



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

9367th meeting

Thursday, 6 July 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Dame Barbara Woodward	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Biang
	Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
	Japan	Mrs. Shino
	Malta	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Nusseibeh
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

Non-proliferation

Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473)

Letter dated 27 June 2023 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/479)

Letter dated 30 June 2023 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/488)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

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The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I have a point of order. But first and foremost, I would like to say that, as announced at the very beginning, time management was to be one of the priorities of the British presidency. For that reason, we should convene our meetings on time. The presidency has time to lobby and discuss its national interests with Member States — before the meeting.

Secondly, I would like to ask you, Madam President, to clarify the basis on which you propose that the representative of Ukraine be invited to participate in this meeting; for, unlike Iran and Germany, Ukraine is not a party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The President: Following receipt of Ukraine's request to participate in this meeting under rule 37, we as President consulted all Council members. We accepted Ukraine's request on the basis that a clear majority of Council members expressed support.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I want to warn members that the question of the participation in this meeting on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) by a State that is neither

a member of the Council nor a party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is far from being routine, as the presidency is trying to make it out to be.

The subject of resolution 2231 (2015) and its being an integral part of the JCPOA is extremely important and sensitive. That is why, for many years, it was discussed only among the members of the Security Council and the parties to the JCPOA. That was the key for a constructive, depoliticized discussion, the need for which was recognized by all members of the Council.

That was the case last December (see S/PV.9225), in June 2022 (see S/PV.9085), in December 2021 (see S/PV.8930) and earlier. Members of the Security Council who held the presidency during the respective reporting periods recognized their responsibility for maintaining a pragmatic, results-oriented dialogue in the Council on subject of the JCPOA. After all, there were others, including States of the region, that wanted to take part in the meetings of the Security Council on the topic. But each time the Council wisely decided to limit the discussion to those delegations directly involved in the negotiations concerning the JCPOA. After all, this nuclear deal is our shared achievement, which was already under threat of derailment as a consequence of reckless action by a participant that withdrew from it in 2018.

Consider this: colleagues are today called upon to depart from that arrangement for the sake of the parochial agenda of the British presidency, which wants to Ukrainize everything, even the most important work of the Council. Our British colleagues, to our great regret, have no concern that, ultimately, instead of a meaningful, substantive discussion, which is urgently needed in the context of the JCPOA, we will have in the Security Council an openly politicized farce, as we have seen more than once.

We categorically disagree with this approach and request that the question of the participation of the representative of Ukraine be put to a vote. We rely on the common sense of the members of the Council and their responsible attitude to the fate of the debate on JCPOA issues in the Security Council.

The President: The representative of the United States has asked for the floor.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): The United States urges fellow Council members to vote

to allow the representative of Ukraine to speak under rule 37 during this briefing on resolution 2231 (2015). Both Iran and Russia have violated their obligations under resolution 2231 (2015) by participating in the transfer of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) without obtaining advance approval from the Security Council. Iranian UAV development has direct implications for Ukraine. Over the past several weeks, we have seen Russia repeatedly use UAVs in attacks that have killed Ukrainian civilians and destroyed Ukrainian public works. This is a matter of life or death for the Ukrainian people. It would be unconscionable to deny Ukraine the opportunity to speak at this meeting when it is experiencing the devastating effects of Iran's violation of resolution 2231 (2015) first-hand.

The President: The first thing to say is that I reject the Russian Permanent Representative's assertion that the discharge of our duties as President was in any way irregular; there is a long-established procedure on the issue of rule 37 participation, which we followed.

In view of the comments made by Council members, I therefore propose to put to the vote the proposal to extend an invitation under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to the representative of Ukraine to participate in the Security Council briefing under the agenda item "Non-proliferation". I shall put the proposal to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Malta, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

China, Russian Federation

Abstaining:

Mozambique

The President: The proposal received 12 votes in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

The proposal to invite the representative of Ukraine has been adopted.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We draw attention to the fact that the United

States voted in favour of the participation of Ukraine in today's meeting, while it was the United States that was behind the crisis with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), having withdrawn from the deal in 2018 and not yet returned.

We regret that, at the behest of the British presidency today, we are witness to the breakdown of the established format for the discussion on the subject of the JCPOA in the Security Council. The consequences of this are yet to be understood, but it is already clear that they will be far-reaching. A major question is whether it will be possible to avoid the projection of this unprecedented situation to the course of negotiations on rekindling the work on the JCPOA. The responsibility for that lies entirely with the United Kingdom.

Unfortunately, the President did not draw any conclusions from her mistakes during the United Kingdom's last tenure in the presidency of the Security Council in 2022, and continues to disregard procedure and undermine the established working methods of Council and to openly abuse the presidency in the interests of their national political agenda. Today the world has once again witnessed the double standards of Western States for the sake of their clients in Kyiv, London, Washington, D.C., and their Western allies, who are willing and ready to sacrifice any and all achievements in multilateral diplomacy, imperilling even the most pressing issues on the multilateral agenda. We call on Members of the United Nations to draw the relevant conclusions.

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Joint Commission.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to the following documents: S/2023/473, which contains

the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015); S/2023/479, which contains the text of a letter dated 27 June 2023 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/2023/488, which contains the text of a letter dated 30 June 2023 from the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

At this meeting, the Council will hear briefings by Ms. DiCarlo, Mr. Skoog and Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta, in her capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

The conclusion of the Plan and its endorsement by the Council eight years ago were the result of intensive negotiations to achieve the common objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and regional security, in a manner that delivers tangible economic benefits for the Iranian people. When I last briefed the Council on this issue (see S/PV.9225), in December 2022, all participants in the Plan and the United States had reaffirmed that a return to the full and effective implementation of the Plan was the only viable option to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. Six months later, negotiations to restore the Plan remain stalled.

Diplomacy is the only way to effectively address the Iranian nuclear issue. It is essential that all parties renew the dialogue as quickly as possible and reach an agreement on the outstanding issues. In that context, I reiterate the Secretary-General's appeal to the United States to lift or waive its sanctions, as outlined in the Plan, and to extend waivers with regard to the trade in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran. And I echo his call on Iran to reverse the steps it has taken that are not consistent with its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan. It is also important for Iran to address concerns raised by participants in the Plan and by other Member States in relation to annex B to resolution 2231 (2015).

In a welcome development, in March of this year, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and

Iran issued a joint statement to expedite the resolution of outstanding safeguards issues and to allow the IAEA to implement further appropriate verification and monitoring and reporting activities. In its report of May 2023, the IAEA reported that, in line with that joint statement, it had installed surveillance cameras at workshops where centrifuge parts are manufactured. The Agency added that it had no further questions regarding the presence of high-enriched uranium detected at one location.

That encouraging step notwithstanding, we are alarmed that the Agency remains unable to verify the stockpile of enriched uranium in the country. It estimates that Iran now has a total enriched uranium stockpile of more than 20 times the allowable amount under the JCPOA. That includes increased quantities of uranium enriched to 20 per cent and 60 per cent. Such a stockpile of enriched uranium is of serious concern.

I now turn to the restrictive measures set out in annex B, as outlined in the Secretary-General's fifteenth report on resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473).

First, on the nuclear-related provisions, no new proposals were submitted to the procurement channel in the past six months. The Council, however, received 10 notifications, submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 of annex B, for certain nuclear-related activities consistent with the Plan. The renewal by the United States of waivers with respect to certain nuclear non-proliferation projects foreseen in the Plan and the nuclear-related provisions in annex B for another 180-day period was an important step.

Secondly, regarding the ballistic missile-related provisions, France, Germany, Iran, Israel, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom provided information to the Secretary-General and the Council concerning a test flight of a space launch vehicle conducted by Iran in March of this year. We also received information from the same Member States about the testing and unveiling of two new ballistic missiles by Iran in May and June, respectively. The letters received from Member States continue to reflect the divergent views as to whether that launch and missile developments are inconsistent with the resolution.

Thirdly, we examined information related to paragraph 4 of annex B. That paragraph pertains to the supply, sale or transfer to or from Iran of all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology as set out in Council document S/2015/546, which require

prior approval of the Council. It includes the list of complete delivery systems and subsystems, as well as the associated components and equipment, including ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and other unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) systems with a range of 300 kilometres or more.

During the reporting period, we received information from the United Kingdom about ballistic missile parts seized by the British Royal Navy in February 2023 in international waters in the Gulf of Oman. The United Kingdom shared imagery of the seized components and its analysis that the components were of Iranian origin and transferred in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). The Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom conveyed their view that some of the seized components are controlled items listed in the document S/2015/546 and that their transfer without prior approval of the Council was therefore inconsistent with the resolution. In their responses, Iran and the Russian Federation stated that there was no evidence linking the intercepted vessel and its cargo to Iran, and no clear indication that the seized components were of Iranian origin. We continue to analyse the available information.

We also received letters from Ukraine, France, Germany and the United Kingdom concerning alleged transfers of unmanned aerial vehicles from Iran to the Russian Federation, in a manner inconsistent with paragraph 4 of annex B. The United Kingdom and Ukraine also provided photographs and their analyses of the UAVs recovered in Ukraine. The two countries assessed the devices to be of Iranian types Shahed-131, Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6, and that they had been transferred by the Islamic Republic of Iran in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). Their assessment was based on comparison with debris of other UAV attacks in the Middle East and with imagery of Iranian UAVs available via open sources. France, Germany, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States have also reiterated their request, in letters to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council and in statements to the Council and the media, for the Secretariat to examine the debris of those UAVS, in Kyiv or any other suitable location. Noting that the accusations were not substantiated by evidence, the Permanent Representatives of Iran and the Russian Federation disputed the imagery and evidence of the UAVs provided by the United Kingdom and Ukraine, as well as the claim by France, Germany, Ukraine and

the United Kingdom that Iran had transferred UAVs to the Russian Federation in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). The Secretariat will continue to examine the available information.

