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Provisional

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Thursday, 14 September 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Hasani/Mr. Hoxha.	(Albania)
<i>Members:</i>	Brazil.	Mr. França Danese
	China.	Mr. Zhang Jun
	Ecuador.	Mr. Pérez Loose
	France.	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon.	Mr. Biang
	Ghana.	Mr. Agyeman
	Japan.	Mr. Ishikane
	Malta.	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique.	Mr. Irachande Gouveia
	Russian Federation.	Mr. Nebenzia
	Switzerland.	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Arab Emirates.	Mrs. Nusseibeh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America.	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Advancing public-private humanitarian partnership

Letter dated 28 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/631/Rev.1)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0601 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Advancing public-private humanitarian partnership

Letter dated 28 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/631/Rev.1)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, India, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Thailand, Türkiye and Qatar to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Cindy McCain, Executive Director of the World Food Programme; Mr. Jared Cohen, President of Global Affairs and co-head of the Office of Applied Innovation at Goldman Sachs; and Mr. Michael Miebach, Chief Executive Officer at Mastercard.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite Her Excellency Mrs. Hedda Samson, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/631/Rev.1, which contains the text of a letter dated 28 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Ms. McCain.

Ms. McCain: I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to brief the Security Council on the vital importance of partnering with the private sector to

address humanitarian needs. I thank Albania for bringing this issue to the Council for the first time. I come from the private sector myself, so it is a topic I feel strongly about.

Thriving businesses and flourishing economies are the critical engines that will power global efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty and strengthen international peace and security. Yet, sadly, the humanitarian sector is today one of the world's biggest growth industries. Demand for World Food Programme (WFP) services is rising relentlessly, and this is happening across the United Nations and the wider humanitarian system. War, economic turmoil and, increasingly, climate change and environmental degradation are driving millions of people into poverty and despair each year.

As many as 783 million people do not know when — or if — they will eat again. And the WFP estimates that nearly 47 million people in over 50 countries are in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) phase 4: just one step away from famine. The number of children caught in the grip of starvation is overwhelming, and a staggering 45 million children under the age of five are now estimated to have acute malnutrition.

I wish I could tell Council members that the surging hunger seen in many parts of the world is the result of one-off causes and will recede as circumstances change. But it will not. We are now living with a series of concurrent and long-term crises that will continue to fuel global humanitarian needs. And that is happening just as funding for humanitarian relief operations is drying up. At the WFP we have had to make the agonizing choice to cut food rations for millions of vulnerable people, and more cuts are on the way. That is the humanitarian community's new reality — our new normal — and we will be dealing with the fallout for years to come. But it does not mean that we are powerless to end this human suffering, and history tells us that the private sector has a fundamental role to play.

The great strides made in the past 200 years in reducing global poverty have largely been thanks to economic growth powered by the private sector. More recently, diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis have been brought under control with effective public-private partnerships. Companies developed the medicines and vaccines, while Governments and humanitarian agencies got them where they needed to be.

As we confront a new reality of sustained humanitarian needs and shrinking budgets, it is time to rethink how we engage and find new role models for cross-sectoral partnerships. We need business leaders' help to develop the smart innovations and solutions required to both build resilience and tackle the root causes of hunger and poverty so that we can reduce humanitarian needs over the long term. Private enterprise must lead efforts to build essential infrastructure, supply affordable goods and services, spur innovation, expand skills and create new employment opportunities. And it is essential that local businesses and private enterprise are front and centre in that work.

Everywhere that the WFP has operations, we rely on the ingenuity and entrepreneurialism of private-sector partners to help us deliver on the ground. Everyone benefits from that approach. Reducing poverty and hunger is a necessary precondition for healthy workforces, functioning markets and sustainable economic growth and prosperity. When people and communities thrive, so do businesses. We at the WFP have a track record of partnering with companies that share our vision of a world without hunger, and we are proud that they trust us to deliver it. Partners such as Amazon, DHL and Takeda have worked with us to reinforce our world-class supply-chain and logistics networks, ensuring that they serve the wider humanitarian community even more effectively. We have also worked with analytics firms to improve our data analysis capabilities, with food companies to improve the nutrition of our food baskets and with artificial-intelligence experts on a satellite monitoring system to assess disaster zones remotely. In addition, the WFP uses its own economic and purchasing power to support business expansion, job creation and community resilience in the countries where we operate. Last year we sourced 50 per cent of our food commodities locally and regionally, injecting \$1.6 billion into local markets.

We are also the world's largest humanitarian provider of cash and digital payments. Last year we distributed more than \$3.3 billion to 56 million vulnerable people in 72 countries — capital that supports local businesses and economies. That is transformational. That programme has its roots in the innovative partnership launched when the WFP and Mastercard joined forces more than a decade ago. Mastercard shared its payments and technology expertise with us to help us improve and scale up our systems for delivering digital food vouchers. The Mastercard team has been supporting

our mission to end hunger ever since, and I thank Mr. Miebach for that.

But there is still so much more to do — more that the humanitarian, private and public sectors can achieve by working together in partnership, powering innovation in science and technology, building new capacities, sharing expertise and acumen and mobilizing the resources and political will needed to confront the new reality we are living with. None of us has all the answers. But our sectors have many attributes in common — a clear focus, a strong commitment to delivering results and a sense of urgency about the task at hand. Our collective challenge is to ramp up the ambitious multisectoral partnerships that will enable us to tackle hunger and poverty effectively and reduce humanitarian needs over the long term.

The Security Council's responsibility for international peace and security will determine the success of that shared endeavour. In the most fragile places, such as Somalia, which I visited in May, the private sector is often what keeps extremely vulnerable populations afloat. But it also leaves them vulnerable to shocks such as the war in Ukraine or sanctions regimes. The Council's responsibility to protect this space is therefore all the more important, and I urge members to be resolute in using its powers and influence to create the broader conditions that can enable public-private partnerships to flourish. Member State Governments should also use their convening power and public-policy levers to create an environment conducive to public-private partnerships so that they can drive grass-roots development and be a forceful engine of opportunity for vulnerable communities. The international financial institutions can support those efforts with capital finance, especially in relation to fragile States.

Finally, and critically, we need the private sector to step up and embrace its responsibility to help build the societies that enable their enterprises to succeed. If we are serious about tackling climate change, delivering decent sanitation, health and housing and opening up new education and employment opportunities, we need business to be on board. Private-sector profitability can and must go hand in hand with the Sustainable Development Goals. I know from my own experience that it makes good business sense. So let us work together to build new models of collaboration, encompassing in-kind support, technology transfers, skills and personnel exchanges, cutting-edge programme design and rigorous systems of evidence and impact evaluation.

The road ahead is long, and the challenges are daunting. But we still have an opportunity to halt the relentless growth in global humanitarian needs. With determination, innovation and above all cross-sectoral collaboration, we can successfully navigate our way through a new and challenging landscape and bring new hope to vulnerable communities around the world.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Cohen.

Mr. Cohen: It is a privilege to appear before the Security Council today. This meeting follows a crisis that happened 760 days ago, 7,000 miles away. It has largely faded from the headlines, but today is an important reminder of the ongoing plight of the Afghan people and continuing crises around the world. We all remember when Kabul fell to the Taliban. Hundreds of thousands of Afghans were put at risk. Most of them had nowhere to go, and a significant portion of the world's countries closed their doors. But a few countries opened them up, including some represented around this table today. I remember at the time talking to journalists, philanthropists and a number of world leaders, asking what could be done. Overnight, that group formed what could only be described as a multisectoral, multinational network of goodwill. It was Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, then Foreign Minister of Qatar and now Prime Minister, who mobilized his country. Qatar evacuated, resettled and transported tens of thousands of Afghan women, girls and civil-society leaders to safety. Sheikh Mohammed and his team did so with extraordinary attention to detail, and his staff worked through some extreme diplomatic complexities, as well as physical risks on the ground, to achieve those goals. After the evacuations, the then President of Iraq, Burhan Salih, brought hundreds of Afghan university students to the American University of Iraq in Sulaymaniyah. And in bringing those hundreds of students to Iraq, he managed to ensure that while the Taliban occupied their university campus, those students missed not more than two weeks of school. Prime Minister Edi Rama of Albania personally greeted Afghan refugees on the tarmac in Tirana. He transformed some of the country's crown jewels, its precious resort towns, into new homes so that Afghans could rebuild their lives. I want to thank Albania for championing humanitarianism through its presidency of the Council and thereafter.

Those are just a few examples of the people and countries that stepped up two years ago. Around the world, countless chief executive officers (CEOs), as well as individuals with no business interests and no connections, covered planes, resettlement, living expenses and so much more. I think the fact that I last addressed the Security Council more than a year ago as an executive at Google (see S/PV.9069) and that today, a year later, I am addressing it as an executive at Goldman Sachs, is just one small point that shows the breadth of private-sector commitment to humanitarian assistance and crisis response. What happened in Afghanistan was nothing short of a tragedy, and in many respects represented humankind at its worst, particularly considering that young girls are now no longer allowed to go to school. But responses such as those I have mentioned were a reminder to me, and I hope to everyone in the Chamber, that such moments can also bring out the best of humankind and what we can all achieve together. That is why I am here today.

