fight against terrorism and in the maintenance of international peace and security in general. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union, as well as the eminent persons who preceded me, for their insightful remarks.

The United Nations Charter attaches special relevance to the role that regional and subregional organizations can play in the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Article 53 allows the Security Council to resort to regional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority. This option favours the configuration of tailor-made solutions that take into consideration local realities, as so many before me have expressed.

In the same vein, the Security Council has acknowledged in a number of resolutions how such mechanisms may be critical in preventing and defusing tensions and in countering such menaces to our collective security as international terrorism. This is particularly relevant given that we should not expect that terrorism can be fought by a one-size-fits-all approach that does not reflect the actual ethnic, religious, political and socioeconomic realities of the countries involved.

Recently, the Security Council addressed the increase of terrorism in the African continent (see S/PV.9257). This trend is indeed very worrisome. The rise of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism seriously hampers hard-won gains in terms of development and stability. It also aggravates existing conflicts, with significant repercussions for the peace and security of the whole continent, including by adding an additional challenge for United Nations peacekeeping missions in fulfilling their mandates.

Facing this enormous challenge, Africa has given remarkable examples of how regional and subregional mechanisms can address the threat posed by terrorist groups. The Southern African

Development Community Mission in Mozambique has achieved significant results in countering terrorism in Cabo Delgado. The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia has been working on reducing Al-Shabaab's capacities. The Accra Initiative may further contribute to containing the spillover of terrorism from the Sahel to neighbouring regions. The Multinational Joint Task Force's counter-terrorist operations may also provide an important contribution to peace and security in the Lake Chad basin region. We hope that the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel will overcome its current challenges, since its actions are also relevant to countering terrorism in the region and preventing it from spreading to its neighbourhood.

Our counter-terrorism efforts will never be enough if we do not address the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, such as prolonged unresolved conflicts, the failure to enforce the rule of law, human rights violations, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and unemployment.

In that regard, we emphasize the importance of the work of the relevant United Nations bodies in supporting activities to foster economic development and social justice, in full respect for national sovereignty, with the aim of reducing inequalities and the sentiment of injustice that can arise from local and global disparities.

The most recent United Nations Development Programme report on extremism in Africa, which deals with recruitment and disengagement, shows that economic incentives, such as opportunities for employment, are important drivers that pull individuals towards that kind of activity. The report makes it clear that we must move away from exclusively security-driven responses and adopt development-based approaches.

According to the report, investments in peacebuilding yield a positive return, estimated at a ratio of 16 to 1. That means that for every \$1 invested in peacebuilding, \$16 could be saved in the cost of conflict and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

With its representative composition and bridging mandate, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is well placed to promote coherence among the relevant actors within the United Nations system, mobilize regional organizations and international financial institutions and foster South-South and triangular cooperation arrangements in support of national capacities. By

enabling capacity-building, the PBC can also support Member States in countering terrorism. I would add that to the list of suggestions that you, Mr. President, presented.

Finally, we would like to underscore that counter-terrorism is effective only if it is carried out in strict compliance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law.

Brazil reiterates its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The repudiation of terrorism is enshrined in the Brazilian Constitution as a guiding principle of our international relations. Our foreign policy also highly values the role of regional and subregional organizations in securing a safer and more peaceful world. We must not hesitate to support them in combating terrorism.

Mr. Liu Yuxi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Republic of Mozambique for having convened this important meeting. I welcome you, Mr. President, presiding over this debate. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres and the Chairperson of the African Union, President Assoumani of the Comoros, for their briefings.

Terrorist activities are currently increasing and spreading around the world. Regional terrorist organizations in Africa, such as Boko Haram, the Lord's Resistance Army and Al-Shabaab, are colluding with Da'esh and Al-Qaida to cause unrest, and regional hotspots remain volatile. There is still a great deal of work to do in order to eradicate the terrorist threat. The international community must respond to the urgent needs and aspirations of African countries and work jointly to help them to address the most pressing challenges and the root causes of terrorism.

First, we must build an international consensus with regard to counter-terrorism. Terrorism is a common challenge for humankind. The fight against terrorism is not about one country or one region. Given the complex and interrelated security challenges, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Security Initiative, stressing that we must remain committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional areas and work together to seek long-term solutions. In the Initiative's concept paper, China further calls for strengthening the role of the United Nations as the central coordinator in the global fight

against terrorism and for supporting the international community in fully implementing the General Assembly and Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In the context of this year's eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we must take stock of past experience, coordinate our actions to promote cooperation and strengthen the global united front against terrorism.