The Secretariat also received an invitation from the Government of Yemen to examine the debris of a cruise missile used in an attack by the Houthis on the Al-Dabba oil terminal last November. The Secretariat is still analysing the available information.

Finally, the Secretariat did not receive any official information alleging actions inconsistent with the assets-freeze provisions of the resolution.

Eight years after the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and its endorsement by the Council, we remain convinced that the Plan is the best available option for ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, as well as for enabling Iran to reach its full economic potential.

In closing, I would like to thank Her Excellency Mrs. Vanessa Frazier for her leadership as Facilitator for resolution 2231 (2015), as well as the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission, for our continued cooperation.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Skoog.

Mr. Skoog: It is an honour to once again have an opportunity to address the Security Council in this meeting on behalf of the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

My first expression of gratitude goes to Secretary-General António Guterres and to the Secretariat for their work related to the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), in particular the report on that subject (S/2023/473) prepared for today's discussion, as well as the briefing we just heard from Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo. I want to thank Ambassador Frazier in her role as Facilitator of resolution 2231 (2015) and for the work done to keep members informed of the current state of play. I would also like to underscore the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as the sole, impartial and independent international organization mandated by the Security Council to monitor and verify the implementation

of the nuclear non-proliferation commitments under the JCPOA.

One year ago, in July 2022, intense international diplomatic efforts to restore the implementation of the JCPOA were nearing completion. In early August, the EU High Representative was able to put forward a compromise text laying down the necessary steps for the United States to return to the JCPOA and for Iran to resume the full implementation of its commitments. Regrettably, it was not possible to reach a deal at that time, and since then an environment conducive to restoring the agreement has unfortunately been lacking. That compromise text is still on the table as a potential point of departure for any renewed efforts to bring the JCPOA back on track.

Since the discussion on the previous report of the Secretariat (S/2022/912) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), the IAEA has documented the continued acceleration of Iran's nuclear programme in a serious departure from its JCPOA commitments. The production rates of high-enriched uranium have continued to increase and have reached unprecedented levels. As of May, the stockpile of uranium at up to 60 per cent uranium-235 was 116.1 kilogrammes, which is 26.6 kilos more than at the beginning of the year. Iran's uranium-enrichment capacity, in terms of number and type of centrifuges, is still not commensurate with the JCPOA limits. Moreover, its cooperation with the IAEA is piecemeal, leaving the Agency with several pending questions. That is why we acknowledged the joint statement that was concluded in March between the IAEA and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. We welcomed the start of the implementation of that joint statement, specifically the installation of surveillance cameras at one location and of monitoring equipment at two declared enrichment facilities. We urge Iran to continue in that direction without delay with a view to restoring the IAEA's surveillance capabilities.

We continue to recognize that Iran has continued to face very serious negative economic consequences following the United States' withdrawal from the JCPOA and its reimposition of previously lifted unilateral sanctions. The United States has also imposed additional sanctions linked to Iran's nuclear programme. For its part, the EU lifted all its nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions on the first day of the JCPOA implementation, and that remains the case. We reaffirm that restoring the JCPOA remains the only way that Iran can reap its full benefits and reach

its full economic potential, since that restoration would result in a comprehensive lifting of the sanctions that would encourage the entire international community to increase its cooperation with Iran. The European Council's conclusions of December 2022 provide the framework for EU engagement towards Iran. Through those conclusions, the EU reaffirmed its commitment and continued support to the full and effective implementation of a restored JCPOA and called on all countries to support the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The High Representative sees no better alternative for restricting the Iranian nuclear programme and ensuring related sanctions lifting.

Let me recall that the JCPOA also considerably increased the IAEA's capacities in terms of monitoring. For instance, the Additional Protocol to Iran's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement was made applicable only under a fully implemented JCPOA. Restoring its implementation is a matter of urgency. The procurement channel, another benefit of the JCPOA, continues to be available. It was designed as a transparency and confidence-building mechanism to give assurances that transfers of nuclear and dual-use goods and services are fully in line with resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA.

We are extremely worried about Iran's military support to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, including through deliveries of drones. That has not stopped but has rather expanded. The EU calls on the Government of Iran to end that military cooperation with a country that is violating every principle of the Charter of the United Nations. The EU will continue to respond to that as necessary. As has already been stated, any transfer of certain combat drones to or from Iran without prior permission by the Security Council is in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). Moreover, since the previous meeting in this format (see S/PV.9225), Iran has unveiled new ballistic missiles, while resolution 2231 (2015) calls on it not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles that are designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic technology.

On the nuclear front, some perspective has opened up as a result of the joint statement in March between the IAEA and its Iranian counterpart. We call on Iran to make further progress in the implementation of the joint statement, including on cooperation with the IAEA, and to refrain from taking any more steps away from its JCPOA commitments, as a first and minimum

measure. We also call on all the remaining parties to the JCPOA and the United States to sustain dialogue on the matter. De-escalation steps on the nuclear front, if concrete and acknowledged by all the parties to the agreement and the United States, will help to restore trust. They could recreate an environment conducive to a resumption of negotiations, possibly leading ultimately to a fully effective JCPOA.

Drawing on the continued support from the 27 EU countries, the High Representative continues to be in close contact with all the JCPOA participants and the United States in working to find a diplomatic solution with regard to Iran's nuclear programme. He encourages all the parties to intensify their diplomatic efforts to that end in the weeks and months to come.

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

I now give the floor to Ambassador Frazier.

Mrs Frazier (Malta): I speak in my capacity as the Security Council's appointed Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

The fifteenth report (see S/2023/488) of the Facilitator was approved by Council members on 30 June. I would like to thank all Council members for their cooperation and constructive engagement in this process and for their spirit of compromise and flexibility. As this is Malta's first report as Facilitator, I am especially grateful for everyone's kind support. The report provides a factual account of the activities that took place in the 2231 format of the Security Council, covering the period from 13 December to 30 June. It includes six subsections, namely, the summary of activities, monitoring the implementation of the resolution, relevant communications, key aspects of the workings of the procurement channel and transparency, outreach and guidance.

Members may refer to the report for details, but I would like to mention the following key aspects.

First, one meeting of the Council in the 2231 format was held during the reporting period. The meeting was held on 30 June, and representatives of the Security Council discussed the findings and recommendations contained in the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), prior to its public release. Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo already referred to some of those points in her statement.

Secondly, during the reporting period, a total of 17 notes were circulated within the 2231 format. In addition, a total of 11 official communications was sent to Member States and the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission, and a total of 11 communications from Member States and the Coordinator were received.

Among the communications circulated were the two regular quarterly reports issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in February and May 2023, as well as one update. The IAEA plays an important role in the verification and monitoring of nuclear activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as requested under resolution 2231 (2015). The IAEA's work provides confidence for the international community that the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran is for exclusively peaceful purposes. The reports of the Director General play a significant role in that regard.

Thirdly, I report that no new proposals were submitted to the Security Council through the procurement channel during the reporting period. The channel represents a key transparency and confidence-building mechanism under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). It remains operational, and the Procurement Working Group stands ready to review proposals. I echo the Secretary-General in encouraging all participants to the JCPOA, Member States and the private sector to fully support and utilize the channel.

As Under-Secretary-General Di Carlo just stated, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, as endorsed by the Council through resolution 2231 (2015), is the best available option for achieving the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and regional security. Through multilateralism and dialogue, we can work together in ensuring the Plan's most effective implementation and in ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, while enhancing mutual trust and cooperation. I echo the other briefers here today in stating that it is essential that all parties to the agreement uphold it both in letter and spirit, avoid actions that undermine the implementation of commitments and work on resolving all outstanding issues so that the Plan can achieve its goals for the benefit of all.

Finally, I would like to state that, as Facilitator, I will do my utmost to support the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, which it

underpins. My team and I will work closely with all Council members in an impartial and transparent manner to meet our shared responsibility. I look forward to continuing and strengthening our dialogue and cooperation for the remainder of the year.

The President: I thank Ambassador Frazier for her briefing.

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

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for the Secretariat's work on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/473) and for her briefing to the Security Council today. I also thank Ambassador Frazier for her facilitation of the report. I also wish to thank Ambassador Skoog for his briefing.

The United States remains gravely concerned about Russia's use of Iranian drones against Ukrainian cities and civilian infrastructure in its unprovoked war against Ukraine. Both Iran and Russia have violated their obligations under resolution 2231 (2015) by participating in those transfers without obtaining advance approval from the Security Council. Just last weekend, public reports indicate that Russia used eight Iranian-made Shahed-136 drones to terrorize Kyiv. The Ukrainian Air Force said it destroyed those drones, but three buildings were damaged by debris and one man was reportedly injured. That incident, together with several others, must be investigated, as it clearly constitutes a violation of resolution 2231 (2015), annex B, paragraph 4.

We urge the United Nations to address those violations and, consistent with the mandate in resolution 2231 (2015), to report on the implementation of the provisions of the resolution. Specifically, the Secretariat should, without any further delay, send a team of investigators to Kyiv to examine the debris from the weapons used by Russia against Ukraine. Moreover, the Secretariat should send, without any further delay, a team of investigators to review materiel recovered by the United Kingdom. The mandate is clear and requires no less. Security Council resolutions are not optional, and they must be upheld. It is no secret that Iran's development and proliferation of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) pose a global threat. That is why the transfer of those items was prohibited under resolution 2231 (2015).

