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Chair: Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia)

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

Agenda item 52: Comprehensive review of special political missions (A/71/330)

1. **Mr. Feltman** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (A/71/330), said that the Committee's annual debate on the current item had fostered greater understanding and awareness of special political missions and their contribution to international peace and security. The ongoing deterioration of the global strategic environment was a bleak reality with significant implications for special political missions and the wider United Nations peace and security agenda. The number of civil wars had increased since 2008, and the eruption of violent and intractable conflicts had led to an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Reversing that trend and fulfilling the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, required a global effort to prioritize the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, urgently necessitating the development of a new "diplomacy for peace". Having proved their worth in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in building sustainable peace, special political missions were a key mechanism for achieving that goal.

2. The report addressed policy issues critical for the work of special political missions, and provided detailed information on Secretariat efforts not only to improve geographical distribution and gender representation in those missions but also to advance transparency and accountability. While special political missions were staffed by personnel broadly representative of the United Nations membership and, in particular, of the regions of deployment, the structural obstacles in the way of gender parity must be addressed so as to improve the representation of women and ensure that they rose to leadership ranks.

3. The recent reviews relating to peace and security, specifically peace operations, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, and women, peace and security, had renewed attention to conflict prevention as an underprioritized and underresourced area of concern in which the United Nations was of central importance, including in sustaining the engagement needed to return it to the fore. Conflict prevention was,

however, a shared responsibility of the international community at large. The "sustaining peace" resolutions, namely Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262, were therefore a welcome sign of the commitment to improving preventive capacities across all stages of a conflict to ensure sustainable peace. Sustaining peace was pivotal to the work of all special political missions and to the mandate of special envoys and mediation teams. The Department of Political Affairs thus strongly supported that agenda and was committed to working closely with the wider United Nations system along the road to implementation.

4. In the contemporary landscape, the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations needed to cooperate closely to resolve conflicts and support sustainable peace. Special political missions were often mandated to work alongside their regional counterparts in pursuit of peace and stability on the basis of a shared understanding that their respective comparative advantages would produce a multiplying effect. In addition to advancing crucial country-specific processes, such partnerships helped Member States to devise strategies for addressing cross-boundary issues affecting entire regions, including organized crime, illicit trafficking and violent extremism.

5. Recognizing that the direct and effective involvement of women in peace processes, politics, public institutions and justice systems was essential to peaceful societies and sustainable development, the Department was fully committed to the women, peace and security agenda. As the Department's focal point on those issues, he oversaw progress towards the realization of its commitments in the context of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). In 2016, the Department had established a stand-alone gender, peace and security unit and developed a Department-wide gender strategy in close consultation with its special political missions in the field. Those new capacities better enabled the Department to respond to the significant expectations of Member States for progress on the women, peace and security agenda.

6. The ability of special political missions to implement their mandate was greatly affected by the ever-increasing volatility of their operational settings, which also posed a daily risk to staff, sometimes at

high cost. Appropriate security and operational measures, such as guard units, were therefore key to enabling responsible deployment and operation while at the same time mitigating the risks. The will to invest in those measures was also essential, however, to ensuring that the United Nations made a difference to the people it served through activities aimed at promoting food security, health and development. With a view to sustainable progress on that score, the United Nations engaged closely on the political front to support emerging federal States, promote national reconciliation and assist justice and electoral institutions.

7. Expressing gratitude to Member States for their continuing support of the special political missions crucial to the Organization, he affirmed the Secretariat's commitment to working closely with the Committee on related policy matters, including through regular interactive dialogues, and paid special tribute to the United Nations staff serving in those missions under extremely difficult conditions for the advancement of international peace and security.

8. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support), paying tribute to the courage, dedication and sacrifices of those serving in special political missions, said that those missions were growing in number and complexity, as indicated by their presence and strength in multiple countries and the array of tasks assigned to them. The immense challenges facing those missions were exemplified by an incident in July 2016 involving a deliberate explosion near the United Nations base in Mogadishu, causing substantial human and material damage, to which the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) had responded satisfactorily under the stellar leadership of its Director. UNSOS would nonetheless benefit from further strengthening, and Assistant Secretary-General and Head of UNSOS Mr. Hubert Price was steering the intensified efforts now under way in that context to provide the required rapid, effective and efficient support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army in its conduct of joint operations with AMISOM, as mandated by the Security Council.

9. Almost 90 per cent of special political mission personnel were working for peace in countries

experiencing high-intensity conflict and thus faced insecurity on a daily basis, as he himself had witnessed during his visits to special political missions in some of the world's most volatile environments. The Department of Field Support was therefore fully committed to enhancing the safety and security of its personnel, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Political Affairs. As a strategic enabler of all peace operations, it likewise remained committed to providing rapid, effective, efficient and responsible field support and would continue to focus on the long-term priority initiatives introduced in 2015, such as improving supply-chain management; strengthening environmental management; fostering technology and innovation; enhancing measures to combat misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse; and supporting field-oriented reform of business processes in the Secretariat, including implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the global service delivery model. In the context of those priorities, the Department had developed a six-year environment strategy, established an integrated end-to-end supply chain, demanded accountability and zero tolerance in order to address sexual exploitation and abuse by all personnel, and was working to align responsibilities for results with decision-making authorities, with support from Member States and relevant departments.

10. The Department also needed the support of Member States to improve the responsiveness and accountability of its support systems in consideration of the unique requirements of special political missions, such as time-sensitive and flexible support services tailored to their specific needs. To meet brief windows of opportunity for advancing a peace process or responding to other real-time exigencies intrinsic to special political missions, the Department could be called upon with only 48 hours' notice to complete all necessary logistical and administrative arrangements, from organizing flights for envoys and delegations from around the world to securing interpreters, conference rooms and accommodation. In its efforts to optimize available aviation resources, the Department had identified strategic air assets for sharing among special political missions, whether on a long-term or ad hoc basis. Furthermore, in order to meet sudden surges in air-support requirements and urgent ad hoc requests,

it had established a stand-by “pay-as-you-go” air-charter agreement. Those initiatives were intended to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of air support, as well as avoid the unnecessary fixed costs involved in procuring additional air assets to meet short-term and ad hoc demands.