Secondly, we should enhance Africa's ability to safeguard peace independently. Africa is at the forefront of international counter-terrorism efforts. Many African countries, including Mozambique, have made tireless efforts to that end. The Security Council is duty-bound to support Africa in its fight against terrorism. The international community should further strengthen international counter-terrorism cooperation with Africa, push for global resources to be weighted further towards African countries and increase support in terms of funding, equipment, intelligence and logistical supplies so that African countries may genuinely have the capability to maintain their own security and stability. The arms embargoes imposed by the Security Council on the Sudan, South Sudan and other countries have had a negative impact on the security capacity-building of the countries concerned and should be adjusted or lifted in a timely manner.

Thirdly, we must eliminate the breeding grounds for terrorism. The reasons for terrorism are complex, and the root causes are primarily development issues. President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Development Initiative, which focuses on resolving the issue of unequal and inadequate development among and within countries and jointly fostering a global development community with a shared future. The Initiative particularly highlights aligning the Belt and Road Initiative, Agenda 2063 of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and on synchronizing the capacity of the relevant multilateral cooperation mechanisms to achieve common development. Africa has an unlimited potential for development and has a promising future ahead of it. China calls on the international community to increasingly listen to the voice of African countries, prioritize the development agenda, take practical steps to support Africa in eliminating poverty and achieving sustainable development and help African countries to fully eradicate the terrorist threat.

Fourthly, we should strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and African regional organizations. Without peace in Africa, there will be no security in the world. The United Nations must work closely with the AU and subregional organizations in Africa in response to the security challenges there. China welcomes the Secretary-General's proposal to provide financial support to AU-led peace operations, which merits the Security Council's careful consideration. The Security Council should make full use of the annual consultation mechanism with the AU Peace and Security Council to coordinate and build synergies regarding counter-terrorism issues in Africa. African countries look to United Nations peacekeeping operations for support in counter-terrorism efforts. The Secretariat should pay great attention to their expectation and better align peacekeeping operations with the needs of African countries on the premise of upholding the goals and mandates of peacekeeping operations.

China and Africa are good friends, good partners and good brothers. China has always been a staunch supporter of peace and security in Africa. China will continue to uphold the principles of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith and the approach of pursuing the greater good and shared interests proposed by President Xi Jinping. China will fully implement the peace and security programme announced at the eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. We will deliver free military assistance to the AU and regional countries. Through the United Nations peace and development trust fund, we will help African countries to develop counter-terrorism plans and provide funds for counter-terrorism capacity-building projects in Africa. China and Africa jointly launched an initiative on partnership for Africa's development in the Security Council, providing a strong impetus for Africa's development. We will, through the implementation of the Global Security Initiative and the Global Development Initiative, work with Africa to build a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future and make a greater contribution to lasting peace and sustainable development in Africa.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, consistent with your personal leadership on peace and stability to drive the implementation of the Maputo Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation. The coordinated response to the conflict in northern Mozambique that you secured, Sir, demonstrates the importance of

regional collaboration to stem the spread of terrorism. I also thank the Secretary-General and President Assoumani, Chairperson of the African Union, for their briefings. I welcome the presence of all the high-level participants in this meeting.

As we have heard, the terrorist threat is increasingly transnational and opportunistic, exploiting existing tensions in society. The international community's response therefore needs to make the most of all our expertise and capacity, adapted to different regional contexts as necessary. Let me highlight three priorities.

First, the United Kingdom is committed to regional security and intelligence cooperation on the continent of Africa and around the world. We encourage collaboration among the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and regional economic communities, including in mission settings. As with United Nations- and AU-led operations, missions led by regional economic communities must have robust compliance and accountability measures, not least to ensure that they do not fuel the terrorists' own narratives. We recognize the challenges of resourcing and sustaining such operations and look forward to constructive discussions about how that could be improved following the Secretary-General's upcoming report on United Nations-AU financing.

Secondly, as we work to cut off the funding of terrorism, we encourage greater use of United Nations sanctions regimes on the continent of Africa while also ensuring the continued delivery of humanitarian assistance to States responding to crises. We deeply value our cooperation with regional partners on the Al-Shabaab sanctions regime, which we have used to continue tightening the knot on Al-Shabaab, including through sponsoring the designation of individuals associated with that group.