Russia's acquisition of hundreds of Iranian drones and current production of those drones on its own territory, however, dramatically change the equation. That is a flagrant violation of resolution 2231 (2015). We should not be shy about condemning that destabilizing and dangerous behaviour. We have seen evidence submitted to the Council and to the Secretary-General extensively detailing components of Iranian UAVs recovered on the battlefield in Ukraine. Despite proof of Iran's complete disregard for its obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), Tehran continues to deny its role in the damage caused by its weaponry in Ukraine. In the face of such clear photographic evidence, those denials suggest that even Iran's leaders are uncomfortable with Russia's brutal use of the weapons against civilian targets.

Also deeply troubling are Russia's attempts to undermine publicly available and verified information confirming Russia's use of Iranian UAVs in its war against Ukraine. Moscow even goes so far as to characterize evidence submitted to the Council by London and Kyiv as false and has rebuffed requests by Council members for the Secretary-General to examine the seized components, which falls under its reporting mandate. In fact, were expert investigators to examine the components, the United States believes that it would find that they appear to have design characteristics and markings similar to components previously recovered from the debris of ballistic missiles launched by the Houthis towards the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The Council must address any and all violations of resolution 2231 (2015), given the implications for not only peace and security in the Middle East, but also in Ukraine and the rest of the world. As such, we reiterate our previous calls for the Secretary-General to update the Council on his assessment of Iranian-made UAVs recovered in Ukraine within the next 30 days. I would say to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo that there should be no higher priority for the Secretariat. The failure to act will lead only to further attacks on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine and potentially the loss of civilian lives. It is our responsibility in the Council to do whatever we can to avert those outcomes, even if it means confronting one of our own members over their violations.

In addition, in May, Iranian State media announced the test of a medium-range ballistic missile. That launch was inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B,

which calls upon Iran not to undertake any activity involving ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology. Iran's continued development and proliferation of such missiles pose serious threats to regional and international security. And the Council should view those actions with the seriousness that they deserve.

Iran's ballistic missile activity — especially in the light of Tehran's nuclear ambitions and its threatening rhetoric — is an enduring threat to regional and international peace and stability. Even after certain restrictions in resolution 2231 (2015) terminate, the United States will continue to take vigorous measures to counter that threat and block the proliferation of sensitive ballistic-missile technology to and from Iran. We will also continue to sanction companies and traders contributing to that threat. In addition, Iran has continued to expand its nuclear programme and escalate tensions. Iran should take actions that build international confidence and de-escalate tensions, not continue nuclear provocations that pose grave proliferation risks. Meanwhile, Member States must fully implement the relevant measures in annex B to resolution 2231 (2015). Iran has continued to flagrantly carry out activities related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, in defiance of paragraph 3 of annex B. The Security Council must be clear and united in condemning that activity. When Iran defies the Security Council repeatedly without consequences, it undermines the fundamental credibility of the Council itself.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing.

Brazil has been actively seeking constructive diplomatic solutions to the issues presented by this file for more than a decade now. We have been willing to work on creative solutions with a range of partners in order to dial down tensions, preserve the nuclear non-proliferation regime and ensure that all parties see any agreement as legitimate and durable. It was in that spirit that we supported and continue to support the agreement that eventually emerged in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA was imperfect, as many agreements are, especially in the field of disarmament, but it represented a major breakthrough for diplomacy, laying out a path towards a comprehensive and definitive solution to the so-called Iranian nuclear dossier.

Like many of the arms-control agreements of the Cold War, however, the JCPOA has been increasingly undermined as part of a worrisome trend in arms control in which the perfect has been allowed to become the enemy of the good. We regretted the decision of the United States to leave the agreement in 2018, just as we regret the recent Iranian actions in response to that decision, which have progressively undermined the letter and the spirit of the Plan of Action. Most of all, we regret the loss of confidence on both sides, which has made it harder to organize a return to the agreement's provisions by all parties. It is now incumbent on all stakeholders to shore up that confidence. We believe that three things are necessary to rebuild trust and open a window of opportunity for restoring the JCPOA.

The first step in creating a pathway back to compliance with the JCPOA is by refraining from taking any actions that might aggravate the trust deficit or make a return to the agreement even harder. All the parties should refrain from escalatory rhetoric and from taking actions that might further degrade trust in the negotiating process. That includes being extremely cautious before triggering the snapback provisions of resolution 2231 (2015), which would represent a point of no return and lead to a very perilous path.

Secondly, we must focus on what is achievable. The JCPOA had a very specific and well-defined mandate, which was ensuring that Iran's nuclear programme remained exclusively peaceful. While geopolitical and military concerns abounded in 2015, the JCPOA was able to focus on the nuclear issue and find common ground around a limited but crucial topic. We must be able to focus on that limited but crucial issue of ensuring sustained confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme if we are to have any hope of restoring the most significant non-proliferation agreement of our time. Arms transfers, the use of conventional weapons and even the evolution of missile technology are serious issues that should be discussed, but they should not hamper the full implementation of the JCPOA as originally intended.

Finally, we must redouble our support to the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regarding the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The IAEA has continued to play a vital role in interfacing with Iran, defusing tensions and finding ways to preserve dialogue and continue the verification of Iran's nuclear programme. Director General Grossi's statement to the IAEA Board of Governors on 31 May

indicates progress in the relationship with Iran. While gaps remain, cooperation between Iran and the IAEA remains the best pathway to ensuring transparency around Iran's nuclear programme and is essential to rebuilding trust in any revived agreement. We must be vocal in our support to those efforts.

While we understand the concerns of many here in this Chamber, we are also alarmed at the prospect of a complete breakdown of the JCPOA, with no appropriate and effective alternatives to replace it. Isolating Iran and cutting off avenues to dialogue can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, leading to exactly the outcomes that all of us here are seeking to avoid. We in the Council never tire of repeating that engagement is not a reward and that diplomacy, not isolation, is the only way to bring these files to a positive conclusion. Resolution 2231 (2015) acknowledges that when it emphasizes the importance of political and diplomatic efforts to finding a negotiated solution guaranteeing that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, the recent agreement signed in May between Saudi Arabia and Iran signals willingness to reach a peaceful solution to regional challenges and to resort to dialogue as a means to promoting stability in the Middle East. Let us seize that momentum and find the political will to do more through diplomacy while there is still time.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Ambassador Frazier and Ambassador Skoog for their briefings.

Eight years ago, we were pleased to welcome the news of the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme. The conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was rightly seen as an achievement for diplomacy in the service of non-proliferation and regional political détente. In that respect, we were delighted to have been able to host critical stages of the negotiations in Switzerland. Today the implementation of the JCPOA is faltering and the situation is more perilous than ever before. Switzerland has repeatedly expressed its deep concern about the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA and the various measures taken by Iran, which are incompatible with its nuclear commitments. In particular, Switzerland deplores the fact that despite the willingness shown by a majority of the parties to negotiate a rapid return to the Plan, no progress has been made in the past six months. The JCPOA is an important element of the

international nuclear non-proliferation regime and of international security. Consequently, the swift and full implementation by all parties of their obligations is essential.

A revitalization of the JCPOA depends on three aspects.

First, the latest report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) shows progress has been made in overcoming outstanding issues concerning nuclear safeguards, as well as monitoring equipment at certain sites. That is a step in the right direction. However, in order to assure the international community that Iran's nuclear programme is indeed peaceful, the Iranian authorities must cooperate rigorously, transparently and unequivocally with the IAEA. Otherwise, the Agency's ability to provide guarantees on the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme remains compromised. That is why the commitments made under the JCPOA and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must be fully respected by Iran.

Secondly, we regret Iran's development and testing of ballistic missiles — actions that are incompatible with resolution 2231 (2015). We are also concerned by allegations of transfers from Iran of ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles to third countries. We stress that any transfer of items, materials, equipment, goods and technology listed in the 2015 Missile Technology Control Regime is a violation of resolution 2231 (2015) if it has not received the prior approval of the Council. In that regard, we encourage the Secretariat to make full use of its flexibility to independently review the information provided and to respond to invitations for an on-site review.

Finally, the current state of the JCPOA serves as a reminder that urgent diplomatic efforts are needed to avoid its total unravelling. As such, we are encouraged by the efforts to hold dialogue, both in the region and beyond. We hope that those talks will enable the parties involved to recall our collective interest in resolving the Iranian nuclear issue. In order to be sustainable, political détente must be accompanied by a return to compliance with the obligations and spirit of the JCPOA.

The Council must give the issue its full attention. Switzerland stands ready, as it has done in the past by hosting negotiations, to facilitate any diplomatic solution aimed at maintaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Mrs. Shino (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Frazier and Ambassador Skoog for their informative briefings.

Japan reiterates its continued support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which strengthens the international non-proliferation regime and contributes to the peace and stability of the Middle East.

The exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme must be ensured through the full implementation of the JCPOA and the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) verification and monitoring activities. The Agency's safeguards are a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Every Member State, including Iran, must act in a manner that preserves the integrity of the safeguards system in cooperation with the Agency.

Japan is deeply concerned about the expansion of Iran's nuclear activities beyond the limits of its commitments under the JCPOA following the regrettable withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA. That includes enhanced uranium enrichment up to 60 per cent uranium-235 and its storage and the expansion of advanced centrifuges, as well as Iran's suspension of its voluntary application of the Additional Protocol. We strongly hope for the immediate return to full compliance with the commitments under the JCPOA by all relevant countries.