The task of crisis response is growing much more urgent. The world is facing the greatest moment of geopolitical uncertainty in more than two decades, perhaps since the Cold War. But we cannot let humanitarian crises become even more geopoliticized than they already are. The mission of this body is the maintenance of international peace and security. Many of today's crises would look fairly familiar to the leaders who founded the Council 78 years ago — pandemics, food shortages, floods and of course the tragic 6.8 magnitude earthquake that occurred in Morocco just last Friday. Other challenges are much newer — cyberattacks, climate change, disinformation and misinformation and even lethal drugs such as fentanyl. And it is no secret that Russia's war on Ukraine and the competition between great Powers are making the Council's objective that much more challenging. Our historic institutions must rise to today's challenges. Ambassador McCain highlighted how the World Food Programme does that, in keeping with humanitarian norms and principles.

I want to highlight two significant groups of global players that did not have the same potential when this body was founded 78 years ago. My hope in doing that is that when the Council thinks about public-private partnership and humanitarian response, we can broaden ideas about which public players matter and what private-sector stakeholders can do.

The first category that I want to highlight is an emerging group of nations that I call geopolitical swing States. They are stable, thriving countries that, while they may not be permanent members of the Security Council, have global agendas and the will, agency and capacity to turn those agendas into realities. Whether it is because of their differentiated position with supply chains, their advantageous geography or resources or their particular leaders' vision of their role in the world, those countries are having a tremendous impact while at the same time expanding their ambitions around the globe.

My main message is that many of the biggest challenges in today's era of great-Power competition will not be solved by great Powers alone. I believe it is a golden moment for geopolitical swing States to step up, lead and expand their roles. I have highlighted Qatar's extraordinary role in Afghanistan and the difference that it made. Prime Minister Kishida Fumio of Japan has not only pledged more than \$7 billion in aid for Ukraine, his statements of support and visit to Kyiv have changed how much of the world thinks about the war. He linked peace and security in Eastern Europe to peace and security globally. In many instances, geopolitical swing States can accomplish things the great Powers cannot. They offer new leaders who better represent a changing world and have the flexible resources, diplomatic leverage and credibility that can enable them to play a meaningful leadership role, particularly within the Global South. And we have just seen India do that by hosting a successful Group of 20 (G20) Summit on the heels of Indonesia's similar hosting the previous year. Those geopolitical swing States often function with the speed and agility of business and have become some of the most reliable partners for businesses looking to play a role in crisis management.

That brings me to the second group that I want to highlight — the private sector. A growing number of companies have global interests and responsibilities. The revenues of many multinationals rival the gross domestic product of some G20 countries. The largest employers in the world are businesses as well as Governments. Five American companies have more than 500,000 workers, as do many of their global counterparts. That means they have more employees than as many as 20 States members of the United Nations have citizens.

Globalization did not just connect the world. It put the private sector at the geopolitical table. But that seat

did not come with a clear playbook. Today's global firms have responsibilities to our shareholders, clients, staff and communities, and to the rules-based international order that makes it possible for us to do business. It is a very complicated labyrinth for us to navigate. I will therefore offer some principles for how we can fulfil those responsibilities during crises.

First, we should not scramble to reinvent the wheel every single time. Drawing on institutional memory may be the difference between getting ahead of a crisis or thousands of people dying. We need more sustained partnerships with one another and the public sector.

Secondly, we need to act with speed and innovate in real time. Resources are not always in the hands of philanthropists and non-governmental organizations. Governments have the principal responsibility, but they can be slow to respond, particularly when events are far away and complicated by perplexing geopolitical dynamics. At Goldman Sachs, our primary philanthropic vehicle for responding to humanitarian crises is something that we call GS Gives. To date, it has deployed more than \$2.2 billion, working with 9,400 non-profits and with an impact in 140 different countries around the world.

Thirdly, local connections matter. Goldman Sachs relies on its people. We have more than 45,000 employees in 42 different countries. Our second largest office outside New York City is in India, where we have more than 8,000 employees. They are our primary responsibility. When a crisis hits anywhere in the world, our people are often directly affected, but they can also help direct our response, and they do so. For example, we have many Ukrainian colleagues and approximately 800 staff in Poland. They have volunteered at refugee centres in Warsaw. They have donated medical supplies and first-aid kits and funded scholarships and food deliveries. They have sheltered Ukrainians in their own homes. Some flew in from as far away as Frankfurt and even Hong Kong to aid in the response. We have also supported international organizations such as UNICEF and local non-profits such as Ukraine Global Scholars.

Fourthly, expertise matters. If the CEOs of Fortune 100 companies were here, they would tell members that they can offer much more than funding. Their expertise sets them apart in business and in humanitarian response. As an example, the White House announced last March that the United States would welcome more than 100,000 Ukrainian refugees — a historic objective.

But the technological know-how to make that happen quickly is not always in Government. It is in the private sector. That is why, working with something called Welcome.US, engineers at Goldman Sachs — we have more than 10,000 — built Welcome Connect. It is a platform to match American sponsors who want to help with Ukrainian refugees. And we built it to serve as a foundation for future refugee-resettlement initiatives. We have seen other companies, including Mastercard, rise to the challenge. The Council will be hearing more from Mr. Miebach, who I think is one of the great CEOs we have in this country. We can all do more.

I want to underline one more way that we can do that. Our business is business. It makes everything that I have mentioned possible and is also part of our response to crises. In our case, we work through global markets to allocate capital where and when it is needed. One example is that after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, our 1,700-person staff in Tokyo were at the office, dealing with extreme market volatility. They provided equity hedging to insurance clients and foreign-exchange liquidity through the Group of Seven intervention. Those actions helped drive down the yen and supported Japan's export-focused economy during a very trying period.

The private sector cannot do what Governments do. That is not what I am suggesting, and neither are we substitutes for non-governmental organizations. I am not suggesting that either. But business is part of the solution, and economic growth is the foundation of sustainable recovery.

I will leave members with three final thoughts. The first is that none of this is historic. It is the scale and the opportunity that are historic. We have done it before. During the Marshall Plan, businesses played a crucial role in Europe's recovery, and we did it with far fewer companies in a much less globalized world.

Secondly, we are ready to do it again. Today's companies are identifying and embracing the responsibilities and opportunities of geopolitics. We are not afraid to do so. And it is a necessity of doing business.

Thirdly, we are looking to the Council for leadership and partnership. I ask that the Council put the private sector on the agenda during the high-level week. We are ready to take everyone's calls.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Miebach.

Mr. Miebach: I thank the members of the Council for advancing the issue of how the world can address its humanitarian needs. Many companies work with United Nations agencies to tackle critical challenges to peace and security. I am therefore humbled by the invitation to address the Council and share our views on how we can work better together. There is no doubt that it is a critical topic, as we have heard from Ms. McCain and Mr. Cohen. We need only look at Morocco and Libya this week to see the overwhelming need for coordinated responses.

Let me start with a thought on why companies need to be involved. It is based on a shared, foundational belief that businesses cannot succeed in a failing world. Humanitarian crises affect our fellow citizens and sometimes our colleagues. The work of supporting global stability and predictability can therefore become personal. During my time today, I will share observations and learnings on three aspects that can encourage companies like ours to help those who need it most.

First, partnerships are not a new concept. However, the challenges stretch beyond the capabilities of any one sector. Coordination is key. Humanitarian relief has long been the domain of Government, philanthropic and development institutions. The private sector was seen as a source of financial donations for supplies and in-kind aid. That has changed. Money is still important, but companies can offer much more. The private sector stands ready to tackle the challenges at hand in partnership with the public sector. We can use our core competencies to strengthen infrastructure, innovate new approaches and deliver solutions at scale. When we succeed in that work, it unlocks greater inclusion, equality and most importantly resilience. That is key, especially for the most vulnerable, as there will be more crises and challenges coming our way.

But we can and should change the dynamics. We encourage the United Nations to be even more direct and deliberate in its outreach to the private sector. When like-minded groups come together, we can align on objectives. That clarifies roles and responsibilities and enables companies to do what they do best — solving problems by building and deploying solutions with commercial rigour. It is about putting the whole of our businesses into service. That includes activating our creativity, technology, relationships, data science

and know-how to make it all happen again and again. There are many partnership examples to consider, but I think back to the surge in the coronavirus disease in India in the spring of 2021. Many companies rushed in to help, but they were all working in silos. It took the Government and selected non-governmental organizations to identify what the actual needs were. From there, roles could be assigned so that the elements with the right impact — doctors, field hospitals, beds and respirators — could be delivered to where they were needed most. Mastercard was right in the middle of all that and saw the power of a coordinated response. With structured public and private partnerships, we see that one plus one can equal three.