Thirdly, we welcome and endorse calls for counter-terrorism efforts to be holistic, not just military-focused. As we review the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we are clear that efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism must uphold the protection of human rights, the inclusion of civil society and the meaningful participation of women in order to be effective. The United Kingdom is working closely with partners across Africa to strengthen security cooperation. In Kenya, for example, the United Kingdom funded the establishment of the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit's headquarters in Mombasa,

as part of our investment of \$8.6 million annually to support Kenya's counter-terrorism efforts. We also worked with national and county Governments, as well as civil society and communities to reduce the vulnerability of 800 Kenyans at risk of radicalization.

In areas of instability, the Wagner Group is part of the problem, not the solution. For example, in Mali and the Central African Republic, we cannot ignore the destabilizing role of the Wagner Group as they exploit conflict and governance deficits to suck resources out of Africa where they are sorely needed, contributing to environments in which terrorism can thrive.

Finally, we look forward to the African counter-terrorism summit, to be held in Abuja in October, as a chance to strengthen further our cooperation on this important subject.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening today's important debate, and I thank the Secretary-General and President Azali Assoumani for their comprehensive briefings.

Addressing terrorism and violent extremism is one of Japan's top priorities. Regrettably, terrorism remains a significant threat to international peace and security, including in Africa. We would like to emphasize the following three crucial elements: African-led initiatives, countering terrorist financing, and a human security perspective.

First, it is imperative to promote African-led counter-terrorism efforts. Japan welcomes regional efforts such as the Accra Initiative, the Economic Community of West African States Conflict Prevention Framework and the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique. Effective counter-terrorism efforts require capacity-building assistance from the international community to law-enforcement and security authorities. Japan is committed to supporting the African-led efforts under the new approach for peace and stability in Africa launched at the seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development, for example, by strengthening local administration capacities in the Group of Five for the Sahel and neighbouring countries.

Secondly, the international community must unite in combating terrorist financing. In the region, it is alarming that the illicit trade in natural resources, including wildlife, has become a source of funding for

terrorists and armed groups. There are also growing concerns about the misuse of new and emerging technologies. Those challenges should be addressed in a coordinated manner in accordance with the relevant resolutions. Japan is firmly committed to tackling those threats in collaboration with the international community, while actively participating in discussions through the Financial Action Task Force on the formulation of international standards.

Thirdly, addressing root causes such as poverty and inequality is indispensable in the fight against terrorism. Japan believes that it is now more important than ever to take a human security approach to protect and empower people and promote the cross-cutting, holistic and coordinated handling of all the challenges we face, thereby leaving no one behind. All our efforts in critical sectors such as health, education and environment sectors, as well as investing in people, are aimed at building a resilient and sustainable society where human security is ensured, thereby reducing people's vulnerability to terrorism and violent extremism. We emphasize the importance for all Member States to consider a human security perspective in their counter-terrorism measures.

Japan will constructively engage in the upcoming eighth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. As the terrorism threat in Africa intensifies, it is crucial to emphasize the need for the promotion of the rule of law, human rights, gender mainstreaming, maritime security and a whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach, as underscored in the previous review resolutions. The rule of law, in particular, is a vital principle for implementing effective counter-terrorism measures. As a committed partner in the global fight against terrorism, Japan will continue to cooperate with the United Nations, regional organizations and all Member States to ensure peace, stability and prosperity across the African continent and beyond.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and welcome the presence of the Chairperson of the African Union here among us today.

Terrorism continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Terrorist groups such as Da'esh and Al-Qaida, as well as their affiliates, remain the most acute threat, particularly on the

African continent, where they are spreading throughout Western, Central and Southern Africa. That threat continues to reconfigure itself and grow, including, for example, in the Sahel, where terrorist groups continue to expand towards the Gulf of Guinea. We must therefore maintain our efforts to address that scourge. I will highlight five priorities in that regard.

The first issue concerns our means. Terrorism in Africa is a threat not just to the region but to international peace and security as a whole. France therefore calls on the Council to resume discussions on the financing of African peace operations on the basis of the common position adopted in Addis Ababa.