While taking note of the start of the implementation of the joint statement between the IAEA and Iran of March 2023, Japan calls on Iran to fully cooperate with the Agency in the full and unconditional implementation of the joint statement without delay to address its nuclear issues, including the outstanding safeguards issues.

The restoration of the JCPOA will require a process of sincere confidence-building among the relevant countries, particularly between the United States and Iran. Diplomacy remains the only viable solution, and Japan will proactively contribute towards facilitating dialogue among the relevant countries to resolve the issue.

With regard to other non-proliferation issues related to Iran, it is important for Iran to seriously address the concerns raised by JCPOA participants and other

United Nations Member States in relation to annex B to resolution 2231 (2015).

Japan is deeply concerned about a series of allegations related to Iran's possible proliferation activities, including the transfer of missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and related technologies from Iran to recipients within and beyond the Middle East region. We urge all Member States, including Iran, to abide by resolution 2231 (2015), particularly annex B, paragraph 4. In that regard, we must once again strongly condemn the transfer of UAVs from Iran to Russia. Even if that transfer took place prior to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as claimed by Iran, prior permission from the Security Council would have been necessary. Any transfer without permission would constitute a violation of resolution 2231 (2015). We would therefore support efforts by the Secretariat to investigate Russia's potential use of Iranian drones in its war of aggression.

Finally, Japan believes that only dialogue and cooperation can ease tensions in the Middle East. Therefore, we welcome the normalization agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Japan is also committed to continuing its diplomatic efforts to ease tensions based on our friendly and constructive relations with countries in the region, including Iran.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I appreciate the briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Ms. Rosemary Di-Carlo, and by Ambassador Olof Skoog. I also acknowledge the work of the Permanent Representative of Malta, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, in her capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

We regret the current situation of the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a result of unilateral actions outside of the agreement, endorsed by the Security Council in July 2015 through resolution 2231 (2015). We recognize the efforts of those seeking to keep the JCPOA in force.

We had hoped that the negotiations for a new JCPOA would bear fruit. While a new framework has not been achieved, for Ecuador, dialogue under the existing agreement remains the best option for dealing with the Iranian nuclear issue, as stated by the Secretary-General in his latest report on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473). We therefore call for the restoration of the actions envisaged within the

context of the JCPOA and encourage all the parties concerned to renew their efforts to resume the full and effective implementation of the Plan and resolve outstanding issues.

The findings of report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) concerning highly enriched uranium particles, which are inconsistent with Iran's declared level of enrichment, is of deep concern. My delegation therefore calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply fully with its obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), including its annex B. In that context, we join others in rejecting any transfer of unmanned aerial vehicles or other types of weapons that could constitute a flagrant violation of the agreement.

Ecuador defends the multilateral non-proliferation regime, whose cornerstone is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In keeping with the provisions of that instrument, we recognize the right of States to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination, and we reiterate the obligation of States to comply with the provisions of the Treaty.

Likewise, Ecuador supports the IAEA's role and tasks of cooperation, verification and monitoring, which are essential actions in the context of the JCPOA. We therefore welcome the high-level meetings held between the IAEA and the Islamic Republic of Iran in March 2023 and take note of the joint statement expressing Iran's willingness to allow the IAEA to carry out further appropriate verification and monitoring activities. We reiterate Iran's responsibility to cooperate fully with the IAEA in all aspects of its obligations under the JCPOA and the NPT. The Agency's monitoring to ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme is vital.

In conclusion, for Ecuador, lasting peace and security for all States are based on dialogue and cooperation. I therefore call on all parties to the JCPOA to redouble efforts to advance the search for negotiated solutions.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I will now deliver a statement in my national capacity.

I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassador Skoog for their briefings. We welcome the Secretary-General's fifteenth report (S/2023/473) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), as well as the Report of the Joint Commission to the Security Council on the status of the Procurement Working

Group's decisions and on any implementation issues (S/2023/479). We have taken due note of both reports.

At the outset, let me underline that Malta remains strongly committed to the restoration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and its full implementation. The JCPOA and its endorsement, in resolution 2231 (2015), remain vital for regional and global non-proliferation. Malta concurs with the Secretary-General's view that the JCPOA is the best available option for ensuring the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. We hope that the parties will renew dialogue and engagement in order to reach an agreement. A diplomatic solution remains possible, and we should strive for the full and effective implementation of commitments under the JCPOA by all sides. Time is of the essence, and we need to seize all available opportunities.

We welcome the cooperation between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran during the past six months, including high-level meetings and the joint statement issued in March. We also took note of the steps taken to install surveillance cameras at workshops where centrifuge parts are manufactured. Iran's timely and full cooperation with the IAEA remains key.

However, a number of questions remain unanswered, including the IAEA's inability to verify Iran's total stockpile of enriched uranium. We encourage further and enhanced cooperation between the IAEA and Iran in order to improve information-sharing, including by providing access to camera data that it is presently withholding, as well as addressing the gaps in recordings. We also urge Iran to resolve outstanding issues and to address concerns related to the expansion of its nuclear enrichment capacity and the production of highly enriched uranium.

Malta believes that a revived JCPOA should succeed in providing the necessary assurances regarding Iran's non-proliferation goals and promote regional stability. In that vein, we call on all parties to take steps to return to full implementation of the agreement and of resolution 2231 (2015). We also join the Secretary-General's call to instil a greater sense of urgency in renewing dialogue and engagement.

Finally, we once again call upon the Council to ensure the implementation and efficacy of resolution 2231 (2015).

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo; Mr. Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) to the United Nations; and Mrs. Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta, for their briefings.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is an important achievement of multilateral diplomacy endorsed by the Security Council in its resolutions and is a key pillar for maintaining the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East. The previous United States Administration unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA and exerted extreme pressure on Iran, which triggered the Iranian nuclear crisis.

Since April 2021, the parties, with the coordination of the European Union, have conducted multiple rounds of pragmatic negotiations and, at one point, were only one step away from resuming the implementation of the JCPOA. Regrettably, the negotiations have stalled since August. The situation on the Iranian nuclear issue has been experiencing ups and downs, and the future prospects have been uncertain. We call on all parties concerned to cherish the hard-won results of the negotiations, demonstrate political wisdom, eliminate key obstacles and reach consensus on restoring the integrity of the JCPOA and ensuring its effective implementation as soon as possible.

I would like to make four points in that regard.

First, it is imperative for all parties to make greater efforts to start the process of resuming talks as soon as possible. In March, Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued a joint statement on outstanding safeguards issues. Recently, they have also achieved substantial progress in advancing the resumption of the Agency's verification process, addressing compliance concerns and other issues. The United States and other relevant parties should seize the positive momentum, adopt a pragmatic approach, move in the same direction as Iran and put the JCPOA back on track at an early date. As the Coordinator of the JCPOA, the EU should play a more active and constructive role.

Secondly, China supports all efforts to help ease the situation on the Iranian nuclear issue and believes that relevant efforts should maintain the consensus reached in previous negotiations, address the legitimate and reasonable concerns of all parties in a balanced manner and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of all

parties. Otherwise, no effort will likely bear fruit and, even if it did, it would not likely be sustainable. China calls on the United States to lift all unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction measures against Iran and any third party, to stop the erroneous practice of threatening to use force and to create favourable conditions for an early and full resumption of implementation.

Thirdly, the current Iranian nuclear situation is at a critical juncture. All parties should maintain a rational attitude, treat the Iranian nuclear issue separately from other issues and avoid any negative actions that could escalate the situation and undermine a political and diplomatic solution. That explains why China just now voted against the proposal in the procedural vote. We hope that similar situations that would further complicate the Iranian nuclear issue will not happen again. At the same time, China calls on the Security Council to play a constructive role on the Iranian nuclear issue. Some of the restrictive measures in resolution 2231 (2015) will expire in October and the farce surrounding the snap-back mechanism in 2020 should not be repeated.

Fourthly, Chinese President Xi Jinping has proposed a global security initiative advocating a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept, which provides useful inspiration for addressing security issues in the Middle East. Not long ago, the historic resumption of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, through the Beijing dialogue, boosted momentum and hope for a political solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and other hotspot issues in the Middle East, including comprehensive reconciliation in the region. China stands ready to work with all parties to uphold true multilateralism, implement the global security initiative, share a common security path and join hands in building a new security architecture in the Middle East to achieve long-term peace and security in the Middle East.

As a permanent member of the Security Council and a participant in the JCPOA, China has always been committed to maintaining the effectiveness of the Plan and the authority of the Council's resolutions and has always participated in the political and diplomatic solution of the Iranian nuclear issue in a constructive manner. We are ready to keep up close contacts with all parties to push the JCPOA back onto the right track at an early date and maintain the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): I would like also to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Di Carlo and Ambassador Skoog for their comprehensive briefings. I would also like to thank Ambassador Frazier for her work and for her briefing today in her capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

We took note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2023/473), and we share his hope that the recent positive regional developments will facilitate the progress needed on the Iran nuclear issue and more broadly facilitate greater regional stability. The United Arab Emirates is fully committed to that goal. Today I want to make three points to that effect.

First, we continue to call for dialogue and diplomacy to ensure that nuclear programmes are exclusively peaceful. The United Arab Emirates has consistently championed peaceful and diplomatic solutions for these regional and international challenges. We continue to advocate de-escalation of tensions, improved diplomatic relations and greater economic cooperation within our region to underpin that objective of greater regional stability.

We recognize that diplomatic engagement is also crucial to addressing the concerns surrounding Iran's nuclear programme and for paving the way towards a resolution that builds the required confidence and ensures all nuclear activities in Iran are exclusively peaceful. We also welcome the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran as a positive step in this direction.