Secondly, we all know that technology can be transformational. When directed in the right ways, technology can grow economies and expand opportunities. But we should also clearly understand that technology is not simply an app or even an end product. It is a tool that can serve as a foundation — an infrastructure — to do more. That digital infrastructure has even greater impact when it reinforces privacy, trust and equal access in a commercially sustainable way.

We need to ensure that technology is relevant to the people who use it. We cannot simply take existing solutions and bring them to new places. There needs to be a very deep understanding of the local context to appreciate how a solution can actually solve the problem at hand. That approach has helped the World Food Programme — and we thank Ms. McCain for its partnership — and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, among many other organizations, to implement digital cash and voucher assistance programmes in a way that makes a difference locally. Digital cash programmes have since become a fast, transparent, secure and more effective way to deliver life-saving assistance at the last mile. Digital cash helps the recipients maintain a sense of dignity, even in vulnerable situations, because they individually decide how to spend those funds.

The value of technology also lies in making complex matters simple. Let us think about the sheer amount of data that exists. We can use technology to identify trends and make better decisions. For example, when a natural disaster strikes, data can direct people to the services they need. After the recent wildfires in Hawaii, data helped people find nearby fuel stations and other businesses that were still open. The same type of insights can be used in many other ways, including

helping refugees determine the best places to resettle, as in the example Mr. Cohen just gave us. Let us challenge ourselves to uncover the ways in which technology can be best used to help the most vulnerable. Let us leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and generative AI and other emerging technologies to do that.

The third dimension is capacity-building. It is about driving the shift from response to preparedness by reinforcing the skills and resources that the most vulnerable need to survive and thrive. Let me illustrate that with an example. In the Global South, smallholder farmers represent 80 per cent of the agricultural industry. Their processes have remained virtually the same for generations, and many struggle to earn a living wage. There is potential to help farmers to build for their futures. One example is Christina Kibonde, a coffee farmer in Uganda. For generations, her family was dependent on middlemen to reach buyers. As a result, she had a very limited view of market prices, which restricted her earnings and opportunities. Technology and partnerships helped break that cycle. A technology platform called Farm Pass, developed by Mastercard, created new access. The technology ensured that Christina was digitally included. Today she is connected directly with buyers, negotiating the best price for her beans. That digital record — including getting paid electronically — gives her access to credit to expand her operations. Christina is now more prepared for what may come, and so too are millions of other smallholder farmers activating that platform. It is a simple solution with the potential for long-term impact, and a powerful example of capacity-building. We must invest in key local capacities, which include education, financial literacy, cybersecurity skills and more, and do so ahead of time — not only in response to crises. When we are successful in that work, we will enable more people to create more opportunities for their long-term future.

Even with our collective effort, we will not be able to stop disasters. But we can help more people prepare to be more resilient and have a say in their own future. Thanks to engagements and dialogue such as the one we are having today, I am optimistic about our collective ability to deliver for our fellow citizens, and I am grateful to the Albanian presidency for hosting our dialogue. As I said, the United Nations has a willing and committed partner in the private sector. We just need to be engaged. We stand ready to put our technology to work to solve real challenges. We are happy to leverage

our competencies to strengthen skills to build more capacity towards greater resilience. That is what the world needs.

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

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Albania.

I would like to thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), Ms. McCain, for her comprehensive presentation. I applaud her personal commitment to the cause and the extraordinarily important work that the WFP is doing in these challenging times. I also want to thank Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach. We commend them for their personal work in the field of philanthropy and humanitarian assistance, and we are also grateful for their involvement and contribution to the initiative that we are gathered here to discuss.

The world is facing an unprecedented level of humanitarian need, driven by conflict, climate change and the enduring impact of the coronavirus disease. In its mid-year review of the *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023*, the United Nations assessed that nearly \$55 billion is required to assist 249 million people in need. Despite continued generosity and resource mobilization efforts, the current gap between what is needed and what is available through donor contributions is huge. But that is not a new phenomenon. Year after year, crisis after crisis, we are faced with a shortage of funds and available aid, despite the generosity of donors. It is a shortage that has immense consequences for millions upon millions of people affected by conflict, natural catastrophes, climate change and the food-security crisis.

We believe that a greater and more structured contribution by the private sector can go a long way to addressing that pressing shortfall. It is not only material resources such as funds, food and medicine that the private sector can contribute to that important effort, which has a newfound urgency in the context of the war in Ukraine and the disruption in food supplies that the war has produced. The private sector can also assist by offering access to cutting-edge technology, research and development and operational capabilities. With the private sector's expertise and capabilities in fields such as logistics, telecommunications, transport and data analysis, humanitarian actors will gain improved efficiency and effectiveness in their response efforts.

As the Security Council and the United Nations address accelerating humanitarian needs in conflict zones or in areas affected by natural disasters, we believe that it is imperative that we find ways to strengthen the role of the private sector in humanitarian operations. Albania also believes that it is imperative that we identify the most problematic gaps and key areas for improvement in crisis response while, at the same time, exploring the mechanisms through which the role of corporations or philanthropies in the crisis response ecosystem can be formalized.

Albania first started exploring the possibility of greater involvement by the private sector in humanitarian operations in a genuine crisis setting. As is well known and was mentioned earlier, beginning in 2021, Albania welcomed thousands of Afghan women, men and children. My country is a small country that lacks the resources and infrastructure needed to provide shelter in dignified conditions for such a large number of people. However, what we lacked in resources we made up by adopting a new approach to humanitarian crisis management that aimed to create synergies between our public resources and those of private actors in order to provide for thousands of desperate people. Working closely with Schmidt Futures and the Yalda Hakim Foundation — Mr. Cohen was personally involved in all those efforts — we managed to conceive of a new model for humanitarian operations that did not simply enable us to provide accommodations, food and care for our Afghan guests but, I believe, also provided us with an out-of-the-box idea on how crisis management and humanitarian aid can work if public and private actors join forces.

During our humanitarian operations, we saw first-hand how efficient the private sector can be in providing humanitarian assistance and essential logistical support in a timely manner, if we partner up with them. It was from that experience that the idea for a public-private humanitarian partnership was born. Albania has worked hard with its partners, and in particular Schmidt Futures, to explore the new idea and how public-private humanitarian partnerships can be advanced by building the private sector humanitarian alliance. The alliance is conceived of as a platform whose primary mission will be to mobilize resources more efficiently within the first few days of any crisis situation that requires humanitarian aid. It will connect private sector and philanthropy actors to international organizations, or non-governmental organizations, so

that the necessary aid can flow through their existing channels and mechanisms within the crucial first days — all of which will be done in full compliance with the United Nations principles of humanitarian aid and those of all its crisis-response agencies. We are happy and proud of what we have achieved so far, together with Schmidt Futures and other partners, including the founding members of the alliance and a number of representatives here in attendance.

Throughout our work on that platform, we have been thrilled to see the level of generosity and motivation of major private sector companies and philanthropies. We believe that advancing the idea of a public-private humanitarian partnership is not only necessary, but the right thing to do. We look forward to the consolidation of the alliance and its work in the months and years ahead for the benefit of a better response to the growing needs worldwide. By working together, we can maximize the impact of assistance, save more lives and build resilient communities in the face of adversity.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on this important issue. I also thank Executive Director McCain, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for enriching our discussion with their thoughts and insights.

Global humanitarian needs driven primarily by conflict and climate change are today placing unpredictable pressure on the global humanitarian architecture. Emergency humanitarian assistance is often left with the challenge of addressing multi-year humanitarian emergencies. They include, inter alia, major displacement, food insecurity and protection crises. Modest resourcing and increasing gaps in funding also continue to exacerbate an already-difficult situation. As such, twenty-first-century humanitarian action will require a realignment of its operating modalities. The private sector can play a central role in providing technological support, resources and sustainable solutions to humanitarian challenges. However, the new partnerships will also require robust delineations and safeguards that preserve the fundamental principles of humanitarian action.

The most effective way to reduce pressure on the humanitarian system lies in the political resolution

of conflicts. From Syria to the occupied Palestinian territories, Ukraine, Mali and the Sudan, protracted conflicts compound humanitarian needs. They heighten the population's vulnerability by degrading social services and critically damaging civilian infrastructure. Finding just and lasting solutions to such conflicts will have a dramatically positive impact for both affected populations and the stability of the humanitarian sector globally. Until that happens, humanitarian organizations must continue to be supported and resourced to save as many lives as possible. In that respect, increased and unearmarked funding for United Nations agencies, international organizations and international non-governmental organizations should be prioritized to depoliticize aid spending and enable humanitarians to work where and when they are most needed. That is an area in which the private sector could greatly support global humanitarian needs. Flexible, multi-year and core financial contributions from the private sector would go a long way in bridging the current major gaps in humanitarian response plans across the globe at a time when it is greatly needed. However, stringent safeguards must be put in place to ensure the legitimate origin of all funds. The generation of such resources must also be aligned to, and not be in conflict with, principled humanitarian action.