Secondly, France and the European Union are determined to continue and strengthen their partnerships with African States and African regional organizations. The European Union makes an essential contribution to peace and stability in Africa. France continues to mobilize against terrorism — alongside its partners, at their request and according to their needs — in line with a global and renewed approach, as President Macron indicated just a month ago. That approach is being translated into concrete actions. The International Counter-Terrorism Academy in Abidjan, which is the result of a common goal and joint efforts by Côte d'Ivoire and France, with the political support of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, is now going international.

Thirdly, we must defend a resolutely multilateral approach. United Nations instruments, from panels of experts to sanctions regimes, are essential. The Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate is contributing to a better understanding of the threat in Africa and to robust capacity-building, notably through the Office of Counter-Terrorism, to which the European Union is the third-largest contributor.

Fourthly, we must help build community resilience in conjunction with the States of the region. It is about addressing the socioeconomic factors that contribute to terrorist recruitment. It is about addressing the fundamental challenges posed by climate change, the links between terrorism and trafficking in resources and all other crimes that affect the environment. It is also about combating terrorist propaganda on the Internet, which is often based on misinformation and targets young people in particular.

Fifthly, in order to be fully effective, our fight against terrorism must be part of a global response

that includes joint initiatives for development, strengthening governance and the rule of law and the fight against corruption.

Offers of pseudo-security made by certain private military companies and their State sponsors are the opposite of the partner-friendly approach I have just described. They are counterproductive in the fight against terrorism and are focused on the economic goal of accumulating wealth through the capture of natural resources, to the detriment of the sovereignty of African States and populations that are victims of well-documented abuses. That is why France encourages the African Union to modernize and implement the instruments that the Organization of African Unity put in place in 1977 to combat mercenary activities. France will continue to work for the implementation of that global approach while respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and multilateralism.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I would like to thank the Mozambican presidency for bringing this matter to the Council's attention and you, Sir, for presiding over this meeting. I thank the Secretary-General and President Assoumani for their important remarks.

Despite undeniable successes and continued and sustained efforts, terrorism remains an acute threat to international peace and security. In particular, reports of terrorist activities increasing and spreading across the African continent are a matter of deep concern. In 2022 alone, sub-Saharan Africa counted for more than 48 per cent of deaths caused by terrorism worldwide, while the Sahel has become home to the world's fastest growing and deadliest terrorist groups. Boko Haram alone has displaced more than 3.4 million civilians across the region. Wherever terrorism has left its deadly footprint, it has put the brakes on development and prosperity, with destabilizing effects that ripple through many areas across the continent and beyond.

While terrorism is currently wreaking havoc in Africa, that does not mean that it is exclusively an African problem. What we are dealing with is a global problem that requires continued global attention and a global response that is coordinated and cooperative. We applaud the great resilience that Governments across the African continent have shown in dealing with terrible forms of terrorism, including coordinated and systematic attacks, with devastating consequences for local communities. We support the initiatives taken by the African Union and believe that coordination and

cooperation remain vital. Only a robust, comprehensive and inclusive approach based on the rule of law will help not only to fight terrorism but to provide a clear alternative to terrorist networks and their treacherous appeal.

Experience has shown that in fighting terrorism there are no quick fixes with patchy solutions. The deployment of private military companies and other mercenaries is therefore not the solution. Most often they create adverse effects and become part of the problem themselves. Fighting lawlessness with more lawlessness is a misconception and will only make matters worse.

The fact is that in order to successfully fight terrorism, we have to deal with the root causes. That requires good and responsive governance. It requires laws and the rule of law and professional and independent justice. It requires responding to people's needs, including by eliminating poverty and ensuring basic services, which help to dislodge terrorists' local foothold. It requires responding to legitimate grievances, as well as investing in and protecting values based on rights for all, including national minorities. It needs transnational cooperation through transparent and coordinated strategies, not by relying on merchants of death who pretend to protect life in Africa while destroying it with impunity.

We note with appreciation that over the past two decades the United Nations has expanded and deepened its engagement in counter-terrorism. Yet the pervasive nature of terrorism and its changing tactics call for stronger regulations and a normative framework to maintain and consolidate gains and to preserve shared norms and universal values against the worst of enemies. In order to fight terrorism effectively, we need an inclusive, multilateral and principled approach. Let me highlight three key aspects.