11. Covering some 90 per cent of mission personnel, the shared-service arrangements in Entebbe and Kuwait were another example of the assistance provided to special political missions, which had few resources of their own and therefore required support from regional and global service centres and from United Nations Headquarters. Such support would be further enhanced by the impending roll-out of Umoja facilities to include the many thousands of national personnel in special political missions and peacekeeping missions, as well as uniformed personnel in peacekeeping missions, all of whom would consequently be able to take responsibility for their own personal information and records. The same central solution would also be used to run payroll for all United Nations staff members. With the support of Member States and working in partnership with the Department of Political Affairs, he was confident that his Department could further enhance its delivery of rapid, effective and responsible solutions for special political missions.

12. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) asked whether the Department of Political Affairs took into account advice and recommendations put forward by the Peacebuilding Commission.

13. **Mr. Feltman** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) said that the Department strongly supported the Peacebuilding Commission, with which it had a firm partnership that was an example of precisely the type of partnerships needed with Member States. The Department very much welcomed the adoption of the two “sustaining peace” resolutions, which explored system-wide cooperation as a means of preventing the outbreak, continuation, escalation and recurrence of conflict. He regularly appeared before the Peacebuilding Commission to discuss issues on its agenda, which included three countries where special political missions worked directly, the other countries on that agenda being covered by United Nations regional offices. Special representatives also regularly briefed the Commission and engaged in exchanges

with its members. He therefore placed a high value on the relationship with the Commission, which he looked forward to strengthening further in the context of sustaining peace.

14. **Mr. Elmodir** (Libya) asked how cooperation could be enhanced between Governments and special political missions, with particular reference to the Tunisia-based United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The Libyan Government of National Accord wished to further its existing cooperation with UNSMIL and, in the expectation that the UNSMIL mandate due to expire in December 2016 would be extended, was calling for UNSMIL to be relocated back to Libya. In addition to enabling UNSMIL to monitor political developments in the country from close quarters, such a move would increase confidence among the Libyan people in the cooperation between UNSMIL and their Government.

15. **Mr. Feltman** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) said that his Department shared that commitment to further enhancing the close relationship between UNSMIL and the Libyan Government and people, which was a prerequisite for enabling UNSMIL to fulfil its mandate and the expectations of Member States. It also shared the objective of returning UNSMIL to Tripoli at the earliest opportunity, based on a responsible assessment of the security situation on the ground. To that end, consultations were already under way with the Department of Field Support, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, and the Fifth Committee concerning the resources needed to realize that objective.

16. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) confirmed his Department’s intent to collaborate closely with the Libyan authorities and return UNSMIL to Libya as soon as it was possible to do so in a responsible manner. Guided by the Department of Political Affairs, his Department staff were doing their utmost as strategy enablers to facilitate that return, including a review of current UNSMIL assets and accommodation and vehicle requirements. The sustainability of the return would be best promoted, however, if completed in phases on the basis of evolving capacities and developments in the situation in Libya.

17. **Mr. Benard Estrada** (Guatemala) requested information about the environmental impact of special political missions.

18. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support), emphasizing that the United Nations must direct its own activities for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement concerning climate change, said that special political missions did not have the ecological footprint of peacekeeping operations but nonetheless presented unique challenges in that connection. The United Nations could not be held responsible for environmental issues that might arise in the context of those missions because appropriate infrastructural facilities were either non-existent or grossly incapacitated. The Department was exploring ways of reducing environmental impacts, however, such as changing conventional patterns of heating and air-conditioning consumption, which would also help to reduce costs. Another area of concern was waste, the critical “4R” components of which — namely reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery — were in fact to be addressed system-wide. In the coming weeks, he would be announcing details of his Department’s new six-year environment strategy, at which time he would also elaborate further on the environmental aspects of special political missions.

19. **Mr. Isnomo** (Indonesia) noting the importance of regional organizations in creating host-country environments conducive to peace and security, asked whether special political missions had engaged with any such organizations and, if so, whether any challenges had been encountered. With particular reference to Security Council resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), he also asked to what extent special political missions had integrated women and gender considerations into their work, including through enhancing women’s involvement in peace processes, and what the challenges had been to date.

20. **Mr. Benard Estrada** (Guatemala) asked how the concept of sustaining peace could be further integrated into the work of the Organization as a whole.

21. **Ms. Alvarado Quesada** (Mexico) asked for information about the long-term vision for special political missions.

22. **Mr. Feltman** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) said that field-based missions and special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General invariably worked with both regional and subregional organizations, which was in fact deemed essential. The Secretariat was thus committed to maximizing partnerships with those organizations: they understood their regions, where they also enjoyed credibility, and they could also have leverage on behalf of peace and security goals consistent with the goals of special political missions. In Colombia, for example, an observer mission was being established with assistance from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States; in Somalia, the Organization’s partnership with the African Union (AU) was essential to its work; in Central and West Africa, United Nations regional offices cooperated with subregional organizations; and in Central Asia, special political missions worked in partnership with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, notably in the areas of counterterrorism and transnational crime. In short, it was an important part of the mandate of special envoys and special political missions to develop, cultivate, nurture and expand relationships with regional and subregional organizations.

23. With respect to Security Council resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), the women, peace and security aspect had been covered since 2014 in all reports presented to the Security Council on special political missions. An excellent practical example was the initiative of the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, to overcome the lack of women’s representation in the talks on the Syrian crisis by establishing the Syrian Women’s Advisory Board, in February 2016, as an advocacy platform through which women’s voices could be heard in the efforts to develop a political solution to that crisis. In Somalia, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in particular and UNSOM in general had advocated for the inclusion of women in the electoral process to ensure their representation in both houses of parliament. Again, implementation of the women, peace and security agenda by promoting women’s involvement in all stages of the political process formed an important part of the mandate of special political missions.