Public-private partnerships in the humanitarian space have the potential to strengthen the logistics capacity of humanitarian organizations. They can increase efficiency across their operations, from recruitment to programme delivery, payments, partnership and research into the development of new technologies required to meet current and future humanitarian needs. The incremental advancements in public-private partnerships to date are encouraging. Nevertheless, there are numerous ways that the private sector can immediately contribute to humanitarian efforts, showcasing its commitment to supporting principled humanitarian action.

In the technology and communications sector, private sector partners could provide more affordable and efficient communication systems and renewable energy solutions to humanitarian organizations. That would significantly enhance humanitarian operations in regions with poor connectivity and infrastructure. In the medical field, reducing the prices of essential drugs and medical equipment would enable humanitarian medical teams to extend their support and operations to a greater number of health centres. In the banking

and financial sector, minimizing the costs of financial transfers would facilitate the rapid allocation of resources to field missions. Having an expert understanding of humanitarian exceptions in sanctions regimes would also contribute to that end. Those steps, in many cases, are what humanitarian partners have been calling on the private sector to help them with for decades.

Within emergency humanitarian action, we must ensure that our focus remains on delivering support to people. That must be in line with the long-established principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity. Although the motivations of the private sector and humanitarians may not be immediately apparent, we are confident that there are various possibilities for cooperation.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): I would like to begin by thanking all our briefers for their very insightful remarks and ideas today. I also want to commend you, Foreign Minister, and the Albanian presidency on your initiative in hosting today's open debate. Public-private partnerships are crucial in the humanitarian sector, and meetings such as this one are an important opportunity to learn how we can all be doing better. We welcome the Albanian presidency's innovation in bringing this topic to the forefront at the Security Council and the connectivity platform it has proposed, which will no doubt have enormous impact.

Year after year, global humanitarian needs overwhelm the generous contributions of donors. This year alone, the United Nations has appealed for over \$54 billion, and until now 80 per cent of those funds remain unfulfilled. This disconnect matches what the briefers today have made clear — we are facing a system in crisis, and the architecture of the past can no longer keep pace with the crises of the present. However, as Mr. Cohen said, the institutional memory exists, and we do not need to reinvent the wheel. Narrowing the gap means ushering in a modified system, one in which public-private humanitarian partnerships are no longer considered simply useful additions to the core of humanitarian work but are a crucial part of that core work. That shift in model should be informed by the lessons of past successes and failures.

Earlier this year, the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey forced us to confront the gap in our capabilities. Our Foreign Minister, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, travelled to the region to try to

offer his support, and he witnessed those gaps first-hand. That scenario has tragically played out again in recent days in the Kingdom of Morocco and Libya as we witnessed the devastating impacts of this week's earthquake and flooding. Our thoughts and condolences are with the families and loved ones of those lost in that tragedy.

In the aftermath of a natural disaster, Governments and first responders need to launch complex processes and responses and then scale them up, all the while gathering and assessing information that feeds into that response. It all unfolds in real time, and every second counts. It is akin to building a plane while flying. Embracing novel approaches and technologies is a way to learn from such experiences and leverage better responses, as Mr. Miebach outlined so clearly in his remarks.

In response to what we have seen over the past decade, the United Arab Emirates has been developing a digital platform to support Governments' ability to better harness international support in the wake of natural disasters. By serving as a central information exchange and integrating advances in artificial intelligence, including machine learning, this digital tool could be used by disaster-hit countries to specify the types of aid needed at specific locations and in what quantities, so they get what they need when they need it. Why? Because we have seen first-hand that that gap exists. We look forward to working on this with Governments, the private sector and humanitarian organizations in the coming months, to launch a new tool to turbocharge our crisis response capabilities.

We have learned in our own country through the International Humanitarian City, the world's largest humanitarian logistics hub, why agility matters so much in crisis response, but we need to see agility writ large across the humanitarian sector. Based in the United Arab Emirates, the International Humanitarian City is host to 62 humanitarian organizations, including major United Nations agencies, and 17 private sector companies. It works closely with the private sector, and its use of new technologies and public-private partnerships is enabling aid to reach those in need as quickly as possible.

Digital tools developed at the International Humanitarian City are now being rolled out around the world. However, even with the right tools in place, we must shape an environment that is agile and ready to

bridge the gap between the public and private sectors in a humanitarian crisis. In the past, those types of partnerships have not been without limitation, however. At the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, we lost crucial time. Across the world, people died while countries reverted to old habits in the race for vaccines. Meanwhile, protracted disagreements over patents and intellectual property continued. We must ensure that in a crisis, a system is in place in which private sector organizations are fully incentivized and enabled to partner with Governments in the non-discriminatory delivery of support, and that support must be equally accessible to all.

In the case of the United Arab Emirates, our world-class aviation and logistics industries, with companies like Etihad Airways, Emirates and DP World, played a significant role in facilitating the country's response to COVID-19, but also in our global response. At the height of the pandemic, the United Arab Emirates sent 192 flights with United Arab Emirates aid directly to 135 countries. Public-private partnerships, particularly in a crisis, are thus not only good practice, but being able to leverage that network has helped save lives. We now need to use the time when we are not in urgent crisis to adapt those lessons to our future responses and institutionalize that partnership.

Finally, we cannot forget that existing humanitarian needs continue to be amplified by our changing climate. With a mismatch between the scale of the climate challenge and the financing to solve it, private sector organizations and capital are key to turning the tide on decarbonization, adaptation and mitigation efforts. Understanding this, earlier this month the United Arab Emirates announced a new public-private initiative between companies in the United Arab Emirates and Africa50. The aim is to deploy \$4.5 billion to accelerate clean energy projects across the African continent.

Over the past five years, the United Arab Emirates private sector has contributed more than \$250 million to humanitarian efforts globally, and as a country, we will continue to do our part, leading on the development of the public-private humanitarian partnership model until the necessity and reality of global humanitarian contributions are one and the same.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, Mr. President, I welcome you as you preside over today's meeting. I would also like to thank Executive

Director McCain, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for their briefings just now.

The humanitarian cause, as a common endeavour of all humankind, can build the greatest consensus across different civilizations. The international community should practice true multilateralism, promote international humanitarianism, unite all actors, including the public and private sectors and civil society, step up investment, jointly face challenges and continuously improve the humanitarian situation in the relevant countries and regions.

First, we should keep up humanitarian investment. The current global humanitarian landscape faces unprecedented difficulties and challenges. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance report released this June, 360 million people worldwide need humanitarian assistance, with a yawning humanitarian funding gap of \$43 billion. With limited access to timely assistance, women and children in many regions suffer from hunger and displacement, which is heart-wrenching.

Today's meeting calls for public-private humanitarian partnership, which can be a useful complement to scaling up humanitarian financing. For a long time, multinational corporations have benefited immensely from the resources and markets of developing countries and thus bear the responsibility for helping the relevant countries out of their humanitarian predicament and have a duty to make greater contributions to the livelihood and well-being of those countries' peoples. At the same time, official assistance from developed countries is the main channel for international humanitarian financing. Their financial commitments should be fulfilled on time and in full. The participation of the private sector should not lead to Governments cutting their investments or shifting responsibility. It is worth noting that, in some conflict-affected regions and countries, humanitarian funding is being cut back arbitrarily, exacerbating the humanitarian plight of the local population — something that should not happen.

Secondly, we should adhere to fundamental humanitarian principles. Humanitarian actions should be carried out in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and in full respect for the sovereignty, laws and customs of recipient countries. Despite their different natures, both public

and private institutions should adhere to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs when providing international humanitarian assistance and should not attach any political preconditions to their aid or impose their will on others, let alone seek ulterior political interests in that process. A few countries, under the pretext of democracy and human rights, have all too easily cut or even suspended humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and other countries, which will only victimize innocent civilians, worsen the socioeconomic crisis in Afghanistan and contravene the spirit of humanitarianism.

For quite some time at the Security Council, there has been constant controversy over the issue of humanitarian access. We advocate against complicating simple issues, especially politicizing issues of a professional nature. We should resolve differences through dialogue and consultation, guide our actions on the basis of national conditions of the countries concerned and find effective ways to ensure that humanitarian supplies reach those in need quickly and safely, without hindrance.

Thirdly, we should establish efficient partnerships on an equal footing. Ultimately, humanitarian assistance is to be effective and successful in benefiting the recipient country, to be measured by how well it is received among the population in that country. When determining priorities, modalities and projects, humanitarian agencies should not only communicate with key donors, but also pay more heed to the views of recipient countries and various local actors. The private sector, in its participation in humanitarian action, should make use of its comparative advantages and be more relevant to the actual needs of the countries concerned. It has been proven that by effectively increasing the voice and representation of recipient countries, humanitarian actions will be delivered in a more efficient and targeted manner, with definitive results that will better stand the test of time.

