



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

**69<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting  
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New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Kőrösi ..... (Hungary)

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

## Agenda item 18 (continued)

### Sustainable development

#### Draft resolutions (A/77/L.59 and A/77/L.64)

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Poland to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.59.

**Mr. Szczerski (Poland):** It is my great pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.59, entitled “Building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity”, a joint, cross-regional initiative of Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania, which has — as of now — garnered the support of over 70 countries from around the world and every regional group. The draft resolution calls for the enhancing of infrastructure connectivity and resilience at all levels through the development of cross-border infrastructure in the transport, energy and digital sectors. That, in turn, can help reduce the risk of, prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks and strengthen resilience against future crises. The draft resolution thus offers a unique angle linking sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and security perspectives.

Connectivity has become a defining feature of today. Transport connectivity is essential to human mobility and efficient regional and global value chains. The cross-border connectivity of energy systems

enhances the stability, reliability and resilience of economies, while, in a world shifting from analog to digital faster than ever before, digital connectivity is embedded in every aspect of our lives and has become a universal catalyst for socioeconomic growth.

In the draft resolution, we have strived to highlight the value of taking a systemic perspective to infrastructure. This means that resilience is related not just to individual infrastructure assets but to how those assets work together as energy, transport, water and international technical cooperation networks and affect each other. Currently, the world is facing multiple and interlinked global crises with significant impacts on infrastructure systems. Every country has experienced disruptions resulting from climate change and natural disasters, geopolitical tensions and conflicts, as well as pandemics and epidemics. Disrupted supply chains, energy insecurity, hindrances in transport or the lack of secure telecommunications and internet connections are problems that can be remedied or largely reduced by regional infrastructural connectivity. I am strongly convinced that the perspectives on infrastructure development set forward in the draft resolution can guide our responses to such challenges, irrespective of the geographic location or economic status of countries.

That response is based on three pillars: first, the development-resilience nexus; secondly, regional responses to global challenges; and thirdly, ensuring sustainable financing for infrastructure development.

The draft resolution promotes, first and foremost, quality infrastructure connectivity as a tool for

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building resilience for future shocks and disruptions. Resilience-thinking and mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in infrastructure development is essential to minimize the impact of shocks and hazards that may arise and to ensure the continuity of basic services.

Secondly, the draft resolution aims to stimulate the exchange of experience and best practices on infrastructure development among different regions. Although crises and challenges are felt around the world, each region is affected differently and, in response, develops context-specific approaches. Regional initiatives based on trust can serve as inspiration to other regions and provide lessons learned from which we can draw some universal guidelines. I will highlight a few of these initiatives today.

Poland initiated the draft resolution, inspired by a concrete, regional example of the approach just described. That is the Three Seas Initiative, developed since 2015 by 12 European countries located between the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas. Our region, having identified deficits in infrastructure connections, decided to turn their limitations into an important measure of integration and cooperation. In South-East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its partners have worked to strengthen connectivity in order to narrow development gaps in the region through such initiatives as the Japan-ASEAN Connectivity Initiative. Meanwhile, in Central America, members of the Central American Integration System are implementing the Regional Mobility and Logistics Framework Policy, focused on infrastructure, transport, trade, border interconnectivity and the mobility of people.

Last but not least, the draft resolution calls for the closing of connectivity divides. The need to boost infrastructure investments is global, but the greatest needs tend to be in low-income countries. The draft resolution recognizes that filling the gap in infrastructure financing requires public and private funds, accompanied by technical cooperation, skills development and capacity-building, especially for developing countries. We are aware that if infrastructure is to fully deliver social, economic and environmental benefits, it has to be anchored in appropriate regulatory and policy frameworks. Developing infrastructure of quality means ensuring its compliance with the highest technical, environmental, accounting and labour standards.

The negotiations of the draft resolution demonstrated the universal importance of infrastructure connectivity. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the New Urban Agenda all clearly call for sustainable and resilient infrastructure. Development of infrastructure, including cross-border connectivity, is also prioritized in the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 and the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action, as a universal development objective.

It is the hope of the proponents of the draft resolution that the adoption of this document by consensus will highlight new avenues for reflection and action on infrastructure development as we prepare for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and the pinnacle Sustainable Development Goal Summit in 2023. It will also contribute to achieving the ambitious objectives of the *Our Common Agenda* report (A/75/982), as set out by the Secretary-General.

I would like to extend words of gratitude to all delegations that contributed to the final outcome and to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, which serves as the technical secretariat of the draft resolution. My sincere thanks also go to the Office of the President of the General Assembly and to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat for their support in this process.

Reaching consensus on the draft resolution sends a strong signal to the United Nations system that investing in quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure is a common good, a universal global priority and an underlying foundation for global development. I would like to encourage all United Nations Members to co-sponsor the draft resolution now, before its adoption, which embodies the shared commitment to promoting regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity as a key driver of sustainable development.

I hope that appropriate decisions by the institutions and agencies of the United Nations system will follow

suit, offering tools to implement this approach to infrastructure, and support cross-border and cross-regional development serving the common aim: developing in solidarity.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/77/L.59 and A/77/L.64.

For the Assembly's information, the draft resolutions have been closed for e-sponsorship.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): Allow me to announce additional sponsors on the two draft resolutions. Concerning A/77/L.59. I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become co-sponsors of the draft: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, France, Guyana, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Malawi, Monaco, Mozambique, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Suriname, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Turning to draft resolution A/77/L.64, I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become co-sponsors: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Guyana, Lesotho, Mongolia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and Togo.

**The President:** Delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of position before the adoption on any or both of the draft resolutions are invited to do so in one intervention.

Before I give the floor for explanations of position before the adoption, may I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): I would like to explain our support for the draft resolution contained in document A/77/L.59, entitled "Building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity".

We thank Poland for proposing the draft resolution on an issue that is vital to the realization of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The achievement of both requires a major transition to sustainable infrastructure in energy, transportation, housing, communications, as well as in industrial and agricultural production and consumption. An estimated \$100 trillion–\$120 trillion will need to be invested in sustainable infrastructure over the next 30 years to create a zero-emissions global economy by 2050. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the current infrastructure funding gap is \$2.5 trillion annually, two-thirds of that in the developing countries.

Pakistan welcomes the commitment in the draft resolution to realizing those vital objectives relating to sustainable infrastructure and regional and international connectivity. Pakistan is actively promoting those objectives of infrastructure development and connectivity under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and in the prospective connectivity projects with Central Asia.

In its thirteenth preambular paragraph, the draft resolution also rightly expresses concern that "economic losses due to disasters are rising as a result of [...] climate change". The floods of last year that devastated Pakistan were one of the greatest manifestations of the loss and damage caused by climate impacts. Pakistan has presented a comprehensive recovery plan that would entail domestic and external funding of around \$15 billion merely for reconstruction and another \$12 billion–\$15 billion to ensure resiliency in the new infrastructure. The draft resolution recognizes rightly that infrastructure investments are central to the economic recovery plans of many Governments.

Clearly, as recognized in the draft resolution, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of the Paris Agreement, a comprehensive plan is needed to develop sustainable infrastructure projects in all countries, especially in the developing countries, and to mobilize finance from all available sources — domestic, international, private and public — for their execution.

It is for this reason that in 2020, in my capacity as the President of the Economic and Social Council at that time, I proposed the creation of a permanent

mechanism under United Nations auspices to promote investment in sustainable infrastructure.

Such a United Nations mechanism could, first, convene all stakeholders on a policy board and take the lead in formulating and coordinating the implementation of a comprehensive plan for transition to sustainable infrastructure.

Secondly, it could develop and harmonize national and international regulatory frameworks to incentivize public and private investment in sustainable development projects, especially in developing countries, and develop modalities to de-risk such investment through such means as green bonds, blended finance, sovereign guarantees, insurance schemes and first-loss mechanisms.

Thirdly, it could create a project unit that would utilize the more than 130 United Nations country offices to help the developing countries identify, prepare and structure sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects, thereby building a sizeable pipeline of such projects, which could be used to mobilize the required investment from public and private sources.