24. “Sustaining peace” essentially represented a call from Member States for the Secretariat to look across

thematic and institutional barriers in order to determine what actions the United Nations might take throughout the entire conflict cycle. Peacebuilding must be looked at anew as an activity that was no longer limited to the post-conflict stage alone but rather consisted in preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict all along, as emphasized in the “sustaining peace” resolutions.

25. Concerning the long-term vision for special political missions, the mandates of most country-specific special political missions and country-specific special envoys were understood to be limited in duration and to have no permanent presence, unlike United Nations country teams, which remained in countries before, during and after conflicts. While special political missions were a flexible tool and took many different forms, both they and special envoys were in place for a specific purpose and period of time typically lasting one year. It was nonetheless necessary to plan beyond that period for the contingency of a mandate renewal.

26. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) further added with reference to Security Council [2242 \(2015\)](#), specifically paragraphs 9 and 10 thereof, concerning sexual exploitation and abuse, that his Department had recently rolled out a pilot e-learning programme as part of its efforts to tackle such misconduct by United Nations personnel in the field, which would be made available during the course of 2017 to all those serving in peacekeeping and special political missions. Other action was also being taken to implement the robust countermeasures called for in those two paragraphs.

27. With regard to paragraph 8 of the same resolution, concerning the appointment of women to senior United Nations leadership positions, his Department’s Field Personnel Division was implementing a senior women talent pipeline project, in which context it had received some 100 nominations for such positions from Member States and was keen to receive more. The outcome thus far was that 1 woman had been appointed as a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, 3 had been appointed to director-level positions and 15 had been rostered. Twenty-nine per cent of non-senior positions in special political missions were occupied by women, which was only two per cent more than in 2014. The support of

Member States would be welcome in encouraging women with the appropriate qualifications to apply for such positions.

28. The proportion of women among national staff in special political missions remained consistently low at around 13 per cent. In a bid to remedy that situation, his Department was piloting a project in Afghanistan, in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources Management, to recruit women who might not necessarily have the right paper qualifications for the simple reason that they had been prevented by the Taliban regime from pursuing an education. In its efforts to address the challenges involved in implementing those three paragraphs of Security Council resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), the Department would welcome input and support from Member States going forward.

29. **Mr. Thomson** (Fiji), President of the General Assembly, said that the broad-ranging issues on the Committee’s agenda had been central to the work of the United Nations since its foundation. Thanks to the Organization’s success during those 71 years in driving forward the decolonization process, over 80 former colonies had gained independence and joined the United Nations family. The status of the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories must now be settled, notably by considering the situation specific to each in order to find acceptable outcomes in line with the principle of self-determination, the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and — most importantly — the wishes of the people of the Territories themselves. A satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issues relating to those historical legacies was all the more imperative now that the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism had passed its half-way mark.

30. The creation of peaceful and inclusive societies, with no one left behind, was central to achieving the vision embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a universal master plan of action for people, planet and prosperity which, if implemented effectively and at scale, promised a multitude of infinite improvements to lives and to Earth itself. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human

Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories continued their useful work, while the activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had taken on new resonance in view of the increasing emphasis on space-based technology for securing critical climate-related data. Climate change posed an existential threat to humanity, necessitating stronger cooperation among Member States to reverse its devastating impacts.

31. United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions remained fundamental to the maintenance of international peace and security, as did the link between sustainable peace and sustainable development. More United Nations peacekeepers and personnel than ever before were now fulfilling increasingly demanding mandates in an escalating number of security and humanitarian crises, with their safety greatly endangered by asymmetrical threats and violent extremism, which were also on the rise. They must therefore be saluted for their exemplary dedication, to the point of ultimate sacrifice, which called for concerted efforts in support of their deployment, including through clearly-defined and well-funded mandates. In the field, the vast majority of United Nations peacekeepers upheld the highest standards of ethical behaviour and discipline by adhering to the “Ten Rules: Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets” and the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as to the letter and spirit of mission mandates. Accountability must follow, however, in the few cases where misconduct occurred.

32. United Nations resources were under such unprecedented strain from global crises that a “business-as-usual” approach was no longer apposite. In the cross-cutting and complementary recommendations of the three recent peace and security reviews, conflict prevention had been identified as a priority to be addressed through special political missions and other preventive diplomacy tools. Similarly emphasized was the need to build coherence in the United Nations engagement at all stages of conflict and across all pillars of its work, such as by better managing mission transitions, breaking destructive cycles of conflict and strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

33. Offering a solid opportunity to examine such issues, the “sustaining peace” resolutions must be fully used to bring more comprehensive and longer-term perspectives to peace and security. Further consideration must also be given to ensuring that United Nations peacekeeping operations had the capabilities and support required for them to address with efficiency and effectiveness the complex challenges facing them in the world’s trouble spots. Lastly, he urged all Member States to respond generously and expeditiously to the efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to secure the funding needed to fill the critical shortfall affecting its ability to continue its work.

34. **Mr. Halfaoui** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and reiterating the Movement’s commitment to support all efforts aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of special political missions, said that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States must be respected, with the United Nations as primary guarantor of the maintenance of international peace and security while also reaffirming the principles of impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and national responsibility. Field-based missions must have clear and achievable mandates formulated on the basis of objective assessments of the related political, financial and practical issues, to which end integrated planning and consistent approaches aimed at implementation on the ground were paramount. The Secretary-General should give further consideration to transparency, balanced geographical representation and the representation of women in senior leadership positions, in particular as special representatives and envoys, and in the membership of expert groups on sanctions.

35. Given the importance of consensus on the development and implementation of policies relating to special political missions, the primary responsibility in the discussion of those matters overall must continue to lie with the General Assembly as the Organization’s most representative body. An interactive dialogue following consultations with Member States would also ensure maximum and meaningful participation, as well as the opportunity to draw on lessons learned in such areas of major concern as sexual exploitation and abuse, regional offices, guard units and procedures for

mandating special political missions. The main points covered in the dialogue should also be included in the next report of the Secretary-General on the current agenda item. In order to enhance budgetary efficiency and transparency, moreover, the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms as for peacekeeping operations must be used in the financing of special political missions, for which a new separate account should therefore be opened. In that regard, the Movement supported the recommendations of the High-level Panel concerning the arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions.