For some time, international humanitarian assistance has been overly focused on certain countries. Humanitarian assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Haiti, South Sudan and the Sahel are severely underfunded. This is not normal and cannot go on like this. We should therefore promote coordination among United Nations humanitarian agencies, allocate resources fairly and rationally and help all countries in need.

Fourthly, we should promote humanitarianism and development in an integrated manner. Humanitarian crises in some countries are rooted in their deteriorating economic situation and the heightened threat from climate change and energy and food crises, among other situations, which all boils down to development at the end of the day. The key to reducing humanitarian needs and dependence on humanitarian assistance lies in people-centred development. In some countries, despite decades-long international humanitarian actions and significant investments in human and material resources, the humanitarian situation has yet to be fundamentally alleviated, which merits careful reflection.

China is of the view that we must look beyond traditional means of humanitarian assistance and attach greater importance to the path of economic development. We must go further than short-term help and seek long-term fundamental solutions. We must rise above external blood transfusions and enhance the ability to organically generate blood. Humanitarian action should be effectively dovetailed with the development strategies of the countries concerned, with greater investment in infrastructure, industrial and agricultural development, education and training, among others. The private sector has a unique role to play in promoting trade and investment, financing cooperation, creating jobs, thereby aligning humanitarian assistance more closely with sustainable development. It is worth noting that illegal unilateral sanctions severely affect the ability of the public sector of the countries concerned to provide basic services such as health care, education and the provision of food. They interfere with the private sector's regular activities in trade, investment and business operation. As such, they have become the biggest obstacle to public-private humanitarian cooperation. The international community should jointly urge relevant countries to immediately lift unilateral sanctions, eliminate their negative effects and create favourable conditions for international humanitarian actions.

During his recent meeting with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Beijing, President Xi Jinping pointed out that China is an active supporter, participant and contributor to the international humanitarian cause. By putting forward the collective Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, China hopes

to work with other countries to promote economic development, better livelihoods, mutual benefits and win-win scenarios and to contribute Chinese ideas and solutions in order to strengthen global governance and address humanitarian issues.

Together with the international community, we stand ready to continue to actively participate in multilateral and bilateral humanitarian relief operations and continue to provide support and assistance, within our capacity, to countries in need.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): I welcome you to the Security Council, Mr. President. I thank Albania for organizing this open debate. It is an opportunity for us to reflect on innovative ways to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian action. I also thank the briefers for their insightful remarks.

Humanitarian action is not a means to put a conflict to an end. It is a way to mitigate the suffering of the most vulnerable, often in contexts of war. The more effective the humanitarian aid, the more lives can be spared, the more hope there will be after the conflict.

The 2005 humanitarian reform agenda was a crucial step in that direction. The cluster approach improved the distribution of tasks and made responsibilities clearer. Nevertheless, the clusters are not self-sufficient. Humanitarian providers do not operate in isolation from economic actors and from the communities they assist. They depend on suppliers, transportation and logistics, banks, information and communication technologies and a myriad of other services to discharge their responsibilities. Public-private partnerships are already a reality on the ground and exist out of sheer necessity. We must explore even further the private sector's potential to support humanitarian assistance.

We must also ensure that the private sector will have appropriate conditions to participate in humanitarian assistance. For instance, in contexts where sanctions apply, the fear of being held criminally accountable have impelled banks and other companies to hinder the provision of neutral assistance by humanitarian providers. The United Nations Special Rapporteurs on counter-terrorism and human rights and on the impact of unilateral coercive measures have pointed out that reality in various reports.

Brazil reiterates the importance of resolution 2664 (2022), which addresses the causes of overcompliance of counter-terrorist financing regulations that impedes

the provision of impartial humanitarian assistance. We are concerned about what we perceive as a trend towards the growing politicization of humanitarian responses and the selective application of international humanitarian law. That trend is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of neutrality, independence, impartiality and humanity, which are inherent to humanitarian action.

Brazil has seen an increase in the influx of refugees and migrants from different regions of the world. To rise up to the challenges brought by this situation, the Brazilian Government took several measures to assist those in need. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, without any kind of discrimination, benefit from full access to public services, including health care and vaccination, regardless of migratory status. We have facilitated procedures to grant humanitarian visas to a number of nationalities. Our migration law has been reformed to facilitate regularization and socioeconomic integration. Our refugee law is well advanced and deeply rooted in humanitarian principles.

We have also established partnerships with the private sector to enable the integration of refugees and migrants into our society. We have created a database of refugees' and migrants' *curricula vitae* to which companies searching for employees have direct access. Furthermore, the Government helped to set up a fund, supported by private donors, to finance part of the so-called interiorization strategy. That aims to relocate Venezuelans who wish to do so from the northern border of Brazil to other cities in the country. In close partnership with civil society, international organizations and the private sector, it has already benefited more than 100,000 migrants, relocated to nearly 1,000 Brazilian cities throughout the country, offering them improved opportunities for socioeconomic integration.

A whole-of-society approach to humanitarian aid strengthens our power to assist people in the grip of conflict, natural disasters and forced displacement. Let us make full use of that powerful tool.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and useful debate. And let me start by thanking Executive Director McCain, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for their informative briefings.

On Tuesday, we rose to offer our condolences to the people of Libya and Morocco following their losses (see

S/PV.9415). I do that again today, but this is also a tragic reminder of the need for us to explore every avenue to maximize our humanitarian response to the many challenges the world faces today against a backdrop of soaring humanitarian need. And in that, the role of the private sector is becoming increasingly important. As we have heard, private actors can provide knowledge, expertise and investment to tackle humanitarian need, reduce threats and build resilience.

The case of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker in Yemen is a good example of a private-public partnership that had real impact to an item on the Council's agenda. By working together, public and private actors removed over 1 million barrels of oil from the decaying *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. In doing so, they averted a major environmental, humanitarian and economic catastrophe.

I want to highlight three further areas in which public and private actors can work together in this spirit.

First, we can bring together all efforts to sustain peace. As the Council has heard many times, conflict is the main driver of humanitarian need. The private sector can play a role in peacebuilding and preventing conflict. For example, the United Kingdom has supported the development of peace bonds, a new investment category to develop finance for peace. We should continue to champion public-private collaboration in support of international peace and security.

Secondly, we can use all the tools at our disposal to get ahead of crises before they hit. In that context, the United Kingdom has collaborated with humanitarian and private actors on disaster risk financing. We have supported the risk transfer mechanism of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which has the potential to unlock \$22 million of private funding in humanitarian crises. That could enable the IFRC to reach an additional 6 million vulnerable people.

Thirdly and finally, the private sector can support better humanitarian responses through new technology. For example, the United Kingdom has invested in mobile innovation funds, which have supported rapid detection and treatment of cholera. That includes a tool to reduce the cholera detection time from three days to just 30 minutes. That innovation is vital for a disease which has been particularly devastating in Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar this year.

It is clear that public-private partnerships have the potential to transform humanitarian action, and we look forward to continuing to work together to tap into that potential.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I thank the briefers for their very insightful briefings.

The world faces dire humanitarian crises. The midyear update of the *Global Humanitarian Overview* this year reveals \$55 billion required to assist the targeted 249 million people, but only approximately \$11 billion has been provided as of midyear. This situation clearly threatens international peace and security, necessitating urgent discussions and the reinforcement of humanitarian aid, including through public-private partnerships. This meeting therefore provides a timely platform for this vital discourse.

One central question today is how the private sector can bolster United Nations efforts to tackle humanitarian crises stemming from conflict. I would like to highlight a few successful collaborations in that regard.

Fast Retailing, the parent company of UNIQLO, has a 12-year partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees under which it has provided clothing to refugees, and recent efforts include a sewing skills training project in Bangladesh aimed at empowering 1,000 Rohingya refugee women by 2025, promoting self-reliance.

NEC and Waseda University have collaborated with the International Committee of the Red Cross on landmine detection technology in pursuit of advancing humanitarian assistance through innovation.

Toyota Tsusho has partnered with the World Food Programme to establish a logistics training centre in Ghana to enhance humanitarian aid supply capacity in West Africa.

Those are fine examples of the private sector finding a nexus between its business and humanitarian needs, but the public sector can help in mobilizing private funding as well. For example, in order to support humanitarian efforts for displaced Ukrainians in the wake of Russia's unlawful aggression against Ukraine, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation has provided guarantees for the issuance of samurai bonds amounting to ¥93 billion by the Polish Development Bank. Those funds are designated to encompass critical

areas such as medical care, education, housing facilities and social security.

Providing the public and private sector with an opportunity to encounter each other on the global stage is also important. Last weekend, former Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Ukraine together with representatives from Japanese private companies, including Rakuten, which had already contributed 500 generators to Ukraine, to discuss with Ukrainian leaders various issues, including Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.

Moreover, as a co-convenor of the upcoming second Global Refugee Forum in December, the Japanese Government also aims to inspire wider private sector involvement in improving refugee and host communities' living conditions with the global refugee and displaced population exceeding 100 million and growing.