Fourthly, it could develop and maintain a database of sustainable infrastructure projects, sources of finance and potential execution partners and service providers, which could be used by all stakeholders, as needed.

As co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Sustainable Infrastructure Investment, Pakistan will continue its efforts to establish such a United Nations infrastructure entity. We look forward to the cooperation and support of all Member States, especially the sponsors of draft resolution A/77/L.59, to realize those objectives.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/77/L.59, entitled “Building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/77/L.59?

*Draft resolution A/77/L.59 was adopted (resolution 77/282).*

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/77/L.64, entitled:

“Strengthening voluntary national reviews through country-led evaluation”.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/77/L.64?

*Draft resolution A/77/L.64 was adopted (resolution 77/283).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of position after the adoption, may I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Ms. Marks** (United States of America): On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I would like to extend our thanks to Poland for shepherding resolution 77/282, on sustainable infrastructure. We are pleased to join consensus. Quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The United States is committed to helping meet those needs with transparent investments and high-standard projects that deliver real economic benefits while protecting the environment and workers’ rights. That is the reason President Biden led passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, which will make significant investments in sustainable and resilient infrastructure in the United States. It is also why we champion the launch of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment of the Group of Seven, which intends to mobilize \$600 billion by 2027 to help low- and middle-income countries invest in infrastructure that serves the needs of their communities.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our position that trade language negotiated or adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council has no relevance for United States trade policy under the World Trade Organization. That includes calls to adopt approaches, such as technology transfer, that are not both voluntary and on mutually agreed terms.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position after adoption. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 18.



**Agenda item 127 (continued)****Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations****(I) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe****Draft resolution (A/77/L.65)**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Iceland, who will introduce draft resolution A/77/L.65.

**Mr. Valtýsson** (Iceland): I have the honour, on behalf of Iceland, as current Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, and Ireland, as the previous Chair, to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.65, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”. I would like to thank Member States that have joined Iceland and Ireland as co-sponsors.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is characterized by long tradition and shared vision of the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and rule of law. First submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session in 2000, this biannual resolution touches on numerous important issues. Consultations, as customary, began in Strasbourg among Council of Europe members during the Irish presidency last spring. The zero draft was agreed upon in November, outlining the issues of most importance to the Council of Europe and its members, before being introduced to the wider United Nations membership here in New York.

As co-facilitators, Iceland and Ireland strived to conduct inclusive negotiations through several rounds of informal consultations, in addition to bilateral and smaller group discussions. Based on the previously agreed language from resolution 75/264, adopted by consensus two years ago, compromises were reached on several issues in order to submit a draft that the vast majority of members could accept. This meant that some key elements from the zero draft, agreed upon by the Council of Europe membership, were omitted from the text.

Early on in the informal consultations, it became clear that there was no ground for consensus on the ninth preambular paragraph. The war that followed the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation 14 months ago has had a devastating impact on Ukraine,

the region and, in fact, every corner of the world. No country has escaped the far-reaching consequences of that unprovoked and unjust invasion. The draft resolution before us recognizes those unprecedented challenges in the context of regional cooperation, international law and multilateralism. The ninth preambular paragraph calls for strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe,

“notably in order to promptly restore and maintain peace and security based on respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of any State”.

It is regrettable that we will have to vote on this draft resolution here today. I call on all Member States to support the text as drafted, and to vote in favour of it.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/77/L.65. For the Assembly’s information, the draft resolution has been closed for e-sponsorship.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/77/L.65, the following countries have become co-sponsors of the draft: Antigua and Barbuda, Israel, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Suprunenko** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation cannot support the draft resolution contained in document A/77/L.65, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”, in its present form for the following reason.

As members are aware, the draft resolution, like many other resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, is always adopted by consensus. That is logical, since resolutions of this type serve primarily as support from the international community for the regional organizations

themselves, as well as their efforts to cooperate with the United Nations.

This year we cannot support the draft in its current form, since the ninth preambular paragraph has nothing to do with the topic of the draft resolution and is highly politicized in nature. We shall not comment again on the accusations made therein against our country. I would just like to recall that in referring to “unprecedented challenges”, the authors are deliberately keeping silent about the eight-year war waged by Ukraine against the residents of Donbas, to which we have consistently drawn attention in all international forums. The authors also ignore the flagrant act of aggression that was indeed committed by NATO on the territory of Europe against the former Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999.

As for Russia’s withdrawal from the Council of Europe in March 2022, that was the only logical step we could take in response to the blatant transformation of the organization into an anti-Russian instrument. The Council of Europe’s previous unifying potential was obliterated by the countries of NATO and the European Union, which see it merely as a means of ideological support for their political, economic and military expansion to the east and of imposing neoliberal approaches to human rights and the “rules-based order” that is advantageous to them.

The politicization of the draft resolution is yet further proof of the willingness of Western countries to undermine the authority of regional organizations and to cause a rift in the General Assembly when they could so easily have avoided doing so. A number of other delegations joined us in drawing attention to that during the consultations on the draft. As we see it, our former Western partners ultimately opted for confrontation rather than a unifying approach. In that regard, we call on all responsible members of the international community to vote against the inclusion of the ninth preambular paragraph in the text of the draft resolution. Once again, I draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that, by voting against it, it is not expressing its position regarding the Ukrainian crisis, but instead about the attempt to politicize a General Assembly draft resolution on cooperation with a regional organization.

**Mrs. Solorzano Cavalieri** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): In the framework of the agenda item on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, since 2000 the General Assembly has considered on 11 previous

occasions draft resolutions that address existing cooperation between our Organization and the Council of Europe, based on the agreements signed between both parties in December 1951 and November 1971.

Undoubtedly, the past 21 years have not been exempt from situations of tension and divergence in terms of positions and views on various issues. However, constructive and good-faith negotiations were always undertaken in order to reach consensus. We therefore regret that, on this occasion, when the peoples of the United Nations demand that their Governments rise to the great challenges before us, and when it is necessary to foster dialogue, understanding and mutual accommodation, the proponents of the draft resolution contained in document A/77/L.65 preferred to prioritize the inclusion of elements that do not enjoy consensus and that only contribute to increasing tensions and further deepening divisions, as well as to exacerbating the crisis of confidence that prevails today in the concert of nations.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela recognizes the added value that cooperation between the United Nations and other regional and subregional organizations can have with respect to, among other things, sharing experience and good practices in the promotion of common values, with the ultimate purpose of achieving the long-awaited realization of peace, security, sustainable development and the human rights of our peoples. We reject, however, that this noble objective should be tarnished in order once again to insist on the disastrous practice of exploiting a circumstantial majority to weaponize the work of the General Assembly to advance political agendas of a dubious nature, including in the context of the current armed conflict in the Eastern European region. We therefore call on the responsible members of the international community to put an end once and for all to this type of approach, which in no way contributes to political dialogue, diplomatic negotiation or the reduction of tensions, much less to the achievement of peace.

Lastly, we hope that in the year 2025, when this agenda item is considered again, common sense will prevail and that the proponents of the text return to the path of good faith negotiations, ultimately favouring the forging of consensus and the unity of the General Assembly on central issues, with a view to guaranteeing the well-being of our peoples and the development of our nations.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/77/L.65, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”.

A recorded vote has been requested. A separate, recorded vote has been requested on the ninth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tonga, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Zambia

*Against:*

Belarus, Central African Republic, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, China, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen

*The ninth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/77/L.65 was retained by 81 votes to 10, with 48 abstentions.*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Ghana informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

**The President:** We now turn to draft resolution A/77/L.65 as a whole.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

*Against:*

Belarus, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic

*Abstaining:*

Angola, Botswana, Central African Republic, Cuba, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Honduras, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Nauru,

Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Togo, Uzbekistan

*Draft resolution A/77/L.65, as a whole, was adopted by 122 votes to 5, with 18 abstentions (resolution 77/284).*

[Subsequently, the delegations of Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ghana informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Gala López** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba wishes to explain its vote on resolution 77/284, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe” and submitted under agenda item 127 of the General Assembly.