36. **Mr. Isnomo** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that transparency, accountability, expertise and effectiveness were vital to ensuring the legitimacy and credibility of special political missions, as was geographical representation among their personnel. In order to fulfil their challenging mandates, all missions must be planned, utilized and assessed in a more inclusive, accountable and transparent manner, especially as they significantly aided the United Nations response to complex, rapidly-changing and ever-more demanding global security situations. Member States and all relevant United Nations bodies must take on board the critical messages of the three recent peace and security reviews by implementing their outcomes in a concrete, vigorous and coherent effort with other United Nations entities, regional organizations and relevant non-United Nations stakeholders, with an emphasis on prevention, political diplomacy, credible political solutions and the peaceful settlement of conflict.

37. Special political missions should focus more attention on conflict prevention and mediation, while Member States and regional partners should complement efforts on that score with the political backing needed to build collective commitment and partnership for success. Although General Assembly resolution [70/304](#), on strengthening the emphasis on mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, regrettably weakened the elements designed to strengthen mediation in the peacekeeping context, its consensual adoption was nonetheless welcome, as was the comprehensive approach articulated in the “sustaining peace” resolutions and in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization ([A/71/1](#)).

38. Given the prominence of host countries in conflict prevention, a primary objective of special political missions must be to contribute to strengthening national capacities in the areas of security, institution-building, good governance and socioeconomic development, taking into account local contexts and priorities. Genuine national ownership was also key to the long-term success of a mission and to sustained peace, necessitating the inclusive participation of relevant national stakeholders, in particular the host Government, from an early stage.

39. Greater transparency and accountability necessitated closer consultation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and Member States through regular interactive dialogue on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions. In that regard, Member States must be provided in advance with relevant and detailed information and their views must be given consideration when special political missions were being mandated or reviewed. The participation of women, furthermore, must be integral to all stages of any peace process, in accordance with Security Council resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#) concerning the women, peace and security agenda. ASEAN trusted that the Secretary-General designate would pursue the welcome efforts already under way to promote more women to leadership positions, in particular as special representatives and envoys.

40. The proliferation of special political missions had serious implications for related funding and backstopping arrangements, hindering their ability to deliver the mandated tasks and creating significant distortions in the regular budget. It would therefore be prudent to follow the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions concerning those arrangements, with particular reference to the creation of a dedicated account for special political missions and the alignment of budgetary considerations with the peacekeeping operations cycle. The financial needs of special political missions should be addressed in a manner similar to that employed for the scale of assessments for peacekeeping operations. In its commitment to enhancing the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of special political missions, ASEAN would play its part in supporting a robust shift towards conflict prevention and intensified mediation,

peacemaking, peacebuilding and credible political solutions in the interest of sustainable peace.

41. **Ms. Bird** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that special political missions were a vital tool for promoting conflict prevention and resolution, as well as sustainable peace, as had been clearly demonstrated by their efforts in, among others, Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Sahel region. Such missions were a particularly important aspect of the evolving framework for sustaining peace, which should be seen as a core responsibility of the entire United Nations system and as the organizing principle flowing through all efforts undertaken before, during and after conflict. In view of their emphasis on conflict resolution, the “sustaining peace” resolutions were therefore particularly welcome, as was the focus on the sustaining peace agenda in the draft resolution on special political missions currently being considered by the Committee. Special political missions should remain at the forefront of the peace and security agenda, with mandates better aligned to financial and political resources. Continuing dialogue on special political missions was also an imperative part of shaping the evolving “sustaining peace” policy within which those missions operated.

42. **Ms. Yáñez Loza** (Ecuador) said that the efforts under way to improve transparency, accountability, geographical representation and effectiveness in connection with special political missions responded to the call for a new approach to the Organization’s key task of sustaining peace, which was underprioritized and underresourced globally and within the United Nations system. Those efforts should therefore be pursued in order to strengthen crisis response, mission deployment and accountability. Mandates must also be readily adaptable so as to meet specific needs and cope with unstable situations and violent conflict in particular. Such flexibility, however, called for pre-assessment of the situation on the ground, in which context the support of regional and subregional actors was key. With respect to the fundamental question of financing, the recommendation to establish a separate account for special political missions merited greater consideration, including on the basis of input from the Committee.

43. One example of the multidimensional character and flexibility of special political missions was the United Nations Mission in Colombia, established at the request of the Colombian Government to help end the protracted conflict in that country by acting as the international component in a tripartite mechanism tasked with monitoring and verifying the laying down of arms. The Government of Ecuador was in fact hosting the first round of negotiations between the Colombian Government and the National Liberation Army, which it hoped would mark the first step towards sustainable peace in Colombia and throughout Latin America. It would also continue to support efforts to secure more predictable financing for peacebuilding and for special political missions in particular.

44. **Mr. Marzooq** (Iraq) said that his country was fully and unreservedly committed to pursuing the rule of law and the pacific settlement of international disputes for the sake of global peace and security. It also encouraged efforts to develop cooperation and promote sustainable development in which economic, social and environmental considerations were balanced for optimal utilization of available natural resources so as not to affect the rights of future generations. Special political missions had specific mandates set by the Security Council in consultation with national Governments, which were the best source of information about a country’s political, social and cultural structures, capacities for addressing requirements on the ground, and local needs. Mandates should not therefore be exceeded and must also respect the territorial integrity and independence of States, as well as the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs.

45. In his country, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) had been instrumental in establishing democratization, promoting human rights, advancing inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation, and assisting the electoral process. Working in constant coordination with the Iraqi Government, UNAMI provided advice, support and help in those matters, as well as in planning for a national census, developing ties with neighbouring countries and promoting judicial and legal reform. It also cooperated with United Nations humanitarian agencies in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Iraqis internally displaced owing either to the vicious

onslaught by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant terrorist groups or to the Ninewa liberation operations. Once all Iraqi territories had been liberated and the internally displaced had returned to their homes, his Government looked forward to wider cooperation with UNAMI and to the continuation of its close work with the United Nations Country Team in Iraq in the regional response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2299 (2016), the UNAMI mandate had been extended, at the request of the Iraqi Government, which was pleased to have been consulted concerning the priorities and tasks that would advance the achievement of that mandate.