I talked about facilitating the public-private nexus, mitigating risks for private funding and providing encounters, but in order to build a successful partnership, we also need to interact. We need to hear from the private sector more, rather than merely talking in a lofty manner. Notably, the private sector is eager to showcase its support for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, Keidanren, the Japan Business Federation, which consists of 17 major Japanese companies, met with various United Nations agencies earlier this week to explore collaboration opportunities for advancing the SDGs. By highlighting that support for United Nations humanitarian action, aligned with our commitment to achieving the SDGs, we can harness that enthusiasm.

In 2017, the Japanese Government introduced the Japan SDGs Award, motivating companies to promote SDGs-related efforts by acknowledging and publicizing their contributions. That award has in fact already recognized several humanitarian initiatives, such as Euglena, a biotechnology company that received the award in 2022 for providing food assistance to underprivileged farmers and Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The founder of Euglena was also in New York among the Keidanren delegation.

Neglecting humanitarian needs, which may further destabilize fragile regions and exacerbate conflicts, helps no one, whether in the public or private sphere. I would like to conclude by reiterating that the Security Council, together with the private sector, must continue

promoting public-private partnership solutions in addressing ever-increasing humanitarian needs.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Albania for convening this important open debate. The briefings delivered by Ms. Cindy McCain, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), Mr. Jared Cohen and Mr. Michael Miebach were particularly informative on the role of the private sector in responding to the alarming global humanitarian situation.

We are witnessing a worrisome and unprecedented deterioration of humanitarian conditions in many regions across the globe. We know that more than 360 million people around the world need humanitarian aid, and we are also aware of the significant shortfall in funding to cover urgent needs, amounting to nearly \$55 billion. Wherever wars and climate disasters strike, humanitarian workers must respond to an array of negative consequences that cause suffering to civilian populations, including hunger, thirst, lack of medicines, disrupted schooling, family separations, sexual violence and other human rights violations.

Unfortunately, as we can clearly see, the scale of humanitarian needs is rising at the opposite pace to that of available funding, which is struggling to be mobilized. When funding is allocated to situations, it can sometimes be to the detriment of certain wars that have been all but forgotten because they are too far away, too old and have become almost commonplace, no longer attracting priority funding. Among those forgotten situations are the African countries of the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Lake Chad basin, which are at the crossroads of multifaceted crises that are hampering their economic growth, undermining their resilience to internal and external challenges and forcing them to resort to external humanitarian aid. In that context, the resources needed for investment are difficult to mobilize.

We welcome that Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths released \$125 million on 5 September from the Central Emergency Response Fund in aid of 14 countries through the Fund's underfunded emergencies window. My country has shouldered its share of the burden by contributing \$2 million to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees towards the humanitarian response plans for two countries of the Central African region that are bearing the full brunt of the consequences of the

crisis in the Sudan. It is clear that additional efforts are needed from donors in order to cover the extent of the needs. To date, only 30 per cent of all needs are funded. We are a long way off, especially if we consider that in many of those humanitarian situations, the prospects for conflict resolution, development financing and resource mobilization in the context of strengthening adaptation to climate change are dwindling.

Multilateral humanitarian action requires adequate, sufficient and predictable funding if it is to be effective. Private actors are key partners in that regard, in a global context in which hunger is rife and food insecurity and malnutrition continue to gain ground. The response to those persistent challenges must be built in cooperation with international and regional financial institutions, within the framework of partnerships aimed at boosting economies and restoring the production capacities necessary to enable countries to take their destiny back into their own hands. That entails a commitment to strengthening the humanitarian-peace-development nexus by taking a long-term approach in carrying out humanitarian responses and bearing in mind that effectively helping a community, village or country involves responding to emergencies, while at the same time providing those affected with the ability to prevent and adapt to crises. That is particularly true in situations of natural disasters and climate crises, but also in situations of armed conflict, in which there are myriad negative impacts on basic infrastructure and means of production.

According to the latest joint report by UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the WFP, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Health Organization, between 691 million and 783 million people suffered from hunger in 2022, an increase of 122 million as compared to 2019. Africa, where one in five people suffer from hunger, remains the hardest-hit region. That persistence of hunger in certain regions, such as Africa, West Asia and the Caribbean, demonstrates the limits of an approach based solely on the provision of basic food aid. It is necessary to respond to pressing needs while investing in economic recovery. While it has become commonplace for United Nations humanitarian aid programmes to include financial services for populations as part of their *modus operandi*, that type of aid would benefit from being systematized and oriented towards the implementation of projects designed to strengthen the resilience of populations,

particularly with regard to women, and with the aim of putting value into and fostering local know-how. In that regard, the strengthening of synergies between United Nations specialized agencies and the private sector must be supported as part of the sharing of responsibilities.

As part of the efforts to explore new financing and participation mechanisms, private companies, but also other non-State actors, such as non-governmental organizations, research institutes and think tanks, can be effective partners in providing data, human or technical capacity-building and monitoring resources with a view to preventing conflicts or natural disasters. Science must be leveraged for the benefit decision-making, including through early-warning mechanisms for risk management. We need to go beyond the framework of traditional donors in order to make better use of all the private-sector resources that could be used for the benefit of humanitarian assistance. United Nations specialized agencies and other humanitarian partners could also increase the resilience of their programmes by developing a partnership approach with communities and population centres benefiting from aid — for example, in areas facing protracted conflict — by promoting the consumption of products grown or processed by those communities. The idea of a resilience index for humanitarian response should be made systematic for long-term crises.

Another way of strengthening the private sector's participation in humanitarian responses is to increase its means of harnessing the financial resources at its disposal through innovative mechanisms. In that regard, I would like to underscore the importance of climate financing through innovative mechanisms, as well as the need to increase the role of the United Nations in the area of taxation, specifically through international financial transactions.

I would like to conclude by reminding everyone of the basic principles of respect for international humanitarian law and compliance with Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2417 (2018), on food insecurity and armed conflict, and resolution 2573 (2021), which condemns the use of starvation as a weapon of war. I also want to remind members that no situation justifies the use of famine as a weapon of war and that warring parties are obliged to facilitate the access of humanitarian workers to all areas and all people in need. Aid to the suffering should never be politicized.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the extraordinary work of humanitarian personnel, who often work in difficult situations, at times risking their lives in hostile environments. Less than one month after we marked World Humanitarian Day, I reiterate my country's support and gratitude to the people whose job it is to assist those most in need and restore hope to the most vulnerable.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We thank Albania for organizing today's debate on a subject that is important for Switzerland, which has a long tradition of humanitarianism. And of course I also thank the briefers for their contributions.

I believe it is now obvious, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania has reminded us, that we are facing a global humanitarian crisis. The world is being ravaged by more than 100 armed conflicts that are lasting longer and longer. The number of displaced people has more than doubled in the past 10 years. The number of people with humanitarian needs has increased more than fivefold, and the Executive Director of the World Food Programme has shown us shocking statistics on food insecurity. And as suffering increases, funding decreases. In 2022, not quite half of the world's humanitarian needs were funded.

My first observation is as obvious as it is alarming. The gap between humanitarian needs and the capacity to meet them continues to widen. We know the reasons for it — the adverse effects of climate change, weak governance, the consequences of the recent pandemic and armed conflicts. Conversely, any dispute that is resolved peacefully and any conflict for which a political solution is found help to reduce humanitarian needs. The Council is on the front line in that regard.

My second, however, is encouraging. Humanitarian needs can be reduced if we invest more in anticipatory action, based on risk assessment and management, and if we work in partnership. We are all aware that new technologies can play an important role in that regard. They make early-warning systems more effective, as they also do for the processing of data, whose collection, use and deployment must always be secure and responsible. In addition, we cannot underestimate the importance of stable and secure Internet connections, which enable people to access both information and the help they need to quickly reach others in need. At times, it is a question of survival. Today's meeting is particularly timely if we are to take full advantage of technological

innovation, because we need to strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors. To illustrate Switzerland's wealth of experience in that area, I will provide two quite straightforward examples.

First, the Humanitarian and Resilience Investing initiative, launched in 2019 by the World Economic Forum at Davos, aims to encourage private capital investment in financially sustainable opportunities for communities in fragile contexts.

Secondly, since the 1990s, Switzerland has been supporting cash and voucher assistance. By focusing on local markets and supporting and investing in small businesses run by women, that assistance enables people affected by a crisis or disaster to quickly cover their most urgent needs. It also stimulates local demand, while helping to create livelihoods throughout the value chain, from producers to sellers. Collaboration with the private sector has improved the efficiency of such assistance and should be strengthened. Based on our experience, we have drawn the following lessons.

First, public and private players can and must adopt common approaches, in both the short and the long term, if we are to meet the specific challenges of fragile contexts. Such partnerships can make a difference for millions of people on the ground.

Secondly, local actors must be at the centre of any humanitarian response. Their expertise and networks should be better integrated.