Secondly, two elements are key for ensuring regional and global nuclear security: the strict and timely compliance with international obligations, including nuclear-related commitments set forth in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We commend the IAEA for its diligent efforts in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related activities. Its detailed reporting is invaluable, and we take note of the recent developments outlined in the IAEA Director General's 31 May report.

However, we remain concerned about Iran's step-by-step cessation since May 2019 of nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. This has led not only to a complete halt in the implementation of those commitments, including transparency measures and the compliance with the additional protocol, but

also to an alarming escalation. As we heard from Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Iran's estimated total enriched uranium stockpile is now more than 20 times the allowable amount under the JCPOA. Iran's enrichment programme has advanced to a level and a scale that is unjustifiable for civilian purposes and far exceeds the limits set out in the JCPOA.

The IAEA's difficulties in performing its important verification activities for over two years has led to a significant degree of uncertainty and loss of confidence. It also poses substantial challenges in establishing a new baseline for these activities.

We take note of the joint statement between the IAEA and Iran reached in March 2023 and the subsequent installation by the Agency of a limited number of surveillance cameras and monitoring equipment. The process of implementing the activities set out in the joint statement needs to be sustained and uninterrupted in order for all of the commitments to be fulfilled.

Iran's return to full compliance of its nuclear commitments, including the safeguards agreement in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and complete cooperation with the IAEA, is crucial. Not only will it foster confidence, but it would also contribute significantly to progress on addressing the concerns of the international community in relation to Iran's nuclear programme.

Finally, the report's discussion of the seizure of ballistic-missile components in the Gulf of Oman by the British Royal Navy is of particular concern to the United Arab Emirates. The United Kingdom's assessment that these components are of Iranian origin and have been transferred in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015) is deeply troubling.

The suggestion has been made that some of these components bear design characteristics and markings similar to those previously found in the debris of ballistic missiles launched against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates by the Houthis in Yemen. This has severe implications for regional security and is of grave concern to my country.

We call on all parties to abide by their obligations and commit to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), including full compliance around ballistic-missile-technology testing. We are convinced that cooperation and adherence to international law will

help build trust and ensure nuclear non-proliferation and regional security. It will also support the tangible economic benefits that are so needed for the Iranian people.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and European Union Ambassador Skoog for their updates, as well as Ambassador Frazier for her work as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

The fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473) paints a disturbing picture of the advancement of the illicit Iranian nuclear programme. It is beyond any doubt that Iranian nuclear proliferation activities supersede and fail to comply with the provisions of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The findings in the report cast doubt on the so-called peaceful purposes of such activities.

It is regrettable to note that Iran has not taken any meaningful steps toward the fulfilment of its obligations under the safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) related to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its additional protocol, despite recent communications between the IAEA and the Iranian Government. The opaque practices of Iran undermine the ability of the IAEA to ensure full verification and monitoring.

A closer look at the steps taken by Iran seem worrisomely and increasingly to indicate a determination to advance towards building nuclear weapons in the near future, rather than a genuine effort in good faith to implement the JCPOA through diplomacy and in transparency. The facts are there: Iran has expanded its stockpile of enriched uranium, put more centrifuges in operation and enhanced their efficiency, increased the number of enrichment sites, dangerously experimented with enriching to high levels in a single step, and obstructed nuclear inspectors.

That is utterly worrisome, but there is more: in clear violation of the paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), Iran continues to conduct ballistic-missile-related activities capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic-missile technology. The test flight of the QAEM-100 space launch vehicle, the testing of the Khaibar ballistic missile and the recent unveiling of the new Fattah ballistic missile are deplorable violations of the restrictions set forth in the JCPOA.

The destructive activities of Iran spread across the region and beyond, and they are a cause for great concern. By illegally transferring weapons without the approval of the Security Council, in flagrant violation of the arms embargo in Yemen under resolution 2216 (2015), Iran continues to empower the Houthi, including in their war of terror against neighbouring countries.

As we had suspected, the preliminary findings by the Secretariat confirm similarities between the ballistic-missile components seized by the British navy in the international waters of the Gulf of Oman and the debris of the ballistic missiles used by the Houthis in their attacks directed at Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. We await the full and timely assessment of the Secretariat on this matter.

Furthermore, the illicit transfer of hundreds of Iranian Mohajer- and Shahed-series unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia, in clear violation of resolution 2231 (2015), is tantamount to supplying death to Ukrainian civilians. Residential areas in Ukraine and critical civilian infrastructure continue to be under unrelenting attack by Iranian drones. We reiterate our call to the Secretariat to provide full clarity on this issue.

In the last year, the international community has dealt patiently and reasonably with Iran, pursuing a diplomatic path to find a solution, which is always possible. We regret that Tehran persists in rejecting all efforts to resume full and effective implementation of the JCPOA. As a consequence, we fear now that its nuclear programme is more advanced than ever and that the threat it poses is growing accordingly.

Let me conclude with a very sincere call. Iran should stop testing the resolve of peace-loving countries and actors by dangerously throwing itself and the entire region into uncertainty by seeking nuclear weapons. It should stop supporting terror and destabilization policies through proxies. And it should stop using cyberattacks against other countries. What is needed are deeds, and not just empty words that are betrayed by Iran's actions. Only that will bring the credibility that is lacking and the assurances that are missing.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her presentation of the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2023/473) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I also thank Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, in her capacity as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), and Ambassador Olof Skoog,

representing the Coordinator of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Joint Commission, for their briefings.

Ghana has always asserted that the JCPOA represents the best opportunity and most pragmatic approach for addressing the Iranian nuclear programme, as it facilitates a balanced compromise that allows Iran to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while simultaneously upholding the crucial principles of non-proliferation. While it was our expectation that the termination of some of the sanctions outlined in annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) would occur against a backdrop of cooperation, communication, transparency and verification, the situation today is different. There is a high level of distrust among the parties to the JCPOA, and the commitment to defining the steps necessary to restore the Plan's implementation has failed to gain traction.

Ghana reaffirms that the global instruments pertaining to nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are fundamental safeguards against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We therefore recognize the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) as critical multilateral initiatives that facilitate universal adherence to the relevant instruments of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that have anchored the global efforts for international peace and security. In forging ahead, we believe that it would be useful for the key stakeholders to develop a practical road map of steps to return to full compliance with the JCPOA and the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). That would require rebuilding trust and coordinating efforts towards a shared understanding of the existing text and the requirements it outlines.

Ghana again echoes the call for the parties to exhibit the necessary flexibility and political will to reach a compromise on the outstanding issues in order to restore the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. We also urge all the parties to adhere to their commitments under the JCPOA, including by lifting the unilateral sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran. Such measures have a negative impact on the people of Iran and create a misunderstanding that there might be political motives to consider beyond the objectives of non-proliferation and regional security.

At the same time, we strongly urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to fulfil all its commitments under

the deal, including reversing any actions that are not consistent with its obligations. It is essential for Iran to uphold its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and implement voluntary transparency measures with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as specified in the Plan. In that regard, we believe that the meeting between the IAEA Director General and the Government of Iran in March, as well as the subsequent restoration of the surveillance cameras in workshops where centrifuge parts are manufactured, are positive developments that must be sustained. We reaffirm our support for the efforts of the IAEA in maintaining the Agency's monitoring and verification activities of Iran's nuclear programme. We believe that the Agency plays a critical role in restoring trust and confidence within the international community and among the countries of the region through the assurances it can provide that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes. We reiterate that the right to peaceful uses must be exercised in conformity with the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other nuclear-related commitments, including the Additional Protocol, and in compliance with the agreed standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In conclusion, Ghana continues to affirm its strong support for the global treaties against the development, production, use and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, as such agreements and instruments are the only means we have to ensure a comprehensive, verifiable, irreversible, non-discriminatory, transparent and time-bound approach to nuclear disarmament.

Finally, we recognize that achieving the JCPOA took determined diplomacy and tact, and that restoring its implementation will require exceptional diplomatic efforts and patience. Accordingly, we urge all the parties to work constructively towards a full return to the terms of the deal, bearing in mind the ongoing threats to global security and the time constraints. We must keep to the path of diplomacy.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General, the Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations for their briefings.

We are at a particularly grave moment in history. Iran has been engaged in a continuing nuclear escalation for four years, documented by successive

reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Never before — and I mean never — has Iran's nuclear programme been so advanced. Its enriched-uranium stockpile has reached considerable levels, more than 20 times higher than those defined in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). During an unannounced inspection in January, IAEA inspectors discovered particles of uranium with an enrichment level as high as 83.7% — close to military levels. Iran has continued increasing its enriched-uranium production capacity relentlessly, rendering the limits defined by the JCPOA meaningless. Such activities are unprecedented and have no credible civilian justification. They cast serious doubt on Iran's intentions at a time when its cooperation with the IAEA remains inadequate. That has detrimental implications for the Agency's verification activities under the JCPOA and undermines its ability to guarantee the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

France regrets that over the course of 2022 Iran refused several opportunities to return to the JCPOA, maintaining demands that it knew to be unacceptable, and Iran bears full responsibility for that. We remain firmly committed to finding a negotiated solution in order to reverse the current trajectory. To achieve that, it will be crucial for Iran to immediately take concrete and verifiable de-escalation measures, including by fully and immediately implementing its commitments made to the IAEA on 4 March.