46. **Mr. Skinner-Klée** (Guatemala), expressing support for the recommendations of the High-level Panel and the Advisory Group of Experts for improving the Organization's work in relation to special political missions, said that sustaining peace was driven by political solutions, which must always guide the design and deployment of United Nations missions. Mandates must also be planned in phases, based on evolving national contexts and circumstances on the ground, with greater system-wide efforts devoted to conflict prevention and mediation for peace as priorities. Member States had clearly invested too little in fighting the underlying causes of conflict, while the United Nations intervention in emerging crises had generally been less than timely.

47. Special political missions were instrumental in the quest for sustaining peace, which should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society in the manner described in General Assembly resolution 70/262, without forgetting the vital part also played by women and youth in creating peace. Sustaining peace required political vigilance encompassing post-conflict efforts to promote inclusion and reconciliation, address the underlying causes of the conflict and support reparation procedures, so as to avoid relapse into conflict. External actors, however, including the United Nations, should only facilitate — and not impose — peace through wide stakeholder involvement in the process. The mandates of special political missions must be negotiated with a view to setting a clear direction and common purpose geared to the features specific to the host country, necessitating improvements in analysis, overall strategy and planning.

48. His delegation agreed with the sixth overarching conclusion set out in the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture (A/69/968-S/2015/490), concerning the challenges posed to the continuity of United Nations engagement in sustaining peace by the proliferation of operational formats and by poorly-timed and poorly-managed transitions, which crucially affected the progress of peacebuilding. The option of establishing a dedicated budget with its own scale of assessments should also be explored in the case of special political missions, which were mostly established pursuant to Security Council decisions and had limited flexibility of response to challenges on the ground owing to the fact that they were currently financed from the regular budget. Budgetary efficiency, transparency and accountability would also be enhanced by establishing a separate account for special political missions.

49. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiola** (Mexico) said that the outcome of the three review processes presented an excellent opportunity to reflect on the paradigm shift in the peace and security pillar towards sustaining peace in the light of the two resolutions adopted on that theme. Sustaining peace recognized the key importance of strengthening conflict prevention and adopting a holistic approach to the structural causes of conflict, as well as to mediation and peacebuilding. It was also primarily centred on special political missions, which should be more focused on guaranteeing the rights and interests of communities and individuals. The review processes and the new concepts around sustaining peace would test the will and commitment of Member States with regard to enhancing the capacity of the United Nations to facilitate multidimensional solutions and to craft and implement political solutions in the areas of security, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

50. As a facilitator of the draft resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions, his delegation looked forward to broad support for such missions as essential tools in keeping with the new narrative of sustaining peace, which emphasized prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, thus harmonizing with the mandates of existing special political missions. The link between sustaining peace, development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would ensure that special political

missions were not simply ad hoc solutions. Implications of that major shift would be assessed during budget discussions in both the Fourth and Fifth Committees. The mandates of such missions must in future fit with the definition of sustaining peace, which filled the existing conceptual gap.

51. Special political missions should be flexible enough to adapt and respond promptly to evolving requirements on the ground, as exemplified by the United Nations Mission in Colombia in its clearly-defined role as the international component of the tripartite mechanism established to monitor and verify the bilateral and definitive ceasefire and cessation of hostilities following the signing of a peace agreement. Greater attention should also be paid to geographical and gender representation in special political missions, which should furthermore be assured of adequate and predictable financing to enable them to carry out increasingly ambitious mandates in increasingly volatile situations. The discussion of proposals resulting from the review processes, including those relating to financial arrangements, must therefore continue.

52. **Mr. Ntsoane** (South Africa) said that special political missions, a crucial part of United Nations efforts to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, had become indispensable instruments at the forefront of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacemaking and peacebuilding. The “sustaining peace” resolutions had renewed momentum and focus in that domain by expanding the notion of peacebuilding to include sustaining peace, which should be broadly understood as a goal and a process towards building a common vision of a society, ensuring that all the needs of all segments of the population were taken into account. Conflicts were invariably rooted in political issues, however, meaning that political solutions were the means to long-term sustainable peace. Special political missions authorized by the Security Council and General Assembly not only assisted countries emerging from conflict to lay the foundations for strong and durable peace but were also instrumental in maintaining international peace and security. Flexibility was among the greatest assets of such missions, all of which were focused on conflict prevention and resolution, irrespective of differences in their mandates, sizes and structures designed to

provide the best possible response to specific situations.

53. In response to the call for renewed and urgent emphasis on conflict prevention and mediation, a comprehensive strategy comprising operational and structural measures was needed to prevent armed conflict and address its root causes, such as poverty, institutional weakness and political exclusion. Strong partnerships with regional and subregional organizations were also crucial to the work of special political missions, which must be assured of adequate and predictable resources through improved financing and swifter reform of funding and backstopping arrangements. In addition to increasing predictability and transparency, a separate account for special political missions would also signal due recognition of their value as a unique tool for resolving conflict. The deployment of missions and the execution of their respective mandates would be further enhanced by using the same funding criteria, methodology and mechanisms as for peacekeeping operations. South Africa was committed to making a positive contribution to the work of those missions.

54. **Mr. Sekito** (Japan) said that rapid deployment and ownership were key to maximizing the potential of special political missions as the vital connection between peacemaking efforts and different conflict cycles. Indeed, the capacity of such missions to deploy rapidly in changing circumstances without the lengthy force-generation process entailed in peacekeeping operations was a major strength, while national ownership supported by missions was especially vital to achieving long-term peace and stability. The ownership of national stakeholders in peace processes was clearly exemplified by the United Nations Mission in Colombia, which, at the request of the Colombian Government and the country’s largest rebel group, was coordinating efforts to monitor and verify the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities in that country. The authority of the Security Council in establishing and defining the mandates of special political missions entailed a corresponding responsibility to ensure that those mandates had clearly-defined goals and timelines and were soundly operated. In that context, rapid deployment and ownership should receive continued attention to promote the effectiveness of future special political missions.