Regrettably, we have not been able to support the resolution that has been adopted because we do not approve of the introduction of divisive language in the text, which is traditionally adopted by consensus. Said language undermines the goal of enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. The adoption of a resolution through a divisive vote does not contribute to the strengthening of that cooperation. Looking ahead to the next opportunity when this item will be considered in the General Assembly, we advocate a consensus text that sets aside controversial issues that should be discussed in other spaces.

**Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico voted in favour of resolution 77/284, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, because we are convinced of the importance of solid collaboration between our Organization and regional entities. Mexico is also an active participant in the debates of the Council of Europe in its capacity as an observer State since 1999.

That notwithstanding, my delegation abstained in the voting on the ninth preambular paragraph as the situations in Ukraine and Georgia do not fall within the scope of cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. The Mexican position regarding the conflict in Ukraine has been made clear in all our statements and votes on the subject.

We regret that the substantive issue of the resolution has been downgraded, resulting in a growing antagonism in which the spirit of good faith negotiation that should characterize this General Assembly is being lost. We therefore reiterate our call to avoid including issues that are outside the core substance of the resolutions in order to preserve the exercise of multilateral diplomacy.

**Mr. Ghadirkhomi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to explain the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding resolution 77/284, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”.

At the outset, allow me to recognize the outstanding efforts made by the Permanent Missions of Iceland and Ireland in co-facilitating the review of today’s resolution and in bringing together the precautionary viewpoints and contributions offered by Member States.

The Charter of the United Nations acknowledges the importance of working with regional organizations. In that context, my delegation would like to underline the importance of cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations. In that understanding, my delegation has been actively engaged in informal meetings with the aim of bridging the existing gaps, including with regard to addressing ongoing conflicts in Europe. We regret that despite the numerous demands made by the Member States, the main sponsors of the resolution were not able to consider any alternative proposals in the specific paragraph. The text presented contains certain references that are not acceptable to us.

Addressing the ninth preambular paragraph, we would like to refer to our position regarding the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, which has been repeated on numerous occasions since its beginning. Once more, we reiterate our principled position regarding the need for the peaceful settlement of disputes, in accordance with international law, and underline the need for full respect for the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of all States. We are of the firm belief that in order to find long-term and sustainable solutions to such crises, it is necessary to address their root causes. We believe that the inclusion of this paragraph as a substantive matter in the text falls beyond the scope of the present resolution, which is aimed merely at addressing cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe.



Furthermore, the current text lacks impartiality and realistic mechanisms for resolving the crisis through peaceful means. The United Nations is expected to maintain its objectivity and impartiality in order to play a responsible and constructive role in the political settlement of crises. Any action taken by the United Nations should be truly conducive to easing the situation, rather than intensifying the conflict and exacerbating the confrontation. At the same time, the Islamic Republic of Iran has rejected any political isolation, unilateral sanctions or pressure, as well as any provocative measures that will only aggravate the situation and make it more complicated and difficult to resolve. It should be emphasized that the General Assembly is not in a position to determine the existence of an act of aggression because, in addition to Article 39 of the Charter, resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974 calls on the Security Council to determine the existence of an act of aggression.

Lastly, while we call for adherence to the relationship agreement without expansion of its interpretation, my delegation would like to refer to its observation with regard to the functioning of the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the engagement of the Council of Europe in the field of promoting democratic institutions. We reiterate that the functioning of that regional organization and cooperation between the two organizations shall be based on common international values and with full adherence to international law, the United Nations Charter and full respect for the sovereignty and principle of non-intervention in internal and international affairs of United Nations Member States.

Moreover, I would like to highlight that my delegation reserves its position on the non-consensual and controversial language used throughout the text, including but not limited to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as reflected in paragraph 3. For the aforementioned reasons, my delegation abstained in the voting on the resolution as a whole.

**Mr. Gueye** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank the delegations of Iceland and Ireland for their hard work in the framework of negotiating the important resolution 77/284, which highlights the cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, including on such subjects of common interest as the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

My delegation would like to clarify that the use of the following terms in the text does not meet with our approval. These include:

(*spoke in English*)

“Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination”; “all women and girls”; “all human rights and fundamental freedoms”; “gender-responsive”; “significant contribution” in paragraph 17; and “recognizes the Council of Europe youth sector strategy 2030”.

(*spoke in French*)

Consequently, Senegal dissociates itself from those terms. In addition, my delegation would like to recall that the concept of gender and all the terms that could be associated with it refer, according to Senegal’s understanding, only to the social relations between men and women.

**Mrs. Balázs** (Hungary): Regarding resolution 77/284, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, under agenda item 127 (I), Hungary wishes to add the following remarks.

First of all, we would like to thank Iceland and Ireland for the negotiations on the resolution. Hungary remains dedicated to its human rights commitments and to the combat against all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. However, we stress that the Hungarian National Assembly decided not to include in the Hungarian national legal system the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, and called upon the Hungarian Government not to take any further steps for the expression of recognition of the binding effect of the Istanbul Convention. Hungary maintains that paragraph 17, which invites States that have not yet done so to consider signing or ratifying the Istanbul Convention, cannot be interpreted as a commitment to signing or ratifying the Istanbul Convention by States that have not yet done so.

In line with our declared national zero-tolerance policy on violence against women, Hungary fully agrees with the crucial aim of fighting against violence against women and children and domestic violence. That has been an independent statutory definition in the new Hungarian Criminal Code since 2013. In our view, it is not the ratification of a treaty but the tangible results of Government actions that make prevention

and combating violence against women and domestic violence a reality. The Hungarian Government regards effective action against every form of violence against women as one of its most important priorities, and that call is continuously reflected in the Government's legislative efforts. Thus, Hungary can only accept a factual reference to the existence of the Istanbul Convention and cannot support calls and invitations for the signature and ratification of the said Convention.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (l) of agenda item 127?

*It was so decided.*

#### **Agenda item 60 (continued)**

##### **Use of the veto**

**Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (spoke in Spanish):** The Security Council is increasingly broadening the scope of the definition of international peace and security, to the detriment of the important functions and responsibilities that fall to the General Assembly, the most democratic and representative organ of the United Nations system. We advocate that the General Assembly fully assume the important role that the Charter of the United Nations grants it in matters of international peace and security. The mandate of the Assembly with respect to those issues has been seriously affected, as a consequence of the increasing tendency of the Security Council to usurp its functions.

Our delegation recorded its considerations when resolution 76/262, entitled "Standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council", was adopted (see A/76/PV.69), and from which today's meeting arises. In Cuba's opinion, the provisions of paragraph 4 of resolution 76/262 on the inclusion of the "Use of the veto" as a permanent item on the agenda of the General Assembly as of this session, can in no way be interpreted to the detriment of the inextricably linked five issues addressed by the intergovernmental negotiations process on Council reform, under decision 62/557. We reiterate that the question of the veto should not be analysed separately from the rest of the issues that are under the mandate of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council framework, established by decision 62/557. The comprehensive reform of the Council that we need could not be achieved otherwise. The five key

issues identified for the reform of that organ, including the question of the veto, are closely related and form a package.

At the same time, we consider it insufficient to limit the submission of special Security Council reports to cases in which the veto has been used. That would be a clearly restrictive and selective approach to what the Charter establishes in that regard in its Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3). We reiterate the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, supported by Cuba, that the Security Council is obliged to submit special reports for the consideration of the General Assembly whenever necessary and not only for issues related to the veto.

Finally, we recall that the mandate of resolution 76/262 does not replace the provisions of articles 8 (b) and 9 (b) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, regarding the convening of special emergency sessions. For that reason, we consider that the possibility for the President of the General Assembly to convene a debate by virtue of paragraph 1 of the aforementioned resolution should be explicitly excluded if a vote by the Assembly itself has previously taken place by virtue of resolution 377 (V) A, "Uniting for peace", in which the majority of the Member States have ruled against calling the Assembly to discuss the same issue.