Iran has also continued to develop its ballistic-missile capabilities by firing ballistic missiles and developing space-launch vehicles. The continued development of those systems, which are capable of delivering nuclear weapons, paints a particularly worrisome picture in the context of the ongoing nuclear escalation. In addition, Iran continues to violate resolution 2231 (2015) by transferring missiles and drones without the authorization of the Security Council. The repeated interceptions of those missiles and drones indicate transfers to actors contributing to the destabilization of the Gulf region, in violation of several other Council resolutions. Those transfers must stop. And since last summer, Iran has chosen, in violation of resolution 2231 (2015), to supply Russia with combat drones used in its war of aggression against Ukraine. Since then, Iran has continued those transfers despite the fact that they are being deliberately used against civilian infrastructure and the Ukrainian people. All of that has been documented. France continues to call on

the United Nations to investigate those violations and on Iran to stop supporting Russia's war of aggression.

As we approach the month of October and the lifting of several important provisions of resolution 2231 (2015), it is clear that the initial path envisioned in 2015 with the aim of inspiring trust in the peaceful nature of Iran's programme and ensuring its renunciation of its destabilizing ballistic activities has not materialized. On the contrary, Iran is further away from that than ever. In that regard, we are committed to ensuring that Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons. In the immediate future, Iran must demonstrate its willingness to reverse an extremely serious trend through de-escalation gestures and full cooperation with the IAEA. We call on Iran to make the gestures needed and halt its headlong rush. For our part, together with our partners, we stand ready to find a diplomatic resolution to the situation.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation was at the forefront of the negotiation process that led to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — a unique achievement in multilateral diplomacy. We are extremely concerned about its future. We regret that, at this critical juncture for the fate of the Plan, the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council is abusing its authority to promote its own political agenda, instead of impartially fulfilling its duties, thereby running the risk of undermining the already-fraught discussion around the JCPOA. Inviting Ukraine, which is not party to the nuclear deal, to participate in today's meeting, in violation of long-standing, established practice, is a politically provocative move aimed at undermining any constructive discussion of resolution 2231 (2015) in the Security Council. This is yet another stain on London's reputation in its role as President of the Security Council.

We thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing.

We were taken aback by the briefing by Olof Skoog, Head of Delegation of the European Union (EU). His politicized statements, which included assessments not directly related to the subject of today's meeting, are puzzling. That is not the Coordinator's role. The EU representative appears to have forgotten that he is acting as the Coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, not as Brussels representative. We regret the fact that, for the sake of its political agenda, the EU has essentially

ended its reputed former role as an honest broker in the JCPOA processes.

We thank Mrs. Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta, in her capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), whom we congratulate on her appointment to the position. We wish her every success in her important role steering the work in the 2231 format. The consensus adoption by the Council last week of the Facilitator's six-month report (see S/2023/488) seems to represent a successful beginning for the work of our Maltese colleagues in their new role.

At the same time, we note that, in her statement, the new Facilitator, like her predecessor (see S/PV.9225), failed to mention the well-known root cause of the problems surrounding the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, namely, the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the deal in 2018 and the imposition of unilateral sanctions against Iran. Rather, she merely called on the parties, which do not include Washington, to the deal to support the agreement. We regret that the Secretary-General also continues to prefer to overlook that objective fact in his six-month reports. Furthermore, we recall that the type of waivers for United States sanctions mentioned in the text of the report (S/2023/473) is insufficient. We must talk about the complete, permanent and verifiable repeal of illegal discriminatory measures imposed by Washington against Tehran in violation of resolution 2231 (2015).

At the same time, we see that the Secretary-General's report correctly emphasizes the order of priorities: the call on the United States to adopt measures to review its unilateral restrictions precedes the call on Iran to refrain from taking further steps away from full implementation of the Plan. No one, including the leadership of the Secretariat, has any illusions as to who bears the main responsibility for the failure to implement the resolution. It is also difficult to ignore the fact that all the steps taken by Tehran were a reaction to the actions of the United States.

Moreover, it is extremely puzzling that the text of the Secretary-General's report once again contains references to the alleged investigation of available information by the Secretariat and the intention to provide the Security Council with certain so-called findings regarding so-called violations of resolution 2231 (2015), annex B, paragraphs 3 and 4. We are

compelled once again to stress that the 2231 cell lacks the authority to take such actions and that the functions of the Secretariat related to the resolution are of a purely administrative and technical nature. They are clearly set out in the provisions of the note by the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2016/44, of 16 January 2016.

My country has already provided the Council with a detailed legal analysis in that regard. We urge the representatives of the Secretariat to strictly comply with their obligations and refrain from the practice of non-consensual visits and unauthorized investigations, based on the so-called invitations by certain States, in violation of Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations. We will consider any such non-consensual actions not only as a violation of the Charter, but also as a deliberate provocation aimed at undermining the implementation of Security Council decisions. The Secretary-General is well aware of our position in that regard.

At the same time, we are pleased to note that the Secretary-General continues to regard the JCPOA as the best way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. We welcome the mention of the constructive cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, with a focus on the implementation of the March joint statement and the resolution of outstanding issues.

We believe more than ever that it is important to recall that almost eight years ago the conclusion of the JCPOA was a real breakthrough in global diplomacy. The political will and pragmatic efforts of the Member States in the process ensured unprecedented transparency vis-à-vis Iran's nuclear activities and addressed all of the IAEA's questions concerning Tehran. Unfortunately, one former participant in the process, the United States, attempted to nullify our shared achievement by unilaterally withdrawing from the JCPOA in 2018. Since then, we have not seen any meaningful steps towards Washington's return to the deal. I wonder if the representative of the United States, who dedicated his entire statement exclusively to the topic of drones and missiles, has anything to say about the purpose of this meeting. The party responsible for problems with the JCPOA was mute on the subject of JCPOA itself, for example, on whether the United States will return to the deal that it attempted to dismantle in 2018. Apparently, the pathos and fervour of the American representative was intended, inter

alia, to draw attention away from the endless stream of weapons supplied by Washington to the Kyiv regime.

Despite the fact that the draft comprehensive decision of the JCPOA Joint Commission, which was intended to reinvigorate the Plan in a relatively short period of time, was completed long ago and that Tehran officially and as early as in December 2022 declared its readiness to conclude a new restorative agreement based on this draft, the actions of the United States and European JCPOA participants led to an impasse in negotiations under the Vienna platform. Moreover, the same States began to openly sabotage the process in their attempt to create the illusion of Iran's responsibility for the situation. That has been seen, in particular, in attempts by some of them to cite facts out of context in order to advance their political agenda, which we saw in the distortion of the situation concerning cooperation between Iran and the IAEA.

Our Western colleagues continue to speculate on the discovery of highly enriched uranium particles containing up to 83.7 per cent uranium-235 at one of Iran's facilities, while deliberately omitting the fact that the issue has already been resolved, as reflected in the reports of the Secretary-General, the 2231 Facilitator and the IAEA Director General. We categorically reject such attempts to manipulate objective information and to cast doubt on Iran's right to explore and develop peaceful uses of the atom under the Agency's oversight. It is in our interest that relations between Tehran and the IAEA continue to develop smoothly, based on mutual trust.

All factual information related to the actual status of the Iranian nuclear programme are transmitted to the international community via the reports of the Agency's Director General. As soon as the JCPOA is fully re-implemented, the Additional Protocol to Iran's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement will once again become operational. All responsible States must facilitate the process, not obstruct it.

An even more appalling example of supercharging the media space with misinformation is the continuous attempts to accuse Iran of violations of resolution 2231 (2015), annex B, paragraphs 3 and 4. Both Iran and Russia have repeatedly responded to numerous letters with identical content circulated in the Council. No irrefutable evidence has been provided by their authors to substantiate those allegations. All we see are certain "suspicions" and vague "assessments" based on

"open-source information". That is particularly well illustrated by insinuations about so-called "Iranian drones" allegedly being used in Ukraine. Some of the "photographic evidence" is even comical in nature. An image of Zelenskyy allegedly carrying a Shahed drone has been widely disseminated in the media. The drone is three metres long, with a wingspan of two metres, suggesting that the President of Ukraine must be roughly 2.5 metres tall. The photo is fake and has been laughed out of court on the Internet long ago.

The other so-called material evidence provided consists of indecipherable photographs of some sort of debris with nothing that points to their Iranian origin. But what is there to talk about when judging by the letters and the materials, the authors themselves were uncertain about the basis for their conclusions? Their language is specifically chosen to absolve London of the responsibility for ensuring that the information presented to the Security Council is reliable. That is clearly the reason for the references to so-called initial assessments, meaning that the British did not even finish the so-called examination of the alleged drones. In the absence of objective facts, the reason for spreading these fabrications is clearly to put a negative spin on the reports of the Secretary-General and the Facilitator on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and to distract attention from the violations of resolution 2231 (2015) committed by the Western members of the JCPOA and the United States.

We are particularly concerned about the fact that in their escalatory rhetoric some Western States not only show no interest in negotiating to restore the JCPOA, but they also make obvious attempts to blackmail Tehran with threats of taking anti-Iranian steps in the Security Council. One clear example is the reference to the possibility of reinstating provisions of previous Security Council resolutions with regard to Iran, the so-called snapback clause. We want to underscore that there are no legal or procedural grounds for that. We are warning our Western colleagues — who should first take some measures themselves to ensure the full implementation of the JCPOA — against taking dangerous steps that run counter to the position of the Secretary-General and the majority of Council members about the importance of preserving the deal.

We are equally concerned about the discussions in the Western press that Great Britain and the two European States might be planning to reconsider the expiration planned for October of the so-called missile

restrictions imposed on Iran in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of annex B. We urge our colleagues to be reasonable and strictly comply with their international obligations, as required by Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations. The illegal national decisions of various countries dictated by purely opportunistic considerations cannot knowingly trigger legal consequences for other States. We resolutely condemn the nefarious practice of the extraterritorial application of unilateral sanctions, one of the clearest manifestations of the so-called rules-based order and one that has nothing to do with international law.