55. **Mr. Fachinotti** (Switzerland) said that special political missions, indispensable in addressing both short- and long-term political challenges and crises, had continued with commendable dedication to fulfil their mandates and contribute to complex peace processes. A results-oriented interactive dialogue among Member States was critical to the success of such missions in view of their complexity, dynamic nature and continually-growing significance. While special political missions had repeatedly proven their value as a cost-efficient and effective tool in conflict prevention and resolution, the effective delivery of their mandates was unfortunately hampered by outdated funding and backstopping mechanisms. Pragmatic improvements on that score, such as those recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, would therefore be a positive step forward.

56. The links recognized in the “sustaining peace” resolutions between peacebuilding and special political missions could be usefully harnessed by following the suggestion that the Security Council might benefit from consultations with the Peacebuilding Commission when considering the formation, review and drawdown of special political missions. The peacebuilding components of special political missions must also be adequately resourced and efforts made to further develop synergies in the light of those resolutions. More generally, it was important to maintain existing momentum for reinforcing the relevant United Nations structures so as to ensure that all stakeholders collaborated closely and innovatively to enable special political missions to perform to their full potential.

57. **Ms. Stener** (Norway) said that preventing and resolving armed conflict and sustaining peace should be a top priority for the United Nations and that special political missions merited full support as the most operational part of the Organization’s political efforts in the field, where their importance was clearly demonstrable in such places as Afghanistan, Colombia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Over the previous decade, demand for such missions had increased owing to their comparatively low-cost effectiveness in the field. It was therefore regrettable that no agreement had been reached concerning a solid and adequate funding and backstopping framework for special political missions, which was prolonging their artificial differentiation from peacekeeping operations.

58. A more holistic approach and new common ground were likely to result if special political missions were instead considered as part of a spectrum of peace operations, as advocated by the High-level Panel and the Secretary-General. In that regard, the “sustaining peace” resolutions offered a unique opportunity to refocus attention during the forthcoming transition stage so as to generate a fresh approach to peace operations and ensure that they were more tailored to needs on the ground. Noting with pleasure that the Secretary-General designate had identified such issues as a main priority, her delegation fully supported his call for a surge in diplomacy for peace. In order to fulfil the Charter of the United Nations in both letter and spirit, system-wide efforts must be directed towards achieving that ambition, both at Headquarters and in the field.

59. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that special political missions functioned in a wide range of political, socioeconomic and security settings, which must be taken into account at the time of a mission’s establishment. Flexible adaptation of missions to those settings, on a case-by-case basis, was therefore imperative; there was no “one-size-fits-all”. All missions must have a clear and achievable mandate, with realistic objectives, as well as material and financial resources appropriate to the situation in the field. They must also be in strict compliance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular those relating to respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

60. The adoption of new special political missions should not affect the Organization’s regular budget. Instead, the General Assembly should have a genuine and transparent debate to arrive at a differentiated mechanism for financing those missions, potentially based on the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms as for the financing of peacekeeping operations, including the establishment of a separate account. Special political missions must furthermore be governed by policies developed within the framework of the General Assembly, which determined the outcome of reform or other initiatives relating to such missions, including the recommendations resulting from the recent review processes. The same was also true for the approval, implementation and follow-up of special political missions. The Secretary-General

should furthermore produce an annual report on special political missions in which the subject was comprehensively addressed, with transparency and accountability guaranteed.

61. **Mr. Isnomo** (Indonesia) said that a comprehensive and collaborative approach must be firmly rooted in the United Nations system in view of the increasing number of civil conflicts and of countries relapsing into conflict or at risk of doing so. Indonesia would steadfastly continue to participate in efforts to achieve sustainable peace through greater focus on prevention, mediation, politics and peacemaking. Indeed, it had long prioritized a holistic approach that strongly emphasized dialogue, diplomacy and equitable development in mitigating conflict so as to sustain peace and development, and had reaped the benefits in its own national setting. The three pillars of peace and security, development and human rights must not be unbridgeable silos, and efforts across them, and indeed system-wide, must be firmly united.

62. Special political missions should be crafted and conducted with those three pillars in mind, and with clarity of purpose, including through the articulation of goals and robust support from all stakeholders. Cooperation and partnership with regional and subregional organizations must also be further strengthened with a view to building the capacity of Governments and all relevant stakeholders at the local, national and regional levels to pursue conflict prevention and resolution. The Department of Political Affairs should more regularly share information and engage in interactive dialogue, including with the Fourth Committee, on matters relating to special political missions. Funding issues pertaining to those missions should also be addressed and United Nations support strengthened to reflect a balanced representation, including of developing countries that had successfully completed the transition to democracy, stability and sustainable development. His delegation would actively contribute to all meaningful endeavours to strengthen conflict prevention across the board for the sake of a peaceful world for all.

63. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia) said that geopolitical rivalries had compounded the conflict and crisis situations endangering international peace and security, creating serious tensions reminiscent of the Cold War.

In facing the daunting task of resolving such complex challenges, the United Nations must use all the tools at its disposal, including special political missions, which must be strengthened. Implementation of the recommendations resulting from the three major reviews on the United Nations peace and security architecture, in particular those relating to special political missions, would be key to tangibly improving United Nations efforts in conflict mediation and resolution by strengthening the good offices of the Secretary-General, enhancing the analytical capacity of the Department of Political Affairs and of regional offices, and addressing financial resource constraints, inter alia. In the context of essential steps towards reinvigorating those efforts, his delegation welcomed the commitment expressed by the Secretary-General designate to making a surge in diplomacy for peace his top priority and to using his good offices as a convenor, mediator, bridge-builder and honest broker.

64. In the light of the growing consensus on sustaining peace, it was only logical that the issue of resources must be addressed as soon as practical to enable the Peacebuilding Commission and special political missions to discharge their important functions effectively. In bringing the entire United Nations system together around a common strategy for sustaining peace, leadership from the Secretary-General designate would be critical to accomplishing the desired objectives and to restoring the Organization's credibility.