We again advocate urgent and comprehensive reform of the Security Council, with a view to transforming it into the representative, democratic and transparent body that the international community demands.

**Mrs. Dime Labille (France) (spoke in French):** After more than a year of Russian aggression in Ukraine and in the face of the extraordinarily serious violation of the Charter of the United Nations by a permanent member of the Security Council, it remains more crucial than ever to strengthen our collective security system. My delegation will repeat what it has said on many occasions: — the veto is not a privilege. Its aim cannot be to paralyse the ability of the Security Council to fulfil its mandate to maintain international peace and security. The veto comes with duties and a particular responsibility for the permanent members. In that spirit of responsibility, France has used the veto only 18 times since 1945 and has not used it for more than 30 years.

In addition, from this same rostrum, President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron recalled the need to regulate the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities (see A/77/PV.4). Indeed, since 2013 France

has proposed that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively suspend the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities. That voluntary approach requires not a revision of the Charter but a political commitment on the part of the permanent members. France has behaved in accordance with that line of conduct since 2015.

Today this initiative, carried out jointly with Mexico, is supported by 106 countries. We call on all Member States that have not done so, especially the other permanent members of the Security Council, to support it. In that regard, we noted with interest the commitment of the United States to restrict its use of the veto to rare and exceptional situations and wish to combine our efforts for a responsible use of the veto. France stands ready to resume an in-depth discussion with the permanent members, as well as with all the States Members of the United Nations, to define the concrete methods that would make it possible to ascertain the situation of mass atrocities and to trigger the suspension of the use of the veto.

Finally, to strengthen our collective security system, we must more broadly reform the Security Council. France supports its enlargement in its two categories of members and would like to see text-based negotiations begin.

**Ms. Stoeva** (Bulgaria): Today's debate marks the first anniversary of the adoption of resolution 76/262, commonly known as the veto initiative. Bulgaria is proud to be a member of the core group of States that introduced the resolution. I would like to especially commend Liechtenstein for its visionary and bold leadership. At the time when it first presented the idea, few believed it stood a chance. As we now know, not only did it stand a chance, it was also adopted without a vote. That was a message that deliberate obstruction of action by the Security Council when faced with threats to peace and security could not and would not be tolerated. The resolution is also a sign of the resolve of the overwhelming majority of Member States to strengthen multilateralism and the international rules-based order.

A year after its adoption, we can see the positive impact resolution 72/262 has had. First, transparency and accountability have increased. That is of particular importance as, through paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, we Members States have conferred on the Security Council the primary

responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility, the Security Council will act on our behalf. On the three instances that the provisions of resolution 76/262 have been triggered as a result of vetoes being cast, the Security Council submitted a special report, as envisaged in the resolution. The respective Security Council members took part in the debate to explain their vetoes. The veto initiative has had some preventive power as well. While not having eliminated the use of the veto, it has increased the political cost of casting a veto.

Secondly, resolution 76/262 builds upon other initiatives aimed at limiting the use of the veto and at preventing its misuse, such as the French-Mexican initiative and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct, which Bulgaria fully endorses. In that regard, a strict implementation of paragraph 3 of Article 27 of the United Nations Charter — namely, that a party to a dispute shall abstain in the voting — should be ensured. Unfortunately, that has not been the case.

*Mr. Rai (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Thirdly, the veto initiative has enhanced the role of the General Assembly in matters relating to international peace and security. Given the extremely difficult geopolitical context, it is likely that the Security Council will continue to be prevented from exercising its role effectively due to the misuse of the veto. On such occasions, it is necessary for the General Assembly to have an avenue to take action and to deliver, because when the Security Council fails to act it is not a failure of the Security Council alone; it is perceived as a failure of the United Nations and of us all. The General Assembly has delivered on a number of instances, as in the case of the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

Today's debate is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on how we can make our United Nations more effective and fit for purpose. The veto initiative has proven to be an important step, but we need to do more, and the time to do it is now.

**Ms. Schwalger** (New Zealand): One year ago today, under the leadership of Liechtenstein, Member States took the landmark decision to adopt by consensus resolution 76/262, entitled "Standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the

Security Council". Through its adoption, the General Assembly created a mechanism to ensure accountability among United Nations organs, in accordance with the Charter, and to ask permanent members of the Security Council that have cast a veto to explain themselves to the wider membership. After all, the casting of a veto is not a display of power, but rather an act of weakness that shows that the caster of the veto has failed to convince others of its position. The veto initiative was and remains a significant achievement and one that New Zealand believes has contributed to wider United Nations revitalization efforts. It has strengthened the credibility of the United Nations and the wider multilateral system. It has also reminded us of the important role that small States play as the custodians of the Charter of the United Nations.

As a proud member of the core group, New Zealand actively supported that initiative from its inception. We did so steadfast in our belief that the General Assembly has a legitimate interest in and political responsibility to address situations where the use of the veto has resulted in the paralysis of the Security Council's decision-making responsibilities. In the year since its adoption, in addition to the emergency special session on Ukraine, resolution 76/262 has been activated on two separate occasions. Sadly, that is two times too many.

The veto is the most undemocratic element of the United Nations. New Zealand has been a vocal opponent of the use of the veto since its inception in 1945. Our position that the veto should never be used remains unchanged. However, in circumstances where it has been used, we are encouraged that the resolution has already proven to be an important and effective accountability mechanism. On occasions when the resolution has been activated, the ensuing General Assembly debate has been a demonstration of strong and inclusive multilateralism.

There has never been a greater need for innovation and creativity to secure the central place of the United Nations in addressing the collective challenges facing us, particularly as they relate to international peace and security. That is why New Zealand actively supports initiatives such as resolution 76/262 and participates in the work of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

When we reconvene on this agenda item in one year's time, we hope that it will be a celebration of the non-use of the veto in the intervening year. If, however,

the resolution is reactivated as a result of the Security Council's failure to perform its responsibility to act on behalf of all Member States, it will be incumbent upon all of us, as members of the General Assembly, to be proactive in exercising our collective political responsibility under the United Nations Charter to address matters of international peace and security. We must unite for peace.

**Mr. Chatrnúch** (Slovakia): Two days ago, we commemorated the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, yet today we gather to talk about the veto power — the power to impose unilateralism in the Security Council, granted to five permanent Member States decades ago. Today it is clear that the veto power in its current form needs to be reformed since, sadly, it has been often abused. Last year's resolution 76/262, establishing the standing Mechanism for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council, was a much-needed step to ensure transparency and accountability for the use of a veto.

Reflecting on the implementation of the resolution over its first year, I will limit myself to five points.

First, the veto power is in no way a privilege, but a heavy responsibility to act in the interest of securing peace and security for people worldwide. It shall not be used to render the Security Council dysfunctional or serve as a tool to pursue the vetoing State's own political interests. Its flagrant abuse, such as that of the Russian Federation in the position of aggressor in the situation of Ukraine, is simply unacceptable and in stark contrast to the responsibilities of a permanent member of the Security Council.

Secondly, the standing mechanism for a General Assembly debate has not in any way impaired the primary responsibility of the Security Council for maintaining peace and security. On the contrary, it applies additional pressure to conduct consultations among Security Council members and thereby contributes to greater veto restraint and, from a broader perspective, to strengthening the whole United Nations system.

Thirdly, the standing mechanism has complemented the existing regime of uniting for peace by ensuring that no instance of preventing the Security Council from fulfilling its mandate can escape without explanation. That is documented by the two instances when a



General Assembly debate has been convened under the standing mechanism.

Fourthly, Slovakia recalls other initiatives aimed at restraining the use of veto, for example the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct and the French-Mexican initiative. Those continue to be equally relevant, and we call on permanent members of the Security Council that have not joined them yet to do so and apply them.

Fifthly, even though the standing mechanism initiative is without prejudice to the Security Council reform process, I cannot but conclude by underscoring the urgent need to finally make a breakthrough in the negotiations, which would allow us to tackle the veto power on the systemic level.