First, prevention must be at the heart of our collective efforts in the fight against terrorism. The use of force to eradicate terrorism is unavoidable, but it can never be enough on its own, and it cannot be the only tool. Ideology cannot be countered by weapons alone, however powerful and effective the use of force may appear to be. It is necessary to deal with the grievances and multiple deprivations that allow people to fall prey in large numbers to the hateful and violent ideology of terrorism. We should heed the Secretary-General's call in his New Agenda for Peace, which recognizes the root

causes of terrorism and a structured, comprehensive strategy to address them.

Secondly, we should always keep in mind the mobile nature of terrorist organizations. Even when they are perceived as eliminated in one place, they will pop up in another, more vulnerable environment, such as neighbouring countries or regions, which explains why only a small percentage of terrorist groups have ever been suppressed through military force alone. In the same vein, the fight against terrorism must follow the law in all circumstances. It cannot be conducted at the expense of basic rights, because that will be counterproductive and ultimately self-defeating.

Thirdly, we need a multilateral counter-terrorism strategy that is fit for the digital age. Our fight against terrorism must involve new methods and technologies applied in cyberspace, where cyberattacks can produce equally devastating consequences in the real world, as has been demonstrated more than once.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that it is through continued collective action — by building trust and resilience, ensuring sustainable development and the rule of law, protecting human rights and acting in an inclusive and gender-sensitive manner — that we will be able to successfully fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever it occurs, making terrorists and their ideology less appealing to vulnerable people and those in need. Albania supports the eighth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and looks forward to meaningful discussions in that process. We must build on the best and most successful examples and lessons learned to find new and effective solutions to eradicate terrorism everywhere.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to be welcoming you as you preside over our meeting today, Mr. President. I would like to thank the Secretary-General and President Assoumani for their briefings. We also thank Mozambique for organizing today's debate on the pressing problem of combating terrorism and extremism, with a focus on the complexities of the African continent.

I would like to stress that the Russian Federation fully supports African countries in the fight against international terrorism. In that struggle we have always advocated respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in their entirety, recognition of the primary role of States and their relevant

authorities, the inadmissibility of any justification of terrorism and the duty to ensure criminal liability for terrorists and their accomplices. The United Nations should continue to play a central and coordinating role with respect to counter-terrorism cooperation, with due respect for the norms and principles of international law. We are opposed to concepts of any kind that allow for interference in the internal affairs of other States on a pretext of combating terrorism, in the guise of preventing manifestations of violent extremism or by manipulating the issue of fighting terrorism and extremism for political purposes. We see the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's 2017 Convention on Countering Extremism as an alternative that provides a robust legal foundation for strengthening inter-State cooperation in the area. Its concept is aimed not only at uncompromisingly combating any manifestations of terrorism and extremism but at preventing and pre-empting them. It is essentially the first international counter-extremism treaty of its kind and is open for accession by all interested States.

We agree that greater attention must be paid to identifying and eradicating the root causes of terrorism. However, in that context, not everything can be reduced to socioeconomic problems and corruption, which do not always reflect the reality or the traditional sources of radicalization.

Terrorism in the Sahel became an avalanche after the West's unforgivable military intervention in Libya, which destabilized the entire region and had ripple effects as far as the coastal States of West Africa. And yet not only could the foreign contingents that ended up on the territory of a number of countries of the Sahel not reverse the situation, it got much worse while they were there. Attempts to justify those developments as the result of religious, ethnic or social conflicts amount to the same kind of manipulation that the colonial Powers have wielded for decades. We can only welcome the growing awareness among African States of the real sources of the threats and the quest for effective regional mechanisms to counter them. Strengthening national security structures and genuine cooperation with neighbours are key to combating terrorism successfully. We see outside forces attempting to sow division among States in the region, claiming that some countries are worthy of assistance in fighting terrorism and others are not. They say they will fight only as far as the border, and that after that countries are on their

own. That is how terrorists are being pushed into Mali and Burkina Faso, a tactic we consider unacceptable.

Our delegation is seriously concerned about the ongoing mass redeployment of fighters to African countries. It is important to prevent terrorists, especially the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, from gaining a foothold in the region and creating a new caliphate 2.0. The Russian Federation supports the initiatives of African States to combat the terrorist threat and violent extremism and appreciates the measures they have taken to establish counter-terrorist cooperation within the context of subregional organizations. We call for further strengthening the potential of regional organizations, especially the African Union, that are capable of implementing comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies and serving as platforms for sharing information, experience and best practices.