Lastly, despite the progress made in the past 10 years, the potential of public-private partnerships remains underexploited. In fragile contexts, the ad hoc promotion of mixed financing models can help to reduce risks. In addition, raising awareness of ethical practices in the private sector remains important. Any action linked to private-sector involvement and innovative financing must be based on humanitarian principles and human rights. In fragile contexts, it is also essential to strengthen the exercise of due diligence on human rights, in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. For Switzerland, those principles fully apply to all our partnerships.

In conclusion, I would like to once again underscore the responsibility of the Council. Experience with public-private partnerships is also discussed in the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Once again, in that regard, we call for closer

cooperation between the Security Council and the other organs of the United Nations system.

Lastly, we always come back to the same key conclusion. I want to stress the Council's essential role in conflict prevention with a view to reducing humanitarian needs. The Council must continue to seek the unity that will enable it to take action to prevent and swiftly resolve conflicts in order to ensure lasting peace.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for their briefings.

At the end of 2022, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that humanitarian needs for 2023 would increase to \$51.5 billion, the first time that it had announced such an amount. Regrettably, as is often the case, other crises emerged — earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the crisis in the Sudan and, very recently, the devastating earthquake in Morocco and flooding in Libya. In addition, global food insecurity, caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, continues to worsen. The initial estimates fell short of reality.

The participation of the private sector in humanitarian initiatives has considerably increased over the past 15 years. That is good news. The response to the war on Ukraine and the commitment of the private sector to that response are examples of what can be envisaged in the future. In France and Europe, that partnership has been strengthened with the signing of agreements with businesses and companies that want to be involved in humanitarian efforts, which is commendable. Together with the World Food Programme, we are specifically mobilizing the private sector to take part in the work of the School Meals Coalition, whose first global meeting will be held in Paris in October.

We must all be innovative, and the private sector can be a valuable partner, not just in responding to crises and disasters but in preventing and forecasting them. To that end, it is our duty to give thought together to modernization, innovation and the effectiveness of humanitarian action. Nonetheless, a number of questions arise that must be answered if we are to ensure respect by all parties for humanitarian principles and prevent unwanted effects. Exchanges such as today's meeting contribute to that, and we encourage them.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate on an issue that is enormously important and relevant. We also thank the briefers for their introductory remarks.

With 360 million people around the world in need of humanitarian assistance — an increase of 30 per cent compared to last year — the gap between the need for humanitarian assistance and funding is widening. We agree with the Secretary-General with regard to the chronic underfunding of humanitarian assistance due to a shortfall of approximately \$41 billion, which is pushing the system to the limit. The recent release of \$125 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund to boost underfunded humanitarian operations in 14 countries is a case in point.

In such a complex context, the private sector can play a vital role, as today's briefers noted in their introductory statements. The expertise they can bring and their capacity for innovation are certainly valuable tools for scaling up and streamlining efforts to respond to humanitarian needs. In many countries, the private sector is a key member of communities affected by humanitarian emergencies and is often among the first responders on the ground.

It is encouraging to note that there are successful experiences of public-private partnerships in the humanitarian field. The Secretary-General's reports on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance indicate positive results from cooperation between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration with companies involved in technology, finance and construction. In addition, the World Food Programme works closely with partners in the private sector.

While there is no denying that private sector involvement in humanitarian action offers great potential, it also poses challenges. The following are recommendations that could enhance the potential in that respect.

First, initiatives aimed at strengthening the private sector's strategic engagement in the humanitarian, development and peace agendas deserve to be supported. In that regard, we support the work of the Connecting Business Initiative, launched at the 2016

World Humanitarian Summit and driven by OCHA and the United Nations Development Programme.

Secondly, any form of public-private partnership must adhere to the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence and be linked to the international humanitarian system in order to ensure coherence.

Thirdly, there is a need to strengthen the normative framework for the relationship between OCHA and the private sector, which is underpinned by the United Nations Global Compact, the guidelines on the cooperation between the United Nations and the business sector and the OCHA-World Economic Forum guiding principles for public-private collaboration for humanitarian action.

Fourthly, public-private partnerships can be more effective if they build on each party's strengths, respond to needs identified by the affected populations, promote local capacity-building and establish a clear distinction between humanitarian and commercial activities.

I should point out the centrality of that issue in terms of food security and even in terms of the spectre of hunger and conflict. The Black Sea Grain Initiative is an example that involved efforts by many actors. Moreover, by involving trade on the one hand and humanitarian support on the other, its impact was central not only in Ukraine, but in acutely food-insecure countries that depend on the assistance that the World Food Programme can provide.

In conclusion, we believe that developing partnerships between humanitarian actors and the private sector, with the shared goal of alleviating human suffering, is a valuable tool to ensure that the most vulnerable receive the support that they need.

Mr. Irachande Gouveia (Mozambique): Mozambique thanks the Albanian presidency for convening this important open debate. We also thank Ms. McCain, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for their pertinent contributions.

We live in an increasingly interconnected and complex world, faced with multiple crisis and emergencies — some manmade and others natural, but all of them competing for limited resources, time and attention. In that context, building collaborative efforts and partnerships is more than ever not only a strategic move, but a moral and survival imperative.

People in need of humanitarian assistance, refugees and their families face unspeakable odds. After all they have endured and survived, they should not have to face the agony of death just because our global humanitarian architecture cannot evolve or innovate. The latest numbers make that urgency more acute. According to the latest update of the *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023*, approximately 363 million people worldwide are in need of humanitarian assistance. The estimated cost to meet that assistance is \$55 billion. In the meantime, the gap between financial requirements and resources was evaluated at \$41 billion. In a world of plenty and riches, that cannot be allowed to be the new normal. It is a scar on our collective conscience.

Against that backdrop, partnerships between Governments, private sector entities and multilateral agencies, notably the United Nations and other key humanitarian actors, need to be given proper consideration. After all, from the recent fight against the coronavirus disease pandemic to efforts towards the eradication of endemics such as malaria, including in my own country, and the conquest of some of humankind's last frontiers, public-private partnerships have proven their worth. The humanitarian sector should not be an exception.

Those partnerships brought not only financial resources but also innovation, agility and a results-oriented approach often homed in competitive markets. Their ability to rapidly mobilize resources, combined with a deep understanding of local market dynamics, provides unique synergies with Governments. In regions marred by conflicts or affected by natural disasters, private entities have long played an instrumental role in rebuilding infrastructure, creating jobs and fostering community resilience under the guidance of local entities. That needs to be scaled up.

A critical examination reveals three primary arenas in which the private sector can magnify the impact of humanitarian assistance: finance, logistics and technology. In finance, the private sector's capability to harness funds can bridge oft-mentioned funding gaps, while innovative financial instruments can ensure sustained support for protracted crises. Logistics, a forte of many private enterprises, when merged with the expansive reach of humanitarian agencies, ensures that aid reaches the last mile promptly. Technology, in today's digitalized era, can revolutionize humanitarian responses. From data-driven decision-making to the development of cutting-edge solutions for

communication, surveillance, early warning and resource distribution, private tech enterprises can enhance the scale, efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.

The essence of public-private collaboration should be rooted in the practices of Member States. First and foremost, national Governments are primarily responsible for supporting their affected communities. While partnerships are valuable, they should not overshadow or diminish a Government's fundamental duty to care for its citizens during crises.

Secondly, the sacred humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence must always guide entities and institutions offering emergency relief to refugees and displaced individuals. Our experience in disaster management in Mozambique evolved from the civil-war period in the 1980s to the coordination of post-emergency interventions in the 1990s, culminating in 2020 in the creation of our own National Institute of Disaster Management. Initially an entity under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinating external aid, the National Institute of Disaster Management has evolved into a fully autonomous and legally independent entity, pioneering various aspects of the integration of public-private partnerships, enhancing coordination and guaranteeing quick delivery. Now it is at the forefront of our efforts in building resilience in the face of climate-related challenges and other natural and human-made emergencies.

In conclusion, we believe that in the face of the enormous challenges to humanitarian assistance, we need a paradigm shift in that area that takes account of new agents and forms. Social entrepreneurs and millennials are using frontier technology such as blockchain, artificial intelligence and other technologies to achieve sustainable development. I am sure they will invest in a cause as noble as humanitarian assistance if given the chance. Considering its long association in this regard as a past and current recipient of humanitarian aid, the African continent has a lot to contribute to such discussions, and we look forward to doing so.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Cindy McCain, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, as well as Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach, for their briefings.

We share the view that the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need remains one of the most

important areas of the work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Given the increase year on year in the world's humanitarian needs, the issue of mobilizing more support, including financial support, to ensure the implementation of the relevant United Nations projects and programmes grows ever more resonant. As has already been mentioned, according to the most recent estimates by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 360 million people around the world are currently in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. In order to implement all its country-specific humanitarian appeals for the current year, the United Nations needs \$55.2 billion, of which only 29 per cent, or \$15.8 billion, has been received. In other words, the shortfall in donations is now almost double the entire annual amount — \$20 billion — of funding requested by the humanitarian wing of the United Nations as recently as 2016.