**Mr. Benard Estrada** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala thanks President Csaba Kőrösi for convening this debate under the agenda item “Use of the veto”. We also take this opportunity to thank the leadership of the delegation of the Principality of Liechtenstein for presenting resolution 76/262 to the General Assembly.

Unfortunately, the reality of various conflicts and the use or misuse of the veto as a result of political or ideological positions make clear to us the need to make structural changes in our Organization, particularly those related to the Security Council. In that regard, we welcome the full implementation of resolution 76/262, which allows us to convene a General Assembly meeting when, due to lack of consensus among the permanent members, the Security Council is unable to fulfil its duties, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

From our perspective, resolution 76/262 has to date been a useful mechanism to involve the international community in decision-making regarding the maintenance of international peace and security, and demonstrates the need to democratize and increase representativeness in matters of international peace and security, ensuring that the maintenance of international order does not fall solely to the unilateral and non-representative decisions of a few States.

Likewise, in our view Member States must continue with all efforts to carry out comprehensive discussions on Security Council reform, which covers, among other things, the topic of implementing measures to prevent the irresponsible use of the veto or to mitigate its effects.

Resolution 76/262 fulfils the purpose of holding the permanent members accountable for the use of the veto before the General Assembly.

Finally, Guatemala reiterates its position that, first, the use of the veto in the Security Council is a prerogative of the permanent members that does not correspond to the current geopolitical reality; secondly, in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Guatemala has supported suspension of the veto in cases of mass atrocities or crimes against humanity; and thirdly, the working methods of the Security Council need to be more transparent and open to the membership. As such, if the veto power is used, it is important that the General Assembly know the reason for said decision, in an exercise of greater accountability with the membership of the United Nations as a whole.

We hope that the various discussions held within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform and this type of debate can achieve substantive progress on a topic of relevance, allowing us to have an Organization that corresponds to the needs of the twenty-first century.

**Mr. Hasenau** (Germany): One year ago, we took a major step towards greater accountability and responsibility in the Security Council. As one of the 83 sponsors, Germany thanks Liechtenstein for the landmark resolution 76/262, on the use of the veto, which was adopted by consensus.

Members of the Security Council — and the permanent members in particular — hold responsibility for the invaluable good of international peace and security. Abuses of the veto are antithetical to that responsibility. Therefore, each use of the veto must be duly justified by the issuing State, preferably in front of the Assembly. The Security Council presidency must heed the call under paragraph 4 of resolution 76/262 to report on any use of the veto.

In 2022, three vetoes were issued — in May (see S/PV.9048), July (see S/PV.9087) and September (see S/PV.9143). They blocked action on matters of vital importance: peace and security in Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East and non-proliferation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Moreover, in abusing its veto to advance its own interests in the context of its war of aggression in Ukraine, the Russian Federation violated paragraph 3 of Article 27 of the

Charter of the United Nations, which states that a party to a dispute shall abstain in the voting.

The intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform show that a growing number of States opposes the veto power. Let us therefore do what is possible now to advance beyond the resolution that we adopted last year. Importantly, the use of the veto should be limited to rare and exceptional cases. We need clear and transparent criteria for its use, to prevent its abuse at great cost to the international community. Therefore, Germany strongly supports the French-Mexican initiative on veto restraint in cases of mass atrocity, as well as the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct, with the aim to define such criteria. We also support all attempts to ensure consistency with the principles of the United Nations Charter, including its paragraph 3 of Article 27.

**Ms. Hussain** (Maldives): As a small State, the Maldives has always supported the need for strong multilateralism, with the United Nations at its centre. We believe that respect for the rule of law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are paramount and should be respected by all States, irrespective of their size or might. The United Nations Charter places an obligation on all its Member States to settle international disputes by peaceful means, without the threat or use of force.

We know that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council. But when the Security Council cannot act, the General Assembly must. The most inclusive and representative organ of the United Nations should strive to ensure transparency and accountability and insist that Member States explain and persuade instead of blocking action with vetoes. It was for that reason that the Maldives joined more than 80 other countries in co-sponsoring resolution 76/262, on the use of the veto. We strongly believe that the power of the veto comes with extraordinary responsibility, and it is therefore the role of the General Assembly to ensure that this responsibility is used wisely.

As other colleagues have pointed out in the debates last year and today, we should view the veto resolution as part of a general goal of greater accountability, transparency, coherence and collaboration among the principal organs of the United Nations.

The Maldives is committed to finding solutions through a multilateral approach by preserving

international peace and security. The overuse of the veto paralyses the United Nations at a time when we need multilateralism more than ever. The veto resolution was an innovation that helped our institution function better. We continue to support it and encourage ideas around further innovation to strengthen the General Assembly and our institution as a whole.

**Mr. Reed** (United Kingdom): The founding Members of the United Nations vowed to save the generations that followed them from the scourge of war. They conferred the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on the Security Council. As a part of that, permanent members of the Security Council were given veto power.

The United Kingdom is clear — the veto is a heavy responsibility, to be used to avoid and resolve conflict. The veto should be used responsibly and with accountability. Sadly, not all permanent members agree. In February last year, Russia used the veto to prevent the Council from taking action in response to its illegal and unprovoked war in Ukraine (see S/PV.8979). That came just two months after it vetoed a draft resolution that would have enabled the Council to take action on climate security — a draft resolution that counted the highest ever number of sponsors (see S/PV.8926). In response, the General Assembly adopted resolution 76/262, which we are talking about today, to enable the General Assembly to scrutinize the use of the veto and to hold Council Members using the veto to account. We were proud to co-sponsor that resolution.

Since then, of course, the Assembly has twice met in response to vetoes: in May 2022, when China and Russia vetoed a resolution that would have responded to the launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of intercontinental ballistic missiles (see S/PV.9048), and in July 2022, when Russia vetoed a draft resolution that sought to extend humanitarian assistance to over 4 million people in north-western Syria (see S/PV.9087), only to accept a resolution days later with one change: allowing humanitarians to provide help for six months, instead of twelve (S/PV.9089). Is that what the veto was created for? Halving the window for providing humanitarian assistance to people who desperately need it?

For our part, the United Kingdom has not exercised our veto since 1989. We listen carefully. We negotiate with Security Council partners to try and find agreement. The United Kingdom also remains committed to never

voting against a credible draft resolution on preventing or ending a mass atrocity, as a proud signatory of the Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency group code of conduct. We encourage all Member States, including the other permanent members of the Council, to support that initiative.

**Mr. Spasse** (Albania): Today we mark one year since the adoption by consensus of resolution 76/262. Albania was proud to co-sponsor that innovative mechanism, along with 82 Member States, to ensure that the Security Council acts in the interests of the international community and for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the positive effects that this standing mandate has had one year since its activation.

First, it has provided a mechanism that promotes transparency and greater accountability of the permanent members for their decision-making. It gives an opportunity to the entire membership to be included in discussions related to peace and security by addressing concerns over the use of veto power and making it a matter of public record and discussion. On four occasions last year, the casting of a veto by one or more Council members prevented the adoption of resolutions: two on Ukraine (see S/PV.8979 and S/PV.9143), one on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (see S/PV.9048) and one on Syria (see S/PV.9087). Following the adoption of resolution 76/262 of 26 April 2022, the Security Council has submitted three special reports to the General Assembly. We believe that the Security Council's special reports are a very good example of the greater transparency and accountability of the Council. As a current elected member, Albania will work with other Security Council member States to make sure that this practice is reflected in the upcoming annual report of the Council to the General Assembly.

Secondly, the veto initiative has been effective in fostering dialogue and greater cooperation among Member States on issues that were exclusively in the domain of the permanent members of the Security Council. We believe that having this debate in the General Assembly whenever a veto is cast in the Security Council provides an opportunity for all Member States to express their views on the matter and for the international community to hear a range of perspectives on the issue. It also helps the Security

Council's members in that it gives them food for their decision-making.