We should also give high priority to the education and training of law-enforcement and judicial officials in countering today's challenges and threats both multilaterally and bilaterally. Russia will continue to provide practical assistance in that area. Specialist programmes and technical assistance projects, especially within the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, represent the best way to make optimal use of United Nations resources. The joint project funded by the Russian Federation and led by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on strengthening States' capacity to combat illicit arms trafficking is a good example. It is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of criminal justice in preventing and stopping illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as preventing their transfer to terrorist groups. The project includes thematic seminars and refresher courses for representatives of Government agencies responsible for combating illicit arms trafficking and terrorism. This year the project's technical assistance is to be expanded to countries on the African continent.

We believe that it is important to once again remind the Council of the potential of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, within whose framework it will be vital to pay greater attention to African States and make assessment visits to them a priority. We would like to stress that the recommendations in the Committee's country reports not only facilitate the implementation of the relevant Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions but also help attract technical assistance and

make it more targeted and tailored to States' specific circumstances and needs.

The issue of the cooperation between Russia and countries of the African continent has been touched on today. I would like to point out that countries of Africa have every right to decide with whom and how to cooperate. It is the failures of Western States that have obliged African countries to turn to those that can make a genuine contribution to the fight against terrorism on their continent. We are all aware that against the background of some of the West's operations in Africa supposedly aimed at combating terrorism, the terrorist threat in West Africa and the Sahel has simply continued to grow.

The Russian Federation will continue to work with reliable partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America on counter-terrorism issues. We remain open to cooperating with all interested parties. We believe that the global nature of terrorism issues demands a comprehensive approach and concerted efforts on the part of the entire international community.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): At the outset I thank you, Mr. President, and your country, Mozambique, for organizing today's important high-level debate. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and the President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union (AU) for his insightful remarks.

It is undeniable that terrorism constitutes a great threat to international peace and security. The deeply worrisome activities we see around the world are testament to that and a clear indication that there is still considerable work to be done by the international community in the area. Terrorist activity and violence continue to increase in Africa, with the Sahel alone accounting for 43 per cent of total terrorism-related deaths globally in 2022, and the situation in other regions of Africa is also very concerning. Notably, many terrorist groups operating on the African continent, including Al-Qaida and Da'esh affiliates such as Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, are conducting attacks and expanding the scope of their operations across national borders, undermining security in the region.

Malta welcomes the increased engagement between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security issues in Africa in recent years and underlines once again the value of regional organizations in bringing their unique knowledge and perspectives to the table. We will continue to support the strengthening

of such cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism, where ongoing regional and subregional counter-terrorism initiatives include the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Accra Initiative.

For United Nations efforts to be truly effective, they must address transnational terrorist threats in a more holistic manner by working with the African Union and African subregional organizations, including the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community. In that regard, Malta recognizes the need for predictable and sustainable financing for United Nations-authorized, AU-led peace support operations. We look forward to discussing the Secretary-General's upcoming report on the issue. We also welcome the work of the Independent High-Level Panel on Security and Development in the Sahel. We hope that the Panel's recommendations will pave the way for some long-awaited progress on strengthening international and regional cooperation in addressing the region's multifaceted challenges, including military coups. However, we must be clear that regional responses cannot be solely security-driven. Comprehensive regional approaches must also address humanitarian, development and social needs to prevent recruitment among vulnerable populations, including disaffected youth.

Malta supports a preventive approach that tackles the root causes of terrorism. They include conflict, governance and accountability deficits, lack of development, poverty, lack of access to education, climate change and human rights abuses. By engaging with regional and subregional organizations, the United Nations can ensure that its efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism are context-sensitive and grounded in local realities. In addition, the latest research by the United Nations Development Programme on extremism in Africa reveals that human rights violations perpetrated by State actors are the main triggers that drive individuals to join violent extremist groups. Malta underscores the fact that regional efforts to counter terrorism must always comply with international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Counter-terrorism measures must be gender-responsive, ensure the participation of women and young people and include meaningful engagement with civil society and local communities. Malta would

also like to highlight the valuable contribution by the Common Security and Defence Policy missions of the European Union to strengthening the security and justice sectors and supporting our partners in Africa. An additional mission was established in Mozambique in January 2022.