65. Another imperative in the prevailing global security environment was for the United Nations to enhance its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations to promote and maintain international peace and security. The political will and commitment of the African Union and its regional mechanisms to respond to crisis situations and take greater risks for the sake of regional peace offered a positive example of burden-sharing with the United Nations and of concrete results achieved at lesser cost. Indeed, greater appreciation of the complementarity and comparative advantages of the United Nations and regional and subregional mechanisms would greatly help to overcome challenges and ensure more dynamic partnerships based on a pragmatic and flexible interpretation of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The recommendations for enhancing the strategic partnership between the United Nations

and the African Union were therefore encouraging, as were the efforts to strengthen United Nations regional offices in Africa and engage in regular consultations and political dialogue with the African Union and its regional mechanisms in the interest of strategic coherence in managing and resolving conflicts in the continent. Improvements were still needed, however, to unleash the full potential of that partnership, including through shared analysis of conflict situations and joint assessment missions. Prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding were vital to ensuring peace and security, whence the significance attached to special political missions.

66. **Mr. Sauer** (Finland) said that his delegation looked forward to the input of the Secretary-General designate on the subject of special political missions, which were a vital part of United Nations action, linked as they were to the pillars of international peace and security, development, human rights and sustaining peace. It was essential to build flexibility into such missions and ensure that they were well planned and analysed, taking into account their key importance in inducing parties to negotiate, monitoring elections, facilitating peace agreements, supporting local initiatives and transitions, and preventing conflicts. Good offices, mediation, preventive diplomacy, dialogue and networking were other crucial elements in the work of special political missions to promote political solutions to conflict.

67. The draft resolution on the current item reflected the recent review processes and, in particular, the sustaining-peace framework and coherence requirement. Sustaining peace indicated not only the direction and larger goal towards which efforts should be targeted, but also assisted comprehension of the planning and other essential requirements in transition situations. As a facilitator of the draft resolution, his delegation hoped that it would be widely sponsored and supported as an important tool for peace, that full consensus could be achieved on funding and backstopping special political missions, and that more women would serve in such missions, including in senior positions and as mediators, particularly as a gender balance and perspective would positively enhance the quality of the missions.

68. **Mr. Andanje** (Kenya) said that special political missions contributed significantly to collective efforts

to support and enhance conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding around the world. United Nations regional offices, too, were engaged in valuable collaboration with regional and subregional organizations to that end, conducting their activities with the consent of the relevant national authorities, which was a fundamental principle always to be upheld. The United Nations had also made a welcome shift from reaction to prevention in its peace and security approach, in line with its peacebuilding architecture, and should additionally focus on reducing fragmentation in the interest of a coherent response to sustaining peace.

69. The efforts of the Department of Field Support to implement the women, peace and security agenda were similarly welcome, as was the establishment of a full, stand-alone gender, peace and security unit in the Department of Political Affairs. All such initiatives would enhance and reinforce gender equality and women's empowerment, while the gender strategy adopted by the Peacebuilding Commission would complement the work of special political missions. Given the critical importance of women in sustaining peace, the prioritization of women, peace and security issues must be continued and sustained, including through more targeted funding, which was imperative to eliminating fragmentation across the three pillars of peace and security, development and human rights. More women should also be appointed to senior leadership positions, taking into account equitable geographical representation.

70. The "sustaining peace" concept was a constructive way forward to preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, with strengthening special political missions' analytical capacity and conflict-analysis methodologies equally important to meeting the demands of prevention. His Government had been pleased to welcome a United Nations assessment mission to Nairobi as part of ongoing collaborative engagement with Member States. The meaningful initiatives taken to enhance overall special political missions policy would undoubtedly have a long-term impact on conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding, although the common objective would be attained only by sustaining the political and financial commitment to those missions.

71. **Ms. Gilmutdinova** (Russian Federation) said that special political missions not only supported Member States in their efforts to maintain peace and prevent latent conflicts from entering another phase but also helped to promote political change through dialogue and to achieve lasting national reconciliation. Emerging threats should be addressed by special political missions on a case-by-case basis, determined by the specific circumstances and in close cooperation with the host country, with respect for its sovereignty and for the principle of national ownership as minimum requirements. Only by giving consideration to national priorities, however, would special political missions accomplish lasting success, to which end it would be useful to harness the capacities of regional and subregional organizations with approaches compatible with those adopted by the United Nations.

72. Special political missions were increasingly called upon to perform such complex tasks as assisting in maintenance of the rule of law, drafting legislation, overseeing electoral processes, protecting human rights and reforming security sectors. Experience had taught, however, that such a multiplication of tasks did not generally favour a positive outcome. She hoped that the text of the draft resolution on the current item would accurately reflect the positions of all Member States.

73. **Mr. Dalo** (Argentina) said that special political missions were increasingly serving as tools for accomplishing a wide range of United Nations mandates in areas including preventive diplomacy, supporting peace processes, assisting in the establishment of justice mechanisms, monitoring the implementation of Security Council sanctions regimes and building peace. For reasons of transparency and accountability, it was essential that the General Assembly should be involved in all policy matters pertaining to special political missions, most of which were created by the Security Council.

74. His delegation welcomed the positive reaction to proposals that the draft resolution on the current item should include a long-term focus on sustaining peace, in the light of the two identical Security Council and General Assembly resolutions recognizing the fundamental importance of such missions in building and sustaining peace. Other important issues highlighted in the resolutions adopted in recent years

on the same item included the need to improve broad geographical representation and gender balance in the composition of all special political missions, as well as ensure the equal and effective participation and full involvement of women at all levels, at all stages and in all aspects of the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

75. Given that special political missions were constantly evolving to allow flexible and distinct responses to crisis, conflict and post-conflict situations, it was vital for the Fourth Committee to continue to discuss related policy matters on the basis of the Secretary-General's reports on the subject. Policy advances must also be accompanied by advances in the financing of special political missions in line with recommendations concerning the creation of a separate account, the establishment of an annual budgetary cycle and access to the support account for peacekeeping operations. Goodwill would therefore be needed to break the five-year deadlock in discussions on the subject in the Fifth Committee. In conclusion, he expressed his Government's support for the peace process in Colombia, as manifested by its commitment to contribute over 100 observers to the United Nations Mission in that country.