Thirdly, this mechanism plays a deterrent role, increasing the needed pressure on the veto powers in limiting their ability to the use of veto, building consensus and seeking compromises on various contested issues of the Security Council. By facilitating open and constructive debate, the resolution can help build consensus on ways to address veto use and improve the functioning of the United Nations as a whole.

Albania is part of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group and supports the initiative of France and Mexico, according to which countries must refrain from the use of veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and mass atrocities. We would like to join others in calling for a faithful implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In paragraph 3 of Article 27, it clearly stipulates that, in decisions under Chapter VI, and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a party to a dispute shall abstain in the voting.

Lastly, the standing mandate has further strengthened the role of the General Assembly, as one of the main deliberative and policymaking bodies of the United Nations multilateral system, in discussing issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. We support ideas for a more substantial and meaningful role of the General Assembly when addressing those issues, including by bringing a possible outcome when considered necessary.

**Mr. Sabbagh** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We are meeting for the first time under agenda item 60, "Use of the veto", in the light of paragraph 4 of resolution 76/262, which was adopted exactly one year ago under the agenda item "Strengthening of the United Nations system" (see A/76/PV.69).

My country, the Syrian Arab Republic, a founding Member of the United Nations, reiterates its keenness and commitment to strengthening the United Nations and supporting solutions to threats against international peace and security in the light of the established provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, which enshrines the right to cast a veto. The use of that right, as provided for by the Charter, has never represented a failure to maintain international peace and security. Rather, on numerous occasions, it has represented a cornerstone of the international balance of powers and

a means to contain any abuse of power and protect the international order from arbitrary decisions that may be taken by one or more countries. In other words, that power realistically limits another power at the international level.

We also wish to recall that throughout history, since the inception of the United Nations to date, the use of the veto has never been an issue on its own merit. The problem actually lies in how it is used and in the political mindset that has often been behind the casting of a veto. Over the decades of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United States of America and its allies on the Security Council have always opposed all draft resolutions calling for an end to the Israeli occupation and all settlement projects in the occupied Arab territories. They have even rejected all invitations to enforce relevant Security Council resolutions that clearly provided for an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab territories since 1967, in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, even though Article 25 of the United Nations Charter provides for the commitment of Member States to accepting and enforcing the resolutions of the Security Council. In other words, the United States and its allies have cast a veto against the United Nations Charter itself and the legitimacy of Council resolutions.

It may be important to recall here that the very first use of the use of the veto in the history of the United Nations took place on 16 February 1946, and it was in favour of supporting the independence of my country, Syria. At that time, the Soviet Union, in all its wisdom, voted against a draft resolution sponsored by France and Britain, with support from the United States, to extend the mandate of the French and British troops in my country and to make their withdrawal conditional upon the assigning of concessions to protect the interests of those countries, at the expense of the sovereignty and independence of my country. However, the Soviet veto defeated that draft resolution and contributed to securing the full, unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops from Syria only two months after the date that meeting was held (S/PV.23). A review of numerous cases in which the veto has been used in all wisdom by Russia and China would confirm that the veto has helped the world avert great disasters and conflicts, the further division and destruction of countries, the starvation of many peoples and the dissemination of chaos and terrorism.

What needs to be addressed is not the way the veto is cast in the Security Council, but the lack of readiness

on the part of some of its permanent members to consider and listen to other perspectives, as well as their unwillingness to reach consensual solutions and take balanced and wise decisions to maintain international peace and security. Some of those members are even adamant about imposing certain draft resolutions and disregarding the perspectives of the countries concerned. They act as if they were the custodians of the United Nations or as if the Security Council were a corporation whose board they control. That is why it often becomes necessary to cast a veto.

It is important to indicate here that resolution 76/262, which was adopted by consensus, should never be interpreted as being aimed at changing the delicate balance between the General Assembly and the Security Council, or as a means of undermining the power and legitimacy of Security Council resolutions. Rather, it represents an attempt to prompt the members of the Council to make additional efforts to find common ground for consensus and take decisions based on greater wisdom, with a view to maintaining international peace and security. Our objective in supporting the resolution was to make the work of the Security Council more transparent by enabling the States members of the General Assembly to objectively discuss the rationale of the member that decided to cast a veto. Our objective was not to transform the General Assembly into a platform to attack that country or hold it accountable and create a state of unjustified polarization in that regard.

In conclusion, I wish to note that the logic behind the distribution and allocation of powers between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as indicated in the Charter of the United Nations since its inception, has enabled them to work effectively to date. That is why we find it strange today to see attempts to expand the scope of the authority of the General Assembly at the expense of the authority of the Security Council, particularly when it comes to maintaining international peace and security, and also imposing a custodial approach related to the way decisions are reached.

**Mrs. Cedano** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Dominican Republic is grateful for the convening of this debate, which provides the General Assembly with a unique opportunity to fully consider a fundamental issue in our collective commitment to maintaining international peace and security. That issue is the exercise of the veto in the Security Council, a resource intended to attempt to remedy particularly



critical situations. However, with each passing day, the value of its use, or perhaps abuse, is becoming less clear. That is because we are facing a Security Council that in recent decades has suffered from deep polarization on various issues, and where a high number of decisions, including those on humanitarian issues or on relevant topics, have been taken by vote, during which the veto has been applied. That unfortunate occurrence should certainly make us think.

The goal is not to try to relieve the Security Council of the responsibility conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations, but to allow the General Assembly to assist constructively in the search for solutions so that its members can discharge that responsibility in an effective, relevant and non-discriminatory way, always placing people at the centre and in accordance with the times we are living. In that sense, the Dominican Republic understands that the General Assembly, together with our colleagues on the Security Council, must focus on considering and evaluating realistic proposals to achieve a more efficient, inclusive, fair and agile Security Council that reflects and protects the best interests of the most vulnerable in conflict situations.

In that vein, the Dominican Republic supports the full implementation of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct regarding the use of the veto, which urges all members of the Security Council, elected and permanent alike, not to vote against any credible draft resolution intended to prevent or stop mass atrocities. The Dominican Republic is also of the view that the Franco-Mexican proposal to obtain agreement among the permanent members of the Council to voluntarily refrain from using their vetoes in cases of atrocity crimes is a valid tool that deserves to be made concrete with a political agreement among the permanent members of the Council.

We consider the “threat of use of the veto” to be unacceptable; unfortunately, however, it prevails in times of tension and division in the Security Council. We believe that there should be no room for such pressure, not only in the Security Council but in any area of the United Nations. We view as both healthy and a step in the right direction the General Assembly practice of requesting any permanent member of the Council that exercises the veto privilege to explain the reasons and motivations that led them to exercise it, as agreed in resolution 76/262, which we co-sponsored.

Looking to the future, the Dominican Republic believes that it would be important to continue to deepen the various proposals that have been expressed in different forums, including empowering the General Assembly to reverse a veto in the Security Council, where applicable; the idea that a decision needs more than one negative vote to be vetoed, thereby limiting the power of the individual veto; and, finally, the notion of restrained veto use, for which there must necessarily be a pre-existing principled political will. We advocate for a United Nations whose bodies enjoy the necessary legitimacy vis-a-vis each and every person it serves, and that is capable of facing, to the best of its ability, the most pressing challenges facing humankind.

**Mr. Mathur (India):** We meet today to acknowledge that a year has passed since the adoption of the veto initiative (resolution 76/262) by the Assembly. India’s position on the veto remains consistent and clear. As we all are aware, back in the year 2008, the General Assembly, via its decision 62/557, considered that all five aspects of Security Council reform, including the question of the veto, would be decided in a comprehensive manner and therefore that no single cluster could be addressed in isolation. The veto resolution last year, though adopted by consensus, unfortunately reflected a piecemeal approach to Security Council reforms, highlighting one aspect while ignoring the root cause of the problem.

Regarding the substantive aspects of the exercise of the veto in the Security Council, my delegation has the following four observations.

First, over the past 75 years, all five permanent members have used the veto to achieve their respective political ends. In that regard, let me flag what our African brothers and sisters have repeatedly stated in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform:

“The veto as a matter of principle should be abolished. However, as a matter of common justice, it should be extended to new permanent members so long as it continues to exist.”