In conclusion, I want to once again emphasize our principled position. Russia firmly believes that there is no alternative to the JCPOA, and that its speedy resumption is the only right way to respond to both regional and global security interests. We are all well aware whose court the ball is in now. Tehran is genuinely interested in revitalizing the JCPOA, but so far we see no evidence that the Western countries are ready to move in the same direction. It would be a great pity if a chance to revive the deal were wasted because of them. We hope that the Secretary-General will send a clear signal to the United States and the European parties to the JCPOA about the need to reach a final agreement on a recovery package and a pathway to its implementation in practice. The Russian Federation is ready to continue joint efforts to that end. We hope that the leadership of the Secretariat recognizes the importance of keeping its published reports balanced and objective. Its statements and actions should be considered, thoroughly verified, impartial and supportive of the multilateral efforts aimed at restoring the JCPOA.

Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Ambassador Olof Skoog of the European Union and Ambassador Vanessa Frazier of Malta for their comprehensive briefings.

It is with deep concern that we note that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), concluded after a protracted negotiation process on a very sensitive matter, has still not been fully implemented. That is clearly indicated in the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473).

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a grave and unparalleled, if not existential, threat to humankind. It is vitally important to eliminate them completely. That

responsibility falls on all of us. We must ensure that it remains a crucial component of our shared security architecture. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of our collective agenda to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, advance the peaceful use of nuclear energy, facilitate nuclear disarmament and ultimately promote complete and universal disarmament. It is against that backdrop, and guided by our Constitution, that Mozambique supports all efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Indeed, Mozambique is a State party to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, commonly known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, and other international arrangements. In recognizing the possibility of an accidental or unintentional nuclear crisis or one based on miscalculation, it is therefore our collective duty to take all necessary measures to prevent such catastrophic scenarios.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, concluded in 2015, is a product of a prolonged and arduous negotiation process on the Iranian nuclear-non-proliferation issue. Resolution 2231 (2015) reaffirmed that the full implementation of the JCPOA is essential to building confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and facilitating the normalization of economic and trade contacts with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We note with concern that the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) indicates "the continued lack of progress toward a return to the full and effective implementation of the Plan and the resolution" (S/2023/473, *para.2*). In view of that, we must take full advantage of the fact that the parties to the JCPOA have committed to a diplomatic solution. It is imperative to ensure that this positive standpoint is exploited to its fullest potential. In that regard, Mozambique echoes the Secretary-General's call urging all parties concerned to demonstrate a greater sense of urgency, renew dialogue and engagement and strive to reach an agreement on outstanding issues. We must make every effort to achieve that noble goal, while emphasizing the importance of conducting a diplomatic, constructive and results-oriented dialogue on the matter during the process. We believe that approach will contribute to reducing tensions, building trust and paving the way for the full implementation of the JCPOA.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that disarmament is the only viable option for ensuring sustainable international peace and security.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Head of the Delegation of the European Union Olof Skoog for their briefings on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I also thank Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta, in her capacity as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

The fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2023/473) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) underscores our belief in the continuing relevance of the Plan as the best diplomatic option for guaranteeing the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. The lack of progress with regard to the comprehensive and effective implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) remains a concern for the international disarmament architecture generally and for nuclear non-proliferation in particular. The worrisome developments mentioned in the report and corroborated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) draw attention to the need to ensure international peace and security and to guard against nuclear war. That is an overriding objective for which the Council is responsible.

The JCPOA represents a significant step forward in the common desire to make the world safer and free of nuclear weapons. The Council must do more to preserve that achievement and avoid any backsliding, which would only increase the uncertainty surrounding our collective security. We therefore call on all parties to return to the negotiating table and to engage in good faith, with a focus on dialogue and cooperation, with a view to returning to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and achieving the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation that would guarantee lasting peace in the region and the world.

It is important for each party to show commitment and flexibility. We welcome the visit in March by Director General Rafael Grossi, as well as the joint declaration between the IAEA and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which are encouraging signals on the road to appeasement and dialogue. We also echo the Secretary-General's encouragement of the JCPOA participants

and the United States to remain determined to find a diplomatic solution.

It is important to restore trust among the parties and to refrain from any politicization of the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). In that respect, the rapprochement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as the indirect talks held in mid-June in Oman between Iran and the United States, are steps in the right direction.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the importance my country attaches to the multilateral nuclear non-proliferation regime, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as its central pillar, while reiterating our wish to see the implementation of the agreement return to a positive dynamic for all parties.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Kingdom.

I would like to start by thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, as well as the Secretariat for its role in supporting implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I also thank Ambassador Skoog for his briefing and Ambassador Frazier for her briefing and work as Facilitator.

After months of negotiations, viable texts were put forward last year that provided Iran with the chance to return all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran refused that opportunity and has instead continued its nuclear escalation, thereby threatening international peace and security and demonstrating disregard for resolution 2231 (2015).

Iran's enriched uranium stockpile currently exceeds JCPOA limits by more than 21 times. Its enrichment capabilities have expanded to over 2,500 powerful advanced centrifuges suitable for nuclear weapons purposes. Building that capacity has given Iran irreversible gains in technical knowledge, which the JCPOA sought to limit. Iran is also launching missiles that could be capable of delivering nuclear weapons and testing technologies directly applicable to intermediate- and intercontinental-range ballistic missiles.

There is overwhelming evidence that Iran continues to provide material support to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, supplying unmanned aerial vehicles with a range of over 300 kilometres. It does so in the knowledge that Russia uses them to target civilians and civilian infrastructure. Iran has also continued to supply

increasingly complex weapons systems to the Houthis in Yemen, in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). That jeopardizes regional security and undermines regional stability and prosperity.

The restrictions in resolution 2231 (2015) were intended to build confidence in Iran as a responsible international actor. Transition day sunsets are due in October, and it is clear that the trajectory envisioned back in 2015 has not materialized. Iran will need to take substantial steps to reverse its escalatory approach if it is to start to rebuild that confidence.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

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

I would like to start by thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassador Skoog for their briefings, as well as the Secretariat for its important role in supporting the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and, in particular, the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the subject prepared for today's discussion (S/2023/473). I would also like to thank Ambassador Frazier and her team for the briefing and work as Facilitator.

We are extremely alarmed by the findings of the Secretary-General's latest report on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), in particular the violation by Iran and Russia of the resolution's annex B, paragraph 4. Those unlawful activities are not limited to the region. Right now, those actions are directly affecting peace and security in Europe. Since September 2022, the Russian Federation has massively used the Iranian Shahed-131, Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in its full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine, in particular as an element of its terror strategy against the civilian population and critical infrastructure.

As of today, more than 1,000 launches by the Russian Federation of Iranian UAVs over the territory of Ukraine have been recorded. All types of Iranian UAVs that struck or were shot down over the territory of Ukraine, as well as their debris, were thoroughly disassembled and studied. According to the results of those studies, Ukrainian investigators and independent international experts identified evidence confirming

the Iranian origin of the UAVs used by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Armed Forces of Ukraine also intercepted UAVs marked as Geran-1 and Geran-2. After detailed technical examination, those UAVs appeared to be Shahed-131 and Shahed-136 respectively — capable of delivering payloads to a range greater than 300 kilometres. They were simply renamed with the Russian names Geran-1 and Geran-2.

Despite numerous official denials and statements, Iran continues its transfers of UAVs to the Russian Federation. They are then used by Putin's regime not only as a weapon on the battlefield, but as a method of warfare against highly populated areas and critical infrastructure in Ukraine. Moreover, the competent authorities of Ukraine possess still more alarming information about the intention of the Russian Federation to continue further attacks on Ukraine with more advanced Iranian ballistic missiles and UAV systems.

The Government of Ukraine assesses that the transfer of UAVs from Iran to the Russian Federation constitutes a flagrant violation of the resolution 2231 (2015), in particular annex B, paragraph 4, of that document. In line with the mandate of resolution 2231 (2015), Ukraine has asked multiple times on a bilateral level, as well as in correspondence with the Office of the Secretary-General, for United Nations experts to visit Ukraine to inspect recovered UAVs of Iranian origin in order to facilitate the resolution's implementation. Any further delay to the Organization's comprehensive consideration of the facts regarding violations of Council resolutions by Iran and the Russian Federation will undermine, if not discredit, the credibility of the Council, as well as its ability to ensure the implementation of its own resolutions.

Since, on 9 June, the United Nations team had not visited Ukraine, we shared a document (S/2023/418) containing the relevant evidence of the supply of the Iranian-origin UAVs to the Russian Federation, which is prohibited under resolution 2231 (2015). We once again reaffirm our readiness to facilitate the respective visits of the United Nations experts to Ukraine at the earliest possible opportunity to study samples of the recovered Iranian-origin UAVs that the Russian Federation uses in their ongoing war against Ukraine. We also urge the international community to reinforce the joint efforts aimed at combating the uncontrolled transfer of those items, which are prohibited under Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).

Finally, if Russia insists that the photos with Iranian drones are fake, why does it so resolutely oppose United Nations inspections to corroborate its statements?

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

Mr. Geisler (Germany): I would like to express my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Frazier and Ambassador Skoog for their briefings and their efforts to support and monitor the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

For the past four years, Iran's violations of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have undermined global peace and security. The speed with which Iran has escalated its nuclear programme is alarming. The discovery of particles containing up to 83.7 per cent enriched uranium in Fordow in January represents yet another escalatory development that brings Iran dangerously close to engaging in weapons-related activities. With over 2,500 powerful advanced centrifuges, Iran has expanded its stockpile of enriched uranium to more than 21 times the JCPOA limit. Put differently, Iran now possesses almost three times the amount of nuclear material required for a nuclear explosive device.