Lastly, as an active participant in this year's review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Malta stands ready to engage with African partners on ways to address the terrorist threat more effectively on the continent. We also hope that the African counter-terrorism summit, to be convened by the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Nigeria later this year, will mark a turning point in strengthening regional cooperation in addressing the evolving threat of terrorism in Africa.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I join others in welcoming you to the Security Council, Mr. President. I also thank Mozambique for convening this high-level debate on an issue that Ecuador considers extremely important. And we are grateful for the informative briefings by Secretary-General António Guterres and Mr. Assoumani, President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union.

As Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions acknowledge, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and mechanisms has a fundamental role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security. That cooperation is even more important in countering the threat posed by terrorism, as that scourge's transnational nature makes a coordinated and comprehensive response on the part of the international community imperative. Ecuador supports the measures that the United Nations has taken to strengthen that cooperation through entities such as the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. One example of that cooperation is the African summit on counter-terrorism to be held in Abuja this year. We also acknowledge the reasons why the fight against terrorism is high both on the agenda of the African Union and its Peace and Security Council and at the subregional level. We commend the efforts made to improve security through initiatives such as the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique. As I said, Ecuador believes that cooperation between the United Nations and regional

and subregional organizations is vital to overcoming the challenges posed by the global issue of terrorism and should be focused on four areas.

First, we must strengthen mechanisms to police the financing of terrorism and its links to organized crime, which is a priority for Ecuador as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. That includes efforts involving financial information-sharing, capacity-building, sectoral risk assessment, the development of an appropriate legal framework and other priority issues identified by the Financial Action Task Force, whose work we acknowledge.

Secondly, the experience and technical capabilities of the United Nations should be used as primary inputs for enabling regional and subregional organizations to react adequately to the growing threat posed by the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes.

Thirdly, and from a prevention perspective, this cooperation can help establish more meaningful democratic institutions through measures that contribute to the strengthening of independent and professional judicial systems and more transparent and credible electoral processes.

Lastly, the creation of regional and subregional strategies for combating terrorism should be promoted according to the model in Central Asia, which has adopted a joint plan of action on the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The eighth review of the Strategy will provide us with an opportunity to give renewed impetus and a new direction to cooperation between the United Nations and regional bodies in the fight against terrorism. It is a useful tool for ensuring that the counter-terrorism responses of regional organizations reflect all its elements, especially respect for human rights and international law and the inclusion of a gender perspective that takes into account women's vulnerabilities in the context of terrorist attacks, and at the same time ensures their participation in decision-making processes.

In conclusion, we reiterate that the fight against terrorism can never be limited to a military response, but must include a development approach at its core — or undertaken in a holistic vision, in the words of the Vice-President of Gabon and other representatives here today. We cannot ignore the fact that factors such as inequality, unemployment and a lack of opportunities spawn radicalism and violent extremism. Consequently, while using their own policies and national plans to

guide them, developing countries require the support and cooperation of the international community to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda.

Mr. Biruta (Rwanda): On behalf of President Kagame, I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for the invitation to speak before the Security Council today. I also thank the briefers, especially the Secretary-General and the President of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union.

In Africa, terrorism and violent extremism are spreading at an alarming rate. That is a threat to everyone everywhere. Traditional peacekeeping missions alone have not proved effective enough to address the global challenge. With the support of the Security Council, we need more robust and pragmatic approaches, tailored to local contexts. Bilateral and regional interventions merit our attention. Under our bilateral mechanisms and at the request of both Governments, Rwanda has deployed troops to Mozambique and the Central African Republic. While that approach is quick and effective, it needs sustainable funding to create a solid

base from which multilateral forces can take over. The assistance measure recently provided under the African Peace Facility of the European Union in support of the deployment of the Rwanda Defence Force to Mozambique has been critical in ensuring that such bilateral interventions can be financially sustained. An effective cooperation framework between the United Nations and regional mechanisms should also prioritize post-conflict reconstruction, working hand in hand with communities.

Ultimately, it is national unity and good governance that create the conditions for lasting peace. We have learned that from our own country's tragic history. It is not enough for issues pertaining to our continent to constitute a significant portion of the Security Council's agenda. The representation of African countries on the Security Council is also critical. If we are to ensure the continuity of discussions such as these and take full ownership of our development, Africa cannot be left out of decision-making processes. I would like to commend the significant progress made in strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. We still have a long way to go, but together we will achieve much more.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.