Turning to our second observation, only five members have been vested with the privilege of using the veto. As rightly called out by our African brothers and sisters, that goes against the very concept of the sovereign equality of States and only perpetuates the mindset of the Second World War — to the victor belongs the spoils.

For our third observation, either all nations are treated equally in the context of voting rights or else the new permanent members must also be given the veto. The extension of veto to new members, in our view, would have no adverse impact on the effectiveness of an enlarged Council.

For our fourth observation, the exercise of the veto is driven by political considerations, not by moral obligations. As long as it exists, the member State or member States that can exercise the veto will do so, irrespective of the moral pressure, as we have seen in the recent past. Therefore, we need to address all five aspects of Security Council reform, including the question of the veto, in a comprehensive manner, through clearly defined timelines, in the intergovernmental negotiations process. India remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting any initiative that genuinely furthers the objective of achieving meaningful and comprehensive reform of the key elements of the global multilateral architecture.

Lastly, the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. No amount of misinformation, rhetoric and propaganda from any country can change this fact.

**Ms. Zoghbi** (Lebanon): Despite its shortcomings, preserving the spirit of multilateralism, with the United Nations at its heart, remains a necessity. That holds true for all of us and particularly for small States. As a founding Member of the Organization and a nation that has constantly turned to the United Nations, Lebanon knows the importance of a strong and credible United Nations system, particularly the Security Council.

Far too often, the Security Council, entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, has failed to deliver on its mandate. The veto has often been the first focus of criticism levelled at the Council. As expressed many times by my delegation, the veto or the threat to use it has been an impediment to maintaining security and to the achievement of peace. Lebanon was therefore one of the co-sponsors of resolution 76/262, the veto initiative, which was adopted by consensus a year ago. We believe that the mechanism established by the resolution represents a significant step towards enhancing the accountability and transparency of the Security Council. It also increases the role and authority of the General Assembly, the most universal body of the United Nations, and offers an opportunity for all

members to engage in a necessary dialogue, regardless of their position.

In the same spirit, my delegation reiterates its support for two initiatives seeking to promote necessary accountability. The first is the French-Mexican declaration on veto restraint in cases of mass atrocity crimes, and the second is the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct, which calls on all Security Council members to not vote against any credible draft resolution intended to prevent or halt mass atrocities.

While we underscore the importance and relevance of the veto initiative, we are aware that it will not stop inaction and will not be sufficient to put an end to conflicts and daily violations of international law. We are aware that more should be done to prompt the Security Council to act more effectively and responsibly; hence, the need for a comprehensive reform of the Council. In times like these, working towards more effective multilateralism by reinvigorating the main organs of the United Nations is long overdue.

**Mr. Al-Maawda** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for us to participate in this important meeting, the first in the General Assembly on the use of the veto, pursuant to resolution 76/262 of April 2022. The State of Qatar was among those members that submitted the resolution, which was co-sponsored by a significant number of countries, reflecting the significance of the issue and the importance attached to it.

The State of Qatar is aware of the importance of that issue in embodying an important role of the General Assembly in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Assembly has prerogatives regarding items pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is high time for the General Assembly to carry out that role so that we can openly and sincerely discuss the use of the veto in the most representative body of the United Nations, particularly when it is exercised on socioeconomic, humanitarian and legal issues. We believe that the consideration by the General Assembly of questions that the Security Council cannot address as a result of the use of the veto is absolutely crucial, as it allows us to fulfil the most important purpose for which the Organization was established, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security.

Two meetings were held by the General Assembly during the first two months after the adoption of

the resolution and following the use of the veto by a permanent member of the Security Council. A debate within the General Assembly took place on two issues of great importance, not only to the members of the Security Council but to the members of the General Assembly as well.

When resolution 76/262 was adopted, we reaffirmed that it did not seek to trample on the prerogatives of the Security Council. The resolution addresses the veto pursuant to the role and tasks of the General Assembly, in line with the mandate conferred upon it by the Charter of the United Nations. The resolution does not undermine the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, in particular the right of the veto. It does not prejudice the outcome of those negotiations.

We believe that the meetings convened pursuant to the resolution will be an opportunity to reach the necessary consensus and to avoid the use of the veto in future. That will enable the Security Council to carry out its duties in maintaining international peace and security. In that regard, I note that the State of Qatar endorsed the French-Mexican initiative on restraining the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocity crimes. We have also endorsed the code of conduct on actions taken by the Security Council against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes introduced by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar is well known to be committed to multilateralism. We reiterate the central role of the General Assembly as the most representative body of the United Nations. We also reiterate the need to strengthen and revive its role as part of the mandate conferred upon it by the United Nations Charter.

**Ms. Syrota** (Ukraine): A year ago, Ukraine was among the initial sponsors of resolution 77/262, which established the standing mechanism and thereby strengthened the role of the General Assembly in a situation when a veto is cast in the Security Council. We welcome the fact that in the year since its launch, the initiative seems to be well embedded in our working practices.

The issue of the use of the veto has always been of particular importance for Ukraine and other Member States that uphold the Charter of the United Nations and its principles. Against the backdrop of the Russian invasion of my country, with the deliberate immobilization of the Security Council as a part of

its aggressive strategy, this issue has become even more relevant. Almost every draft resolution that the Security Council has attempted to adopt in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine since 2014 has been blocked due to the abuse of the veto by the Russian Federation. In particular, Russia cast a veto on draft resolutions concerning the territorial integrity of Ukraine in 2014, when it launched an armed aggression and started the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (see S/PV.7138); Malaysian Airlines MH-17, which it shot down in 2014 over the territory of Ukraine (see S/PV.7498); and the condemnation of its aggression when a full-scale military invasion of Ukraine started in February 2022 (see S/PV.8979).

The most recent case took place in September 2022, when the Security Council addressed the Russian attempt to annex, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign territories of Ukraine in the east and south of Ukraine (see S/PV.9143). The Russian representative was the only one to vote against draft resolution S/2022/720. That testified to the fact that even when isolated, that country is capable of blocking the Council from exercising its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is why Ukraine supports further fine-tuning of the mechanism in response to the use of the veto, which we are discussing today. In particular, paragraph 3, inviting the Security Council to submit a special report on the use of the veto in question to the General Assembly, should be applied regardless of how the issue is addressed — either the holding of a debate on the situation concerning which the veto was cast or meeting in an emergency special session on the same situation.

As already stated today, the veto power was designed not as a privilege but as a responsibility. It runs counter to the spirit of the United Nations Charter that, in recent years, the veto power has been misused to block resolutions while ongoing aggression or atrocity crimes — genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes — were being committed. Such vetoes prevented the condemnation, investigation and prosecution of crimes, as well as other measures designed to curtail or alleviate the commission of those crimes.

Ukraine therefore is a staunch supporter of existing initiatives aimed at limiting the use of the veto and strengthening the responsibility for its casting, notably the code of conduct regarding Security Council action

against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, prepared by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, as well as the Franco-Mexican initiative on suspension of veto powers in cases of mass atrocities. We are convinced that the use of the veto should also be restricted when a permanent member is directly involved in the conflict under the consideration of the Council and therefore cannot be expected to exercise its voting rights and privileges in an impartial manner.

The wider United Nations membership cannot further tolerate the abuse of the veto and seek a strengthening of accountability. We encourage the General Assembly to translate our commitment into action by strengthening existing mechanisms and implementing existing initiatives.

**Mr. Abesadze** (Georgia): We are pleased to participate in this much-needed debate on the question of the veto, marking one year since the adoption of resolution 76/262, commonly known as the veto initiative. As one of the main co-sponsors of the resolution, we wish to thank the leadership of Liechtenstein once again for negotiating that vital document. We believe that the veto initiative serves the goal of upholding the multilateral system we all aspire to. By adopting the resolution last year, we strengthened the role of the General Assembly, the universal body granting all States equal rights and responsibilities. It also paves the way for more efficient, fair and up-to-date ways of cooperation between the two main bodies of the United Nations.