76. **Ms. Gambhir** (India) said that the consistent decline in peace across the globe was illustrated by the rise in the number of civil wars, battle-related deaths, refugees and internally displaced persons, underscoring the critical importance of special political missions and the growing expectations placed in them. The primacy of politics in conflict prevention and resolution was widely recognized; political processes must therefore be given due attention in the area of peace and security, notably in situations that peacekeeping operations were ill-equipped to handle. The United Nations must therefore adhere in its endeavours to the principles of the pacific settlement of disputes, and design peace processes that respected impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

77. The success of those endeavours demonstrated the collective responsibility of the United Nations membership, which should engage more constructively in the processes associated with special political missions, including the formulation and renewal of their mandates through consultation. Interactive

briefings by mission heads would also enable Member States to raise queries and offer suggestions on the functioning of missions, as well as contribute to policy formulation, which remained somewhat opaque and non-transparent. More consultation between the Security Council and the wider membership on mission-related issues would be similarly beneficial.

78. As perhaps the best and arguably the most-utilized United Nations mechanism for addressing crises, special political missions should be more reliably resourced through a regular United Nations budget for core prevention and mediation capabilities. Her delegation hoped that the Secretary-General designate would implement the long-awaited initiative of establishing a separate account for special political missions, as well as ensure that those missions were financed on the same basis as peacekeeping operations so as to enhance budgetary transparency. Implementation of the measures suggested by her delegation and others would greatly serve the United Nations and its Member States in the short and longer terms to maintain international peace and security in the face of ever-more-complex crises.

79. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that special political missions were of fundamental importance in shaping and establishing peace and supporting Member States to that end through processes that could be successfully replicated elsewhere, although flexibility was needed in adapting their mandates to overcome difficulties presented by increasingly trying environments. Special political missions would also benefit from the addition of capacity-building to the positive measures already taken to revitalize the Organization's conflict-prevention and mediation work. Concerning the historic peace process in Colombia, his Government supported the efforts under way for a successful conclusion to the negotiations and was ready to dispatch additional observers to the country.

80. To improve their functioning, special political missions must have clear, credible and achievable mandates that took account of the situation in the country concerned. Their geographical representation must also be improved, as must the gender balance, bearing in mind the importance of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Over the previous 10 years, however, the regular budget had

been distorted by the increasing amount of support and financing consumed by special political missions, which was a cause of concern. Establishment of a separate account for such missions would enhance transparency and enable a more detailed analysis for informing the recommendations made by the General Assembly, thereby improving results.

81. **Mr. Ceylan** (Turkey) said that the three recent peace and security reviews had reaffirmed the growing relevance of special political missions, which were crucial assets of the United Nations in support of political processes, conflict prevention and resolution through peaceful means, including mediation, and sustaining peace through more comprehensive and coherent strategies overall. They were also central to the main efforts towards peace, development, human rights and humanitarian work. Preventive diplomacy was particularly important for preventing the escalation of political crises into violent conflict, a delicate task that increasingly required the Secretary-General or special envoys to exercise their good offices, backed up by efforts from United Nations regional offices or field missions. Mission drawdowns were another sensitive stage in which special political missions crucially worked to prevent relapse into conflict. More critically still, such missions were sometimes deployed in situations of all-out conflict, as in his region, which did not always produce the desired result.

82. The effectiveness of special political missions should therefore be enhanced through stronger political support, adequate and predictable funding, improved analysis and backstopping capacity, continued engagement with relevant actors in keeping with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, satisfactory geographical representation and gender balance, and an emphasis on expertise and merit. Turkey continued its extrabudgetary contributions to the Department of Political Affairs, sponsored General Assembly resolutions on special political missions and had facilitated the consensus General Assembly resolution [70/304](#) on strengthening the importance of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict resolution and prevention.

83. With the increased reliance on special political missions, the near-impossibility of meeting their requirements from the biannual regular budget indicated that the formula was no longer sustainable,

necessitating financial adjustments or the introduction of new financial mechanisms. Turkey was committed to cooperating with special political missions, including expert panels and monitoring groups established by the Security Council committees established under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It was crucial for those bodies to function in accordance with the mandates defined by the relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as to the highest standards and with the utmost transparency and accountability, criteria that equally applied to the selection procedures in place for the members of those bodies.

84. **Mr. Fazeel** (Maldives) said that recent negative trends in the global peace and security landscape were exacerbated by the tremendous numbers of displaced persons, the vast scale of humanitarian needs, and the activities of terrorist and multinational criminal organizations. In the light of those developments, special political missions were ever-more important, particularly for United Nations efforts to prevent conflict, including through mediation, and to consolidate peace in post-conflict situations, notably through institutional capacity-building. When proficiently utilized, such missions could be unique and invaluable tools for United Nations peace operations and must therefore operate within a robust and comprehensive framework encompassing defined, transparent and objective methodologies.

85. Given the sensitive nature of the work of special political missions, their mandates must be crafted, implemented and monitored through inclusive and wide-ranging consultations and processes in line with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, among them impartiality, objectivity, respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Those principles should never serve as an alibi for violations and non-compliance with international law and United Nations resolutions, but nor should they be discarded in the name of expediency. The success of peacebuilding efforts, including the work of special political missions, was dependent on the political will of all stakeholders, which could be built only through trust. In fulfilling mission mandates and in operationalizing the missions themselves, the consent and input of host nations was thus crucial.

86. Special political missions must also be afforded the broadest possible level of cooperation and support, while their diversity in form and requirements only underscored the importance of strengthening their capabilities. Their mandates, moreover, must be clear, consistent and tailored to the unique political, economic and social situation of each host nation, which was best evaluated through continuous engagement from conception to completion of the missions. Challenges and shortcomings must furthermore be identified and remedied, in the light of lessons learned, to ensure efficiency across the board. The hope was that strengthening special political missions would also strengthen efforts towards international peace and the prevention of potential conflicts.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.