Against that backdrop, it is imperative that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is in a position to promptly report any further such escalation. Yet, for over two years, the Iranian denial of access has blindsided the Agency and, with it, the whole international community. Iran's proclaimed efforts to increase cooperation with the IAEA have fallen markedly short of expectations. As emphasized by the Director General in his most recent report, Iran must promptly return to full and effective cooperation with the IAEA.

Iran's nuclear activities also warrant particular scrutiny of its ongoing advances in space-launch-vehicle technology and the testing of ballistic missiles. Despite the restrictions under resolution 2231 (2015), Iran continues to carry out launches using missiles that could be capable of delivering nuclear weapons. In a further blatant violation of resolution 2231 (2015), Iran continues to transfer missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to partners and proxies in the region and beyond. With the transfer of such vehicles to Russia and plans to establish a production facility within Russia, Iran's violations have reached a new level of severity.

Iran can no longer deny full knowledge that Russia has been using these UAVs against densely populated areas in Ukraine to target cities and critical infrastructure in order to terrorize the Ukrainian population. We call upon Iran to halt immediately any support of Russia's war of aggression and recall that indiscriminate attacks on civilians constitute a war crime. We welcome the prospect of a visit by United Nations experts to Ukraine, in line with the Government of Ukraine's request and past practice.

Germany regrets Iran's consistent refusal to seize multiple diplomatic opportunities to restore and fully implement the JCPOA, the last of which was Iran's refusal to accept a proposal it had negotiated for weeks in Vienna in August. Concrete and verifiable measures are urgently required to de-escalate the situation and pave the way for further steps. We call on Iran to immediately re-establish full cooperation with the IAEA and to live up to its commitments, as set out in the joint statement of 4 March. We call on all States to work together to address this critical situation and safeguard international peace and security.

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

Mr. Irvani (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, we would like to state our position clearly and on the record regarding the participation of the representative of the Republic of Ukraine in today's meeting, under the agenda item of non-proliferation, and focusing on the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

We strongly object to the presidency of the Council extending an invitation to a Member State that has no direct or indirect relevance to the agenda item of the meeting. We perceive that action as neither constructive nor in good faith. Instead, it appears to be a cynical attempt to divert attention from the pressing matter at hand — the implementation of the JCPOA — and the failure of certain Western parties to fulfil their obligations under the agreement.

Let me make it clear — this meeting and resolution 2231 (2015) have absolutely no connection to the conflict in Ukraine. The invitation extended to the representative of Ukraine for this meeting represents an abuse of the process and a misuse of the Council's presidency, serving the political agendas of certain States. Moreover, this action flagrantly contradicts established practices of the Council and its provisional

rules of procedure and runs counter to the principles outlined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Iran categorically rejects the unfounded allegations made by Ukraine and maintains its impartial stance on the Ukrainian conflict. We have patiently awaited the alleged evidence from Ukraine, following the preliminary meeting between Iranian and Ukrainian experts. If the intention is truly to address and resolve the issue at hand, it is crucial to refrain from employing illegal and politically motivated measures. Instead, Iran's request should be acknowledged and earnestly addressed in a constructive manner.

The use of the so-called "documents", entailing inconsistent photos and questionable open-source information and abusing United Nations procedures to release them as evidence of alleged violations, as Ukraine and the United Kingdom have done, is unprofessional, deceptive and unconstructive.

I must reiterate once again that the repeated request to the Secretariat to conduct the so-called "investigation" lacks a legal basis. Neither resolution 2231 (2015) nor the relevant note by the President of the Security Council (S/2016/44) authorizes such an unlawful mandate. Any finding or conclusion by the Secretariat based on such illegal activities is null and void.

It is quite evident that certain Council members are deliberately attempting to divert international attention away from the root causes of the current situation concerning the implementation of the JCPOA and the ongoing material violations of resolution 2231 (2015) by the United States since its illegitimate withdrawal from the agreement in 2018.

Consequently, we firmly declare that we do not recognize the presence of Ukraine in this meeting, and we have no intention of addressing the baseless allegations put forth by the representative of Ukraine or certain Member States against my country during this meeting regarding the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Having clarified our position on the matter, I would now like to address the substantive issue pertaining to the agenda item, namely, the implementation of the JCPOA.

We thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ambassador Frazier of Malta for their briefings.

I would like to begin with a phrase by the Secretary-General, contained in his report (S/2023/473), describing

the JCPOA as the best available option. Indeed, it is. That is why today Council members unwaveringly reaffirmed their resolute support for the restoration of the JCPOA and called for its full implementation by all sides as the only viable course of action. We hold the view that, while the JCPOA might not have been flawless and impeccable, it was undoubtedly the most viable option at the time given the circumstances, and it continues to be the optimal and valuable choice among the available options.

Regrettably, certain members of the Council, notably, the United States, have chosen to turn a blind eye to reality and overlook the root causes contributing to the challenges associated with the JCPOA. In hypocritical behaviour, they blame and accuse Iran without considering their own failures to uphold their obligations. If any party should be blamed for the JCPOA's current situation, it is the United States for its 2018 illegal unilateral withdrawal therefrom and the re-imposition of all its sanctions against Iran based on its notorious and yet failed "maximum pressure policy". Likewise, the European Union must also be blamed for significant non-performance with their explicit legal obligations under the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). Since then, the United States has expressly and aggressively forced all other United Nations States Members to either violate resolution 2231 (2015) or face severe punishment. That bullying, conduct by a permanent member of the Council, is unprecedented.

In response to those instances of significant non-compliance, Iran had no option other than to take certain remedial measures in exercising its rights under paragraphs 26 and 36 of the JCPOA. Iran's objective was simply to restore the delicate balance in reciprocal commitments under the agreement. Today certain Council members attempted to reverse the place of the victim and the culprits and referred to Iran's remedial measures as if Iran were the party that withdrew from the JCPOA. Taking remedial measures is our explicit right and, unlike the United States illegal actions, which have irreversible consequences, all our measures are reversible as soon as the sanctions are lifted in a verifiable manner. In addition, the Vienna talks are stalled not because of Iran, but due to the lack of political will by the United States and the E3, including for its internal political considerations. We are still prepared for the resumption of the negotiations, should the other sides be ready to do the same.

While Iran is fully committed to its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and continues its cooperation with the Agency, certain claims against Iran's peaceful nuclear programme — obviously based on disinformation disseminated by the Israeli regime — serve no purpose other than putting political pressure on Iran, which will lead nowhere. In exercising its inalienable rights and committed to its international obligations, Iran is fully determined to vigorously pursue its peaceful nuclear activities, including enrichment at various levels required, under the monitoring and verification of the IAEA. Iran's nuclear programme has continuously been scrutinized by the IAEA's most robust monitoring and verification, as repeatedly declared by different Directors General of the Agency.

Our recent voluntary measures, in implementation of the Iran-IAEA joint statement of 4 March 2023, to ensure the continuity of the Agency's knowledge through installing surveillance cameras at centrifuge manufacturing workshops is indeed a testament to our continued constructive cooperation with the IAEA and our commitment to transparency.

In addition, the IAEA recently found Iran's explanation regarding highly enriched uranium of a few particles containing up to 83.7 per cent uranium-235 detected at one location to be satisfactory, with no further questions on the matter. As such, significant progress has been made on safeguards issues and, as the IAEA recently confirmed, the concerns regarding depleted uranium particles in one location have been effectively addressed and resolved.

Instead of parrot-like repeating disinformation of the Israeli regime on Iran's peaceful nuclear programme by certain Council members, they had been expected to be courageous enough today to duly acknowledge the positive outcomes of our constructive cooperation with the Agency.

Given the purview and competence of resolution 2231 (2015) and the fact that the resolution has nothing to do with regional subjects, referring to such issues is an abuse of process. Iran is committed to preserving regional peace and security through the active involvement of all States of the region based on full respect for international law, mutual respect, good-neighbourliness, cooperation and dialogue. Obviously,

the raising of regional issues by some Council members is aimed only at diverting attention away from their own massive military build-up in the region, as well as the unbridled transfer of their highly sophisticated weaponry to certain States of the region, and above all to cover up the crimes and destabilizing practices of the Israeli regime, whose clandestine weapons of mass destruction programmes and military adventurism continue to threaten the peace and security of our region and beyond.

While our full observations on the Secretary-General's report on resolution 2231 (2015) are contained in my letter to him dated 3 July 2023, I would like to make a few comments.

The report once again fails to address the root causes of the current situation regarding the JCPOA, namely, the United States withdrawal therefrom. It also remains silent on the United States and European Union systematic material breach of their explicit legal obligations under resolution 2231 (2015). The Secretariat's engagement in the so-called investigation to allegedly examine the alleged violation of the resolution is clearly beyond the mandate entrusted to it by the Council through resolution 2231 (2015) and note S/2016/44 by the Council's President. According to those two documents, the Secretariat has no mandate whatsoever on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), other than providing administrative support for the Security Council's work. Therefore, those *ultra vires* activities by the Secretariat are unacceptable and shall be avoided.

I must again reiterate our consistent position that Iran's space and missile programmes fall outside the purview or competence of resolution 2231 (2015).

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that pressure, intimidation and confrontation are ineffective. If the United States and the E3 demonstrate genuine political will, tackling the current challenges of the JCPOA is well within reach. For our part, we are prepared to resume negotiations at the earliest opportunity to restore the JCPOA and ensure its full implementation by all.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.