We saw resolution 76/262 in action last year when, on several occasions, a veto was cast in the Security Council and considerations continued here in the Hall, providing equal opportunity to all members to take part in the debate, regardless of their size, military or economic strength, geographical location or any other preconditions. We saw that the resolution proved to be efficient, serving its main purpose and thus living up to Member States' expectations.

According to paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council discharges its mandate on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. However, lately it has been more evident than ever that the Council is failing us, the entire membership, with respect to dealing with violations of the United Nations Charter. Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine is the latest litmus test of the inability of the Council to

effectively fulfil its main role — first, to prevent and, if not, then to stop the war and the bloodshed. All of this comes down to the detrimental effect of the abuse of the veto right by a permanent member.

But before Ukraine, there was Georgia. In 2008, we felt on our skin what the inability of the Security Council can look like. In breach of paragraph 3 of Article 27 of the United Nations Charter, which clearly stipulates that “a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting”, we witnessed the exact opposite. A permanent member of the Security Council and party to the conflict cast a veto, thereby preventing the Security Council from stopping aggression against Georgia, as well as the subsequent illegal occupation of two of its regions — namely, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali — which, as a matter of fact, continues as we speak.

To avoid the repetition of the same scenario in the future, the Security Council must be reformed. First and foremost, we must address the issue of the use of the veto. We are fully aware that the considerations on Security Council reform are an exclusive prerogative mandated under decision 62/557, commonly known as the intergovernmental negotiations process, and we will continue to address that issue in the appropriate format. However, until there is tangible progress on the issue at hand, our efforts should be directed towards revitalizing and strengthening the role of the General Assembly in cases of threat to the peace or acts of aggression, without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the Security Council to uphold global peace and security.

Let me conclude by stating that the resolution on the standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council is the right track to follow. We will continue to contribute to the process of strengthening this organ and, thus, the multilateral system.

**Mr. Makarevich** (Belarus): I will try to be very brief and make just a few remarks.

*(spoke in Russian)*

The issue of the veto is inextricably linked to the issue of United Nations system reform. Reform is an extremely important question and pertains directly to the national interests of all Member States, without exception. We believe that it is necessary to find a comprehensive solution to current disagreements, taking into consideration the interests and concerns of all parties through consultations and on the basis



of consensus. I repeat in particular that this should be based on consensus. We urge that the existing format of intergovernmental negotiations be maintained. There simply is no alternative to it. We recall that this format is enshrined in General Assembly resolutions and supported by Member States. Any arbitrary change to the modalities of the agreed intergovernmental negotiations process would have a serious negative impact on both the reform and the integrity of the United Nations system in and of itself.

Today there are serious ongoing disagreements and divergences of opinion among Member States regarding the use of the veto. The different approaches to the format of the reform are fundamental in nature. We note that none of the proposed solutions enjoys tangible support. That fact clearly implies that in order to achieve a mutually acceptable solution, there is a need for ongoing, consistent movement towards it based on mutual trust and respect.

In terms of the issue of the right of the use of the veto, we do not believe that the institution in and of itself needs to be viewed as a privilege of individual countries. That right is a particular responsibility of the permanent members when considering issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security. The mechanism of the right of veto is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and serves as an important instrument to develop balanced decisions on which peace and security on our planet depend. However, we believe that given the fact that the results of the negotiations have not yet reached maturity, talk about starting direct, text-based discussions is premature.

There is a saying in our country: “More haste, less speed”. In other words, everything comes in its own time. Belarus would urge all Member States to uphold that.

**Mr. Kiboino (Kenya):** My delegation commends the President of the General Assembly for convening this debate marking the first anniversary of the adoption of resolution 76/262, otherwise known as the veto initiative. As one of the core veto initiative countries, Kenya welcomed the adoption of resolution 76/262 as a significant step in improving the work of the United Nations by creating a form of accountability for the use of the veto by any of the permanent members of the Security Council. My delegation commends the

efforts of Liechtenstein and the co-authors for that historic achievement.

The resolution has enhanced the General Assembly’s engagement in the maintenance of international peace and security. It has provided a forum for Member States to play a more active role, particularly when the Security Council is unable to act due to the application of the veto by one or more of its permanent members. We believe that it has contributed to a greater sense of accountability by making it more difficult for permanent members to use the veto without facing some form of scrutiny by the General Assembly. It may also encourage greater cooperation and compromises within the Security Council, thus leading to more effective responses to international crises.

However, it is important to note that the General Assembly does not have the powers under the Charter of the United Nations to compel States to act. In that regard, the effectiveness of the resolution will largely depend on the willingness of Member States to meaningfully engage with it. We encourage all Members to do so. But more fundamentally, it should be understood that the veto is not a privilege, but an international responsibility to be applied responsibly, only in exceptional circumstances and solely in the interest of international peace and security. The resolution is a reminder that the Security Council holds a critical mandate in trust for the wider United Nations membership. The Security Council should therefore, in all its engagements, including the use of the veto, be accountable to the General Assembly.

While appreciating the contributions of the veto resolution, Kenya believes that a reform of the Security Council is what is needed to comprehensively address not just the use of the veto, but also the need to ensure that the Council is more representative and effectively responsive to today’s challenges. Kenya subscribes to the Common African Position espoused by the Ezulwini Consensus — a position that seeks to remedy the historical injustices of the non-representation and underrepresentation of the continent in the permanent member category and non-permanent member category, respectively. The Common African Position is also clear on the question of the veto. If the pursuit of the purposes of the United Nations Charter is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of States, then the veto is a contradiction that should be abolished. But if it is to be retained in a reformed Security Council, it must be extended to new permanent members with all

its attributes, including the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Kenya's continued support for the veto initiative as an accountability instrument that also contributes to the quest for a more effective rules-based multilateral order.

**Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil):** We thank President Csaba Kőrösi for convening this meeting, which marks one year since the adoption of the veto initiative (resolution 76/262). Pursuant to the initiative, the Security Council has submitted three special reports to the General Assembly. The debates so far have provided additional opportunities for transparency and accountability.

We recognize the merit in the intent to encourage the permanent members of the Security Council to further clarify to the wider membership their positions on peace and security matters. We should not lose perspective, however, on the fact that the veto initiative is limited in nature and will never be an appropriate response to the lack of effectiveness of the Security Council, which arises from its lack of appropriate representation and legitimacy.

It is our firm belief, therefore, that any attempt to improve the efficiency of the Security Council must have the Council's reform as the overarching framework for discussion. The Security Council cannot and will not be a legitimate and fit-for-purpose body as long as developing countries remain sidelined and whole regions, such as Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, are not represented in the category of permanent members.

We acknowledge that there is growing interest among Member States in discussing initiatives to limit and regulate the veto. Brazil supports the French-Mexican initiative to restrain the veto in case of mass atrocities. As one of the main elements of Security Council reform, any further regulation of the veto

must be discussed in tandem with the other clusters in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

We should not forget, however, that a veto is not in itself a failure to maintain peace and security. The veto has been enshrined in the Charter as a means to contain excesses of power and safeguard the international system against decisions to use force taken by one country or a group of countries. While it may cause frustration when it is invoked, the prerogative of the veto can help foster dialogue and negotiations. In that sense, the consistent use of the veto can be understood as an expression of the great divide that stalls the Council and harms the Council's efficiency. A veto is cast only after diplomacy and dialogue have failed. That is why reforming the veto alone will not solve the main problem that affects the Security Council, which is its anachronistic membership. The lack of legitimacy that arises from its inadequate representation makes the Council unfit to fulfil its responsibilities.

Finally, we would like to point out that we should refrain from changing the delicate balance between the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is worth mentioning that the Uniting for Peace mechanism was adopted to respond exceptionally to situations in which the Security Council fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It was officially enacted only 11 times in more than 70 years. That is not without reason. It means that the General Assembly has been urged to act only in extreme or exceptional circumstances. It should remain so.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in this debate. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 126.

*The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.*