It is notable that Ukraine steadily remains the leader in attracting donor attention. This year alone, the United Nations has already received \$1.83 billion to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine, which is \$300 million more than the support given to the long-suffering population of Syria and \$1 billion more than the aid to the ordinary people of Afghanistan, who have endured the bitter taste of the NATO and United States experiments in democratization in full. As we know, many of those people are now so desperate that they agree to sell their organs, while some are selling their children in order to find a way to feed the rest of the family. Some of our colleagues prefer not to talk about that, however. I particularly want to emphasize the situation in African States whose independent economic and agricultural development has for decades been deliberately limited by their former colonial masters and is exacerbated by neocolonial instruments that only worsen their dependence.

As we understand it, against the backdrop of a truly dangerous situation in which the humanitarian needs in the world are only growing, Western donors have no alternative but to look for ways to shift the financial responsibility for the consequences of the crises they have unleashed all over the world onto others and maintain the possibility that they can continue to sponsor coups and wars for the benefit of their conglomerates and arms manufacturers, without being distracted by any incidental protests. We have repeatedly drawn the Council's attention to that issue. We have also continued to study the so-called proactive

approach to humanitarian assistance advocated by our colleagues, as well as the possibility of coupling it with development efforts. We have seen that donors allow development projects to be part of humanitarian aid efforts in some countries but not in others.

We nonetheless believe that it is justified to involve business in the form of public-private partnerships, both bilaterally and in international humanitarian activities. The private sector accounts for only \$115.7 million in the provision of humanitarian funding, which is clearly inadequate. However, it is not just about raw numbers. Joint work with private entities often leads to more effective solutions to humanitarian problems, strengthens the resource base of humanitarian operations and thereby increases the number of lives saved, which is the international community's key task.

At the same time, Governments' consent to receive assistance must remain an absolute requirement for commercial entities' participation in international humanitarian operations, along with strict adherence to the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence in providing that assistance. Beyond that, with regard to public-private partnerships, we believe that the principle of having no economic or political interests or conditions in relation to recipient countries should be respected. In that context, we welcome healthy market competition among the suppliers of humanitarian goods and services within the framework of United Nations procurement and support organizing those efforts on a non-discriminatory basis. The procedure for economic operators' participation in international tenders should be transparent and clearly understood, and should not be influenced by third parties. That is also the responsibility of the Secretariat. We would like to remind the Council that the agreement between the United Nations and the European Union (EU) on their programme of cooperation on humanitarian aid was predicated on the condition that suppliers cannot be operators that come under EU sanctions. I am referring to the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement. The Secretary-General clarified at the time that he would continue to be guided only by sanctions adopted by the Security Council. It would be interesting to know what that EU demand, which is irrelevant to the United Nations as a donor, and the judicious response of the Secretary-General mean in practice.

We would be remiss if we failed to once again draw the Council's attention to the illegitimate unilateral

restrictive measures imposed by the countries of the collective West and the so-called over-compliance effect on the corporate sector, which continue to have a negative impact on the work of the entire international humanitarian system, including, as we have said, on promising public-private partnership projects. The West's vaunted humanitarian exemptions from its sanctions packages do not work in practice, as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council have convincingly and factually documented. As the United Nations findings show, even when economic operators deliver assistance to those in need, they must be able to demonstrate post facto that the aid was of a humanitarian nature, and if not may be subject to prosecution, including criminal prosecution. In such circumstances, it is easier for businesses to minimize their risks and refrain from being involved in such operations in the first place. It is the populations of States in need that suffer the most as a result. The people of Syria who went through the devastating earthquake know about that first-hand. They are also fully aware of who it was that deprived them of bread and doomed them to destitution by occupying their lands and plundering Syrian wheat from the fertile lands beyond the Euphrates.

We draw attention to the fact that, in the concept note (S/2023/631/Rev.1, annex) that the President's delegation prepared for today's open debate, only the Black Sea Grain Initiative was cited as a successful example of public-private partnership. It seems that that fact best proves the thesis we have long voiced about the initiative being purely commercial, and not at all humanitarian, in nature. It is obviously a partnership between Western Governments and Western corporations, which this year have profited on grain exports twice over, on both the export of Ukrainian products owned by their largest corporations and the sale of processed goods by European countries that, as they assure us, perform only a transit role — at even higher costs. The lion's share of those exports is feed grain and corn fodder at clearly commercial prices. At the same time, concessional deliveries to the poorest countries, including through the World Food Programme, amounted to a mere 1 million tons of grain, which account for 0.2 per cent of global trade. We therefore have a rhetorical question to put forward — what is the humanitarian objective of those deliveries?

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): We begin by thanking Albania for convening this important and novel open

debate and note with appreciation the insightful briefings by Ms. Cindy McCain, Mr. Jared Cohen and Mr. Michael Miebach.

The unprecedented level of humanitarian needs globally, which is being driven strongly by such factors as conflicts, insecurity, climate change, natural disasters and the prevailing global economic headwinds, should perforce require all of us to reconsider how we mobilize support at all levels for effective responses. As the August update of the *Global Humanitarian Overview* indicates, 248 million of the 363 million people in need of assistance around the world require some \$55.2 billion if we are to be able to respond to their needs. With a staggering financial requirement gap of \$39 billion at this point in the year, new opportunities beyond the known limits should be explored to better understand how the interests of the private sector can be made to dovetail with a universal and solidarity-based framework of multilateralism in delivering humanitarian assistance to those most in need. In that regard, Ghana welcomes this intergovernmental opportunity for discussions on sustaining the private sector's involvement in humanitarian action and would like to highlight four main points.

First, we hold that public-private partnerships for humanitarian action should be based on shared principles and values that respect the core consensus of the international community on humanitarian action, which is based on humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. Without common principles, we face the risk of undermining the convergence that we seek between the influence of the market and that of humanitarian actors. In that context, we believe that the work that has been done by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Economic Forum in developing guiding principles for public-private collaboration for humanitarian action, the Agenda for Humanity and the principles jointly developed by a number of United Nations funds and programmes with private sector companies for humanitarian payments can serve as a basis for deepening collaboration in response to growing humanitarian needs.

Secondly, it is important to underscore that partnerships for humanitarian action should be undergirded by the application of emerging technologies as a strategic goal to anticipate needs and enhance the reach and scale of humanitarian responses, but also the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian

performance. Equally important is the need for United Nations humanitarian actors to continue to embrace new technologies in the humanitarian architecture; to pick up early-warning signals, coordinate and deploy resources when doing so can be most effective; and to identify the needs of the victims in ways that can help create sustainable and self-reliant humanitarian outcomes.

Thirdly, we encourage the strong development of public-private partnerships at the regional level to help diversify capabilities, create regional resilience and nurture home-grown experiences and solutions. We therefore call for cooperation between the private sector companies on the African continent and such regional humanitarian frameworks as the African Union's humanitarian policy and the Economic Community of West African States humanitarian policy, in order to advance sustainable regional humanitarian outcomes. We are mindful that, in advancing Africa's stability and resilience, we would also reduce the risks faced by the continent's private sector companies and facilitate the interest of our Governments in fulfilling national aspirations. We therefore encourage the continuing development of a conducive environment that sharpens the convergence of interests and mobilizes joined-up action in dealing effectively with regional humanitarian crises.

Fourthly, at the heart of addressing the global humanitarian crisis is the need to prioritize investments that address the root causes of growing humanitarian needs. In that regard, we call for critical attention to be paid to the structural and institutional drivers that are affecting governance and development and call for all segments of society, particularly women and youth, to be at the forefront of national processes — they cannot be left behind. We also urge the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to play a role, in particular in helping countries resolve fragilities, including conflict triggers, the impact of climate change and post-coronavirus disease recovery processes.

In conclusion, Ghana believes that, even as we enhance public-private partnerships for humanitarian action, solidarity must be sustained and strengthened among Member States for times of great humanitarian crisis. We therefore believe that the call to donors, including for this year, would remain an important one in filling financing gaps in humanitarian response plans. We support the Secretary-General's call in that regard. Finally, as we look forward to a well-structured partnership in dealing with humanitarian crises across

the world, Ghana remains hopeful that such partnerships at the national, regional and international levels will help unlock innovative, effective and efficient ways to deliver on resilient and sustainable societies, for the benefit of the peoples of our shared world.

Ms. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for hosting this important discussion. We thank Executive Director McCain for working to make the World Food Programme a leader in advancing partnerships with the private sector. We also thank our private sector briefers, who have offered a compelling road map for other companies to follow.

As the Security Council knows all too well, the world's most vulnerable are at a moment of great peril. Humanitarian needs are growing at a blistering pace, and the gap between the funding provided and United Nations-assessed needs stands at nearly \$40 billion. Every day, it feels as if we see a new humanitarian crisis emerge. Just this Tuesday, we witnessed the catastrophic flooding that swept through Libya, claiming thousands of lives, and over the weekend, we watched in horror as a devastating earthquake rocked Morocco. We offer our condolences to the peoples of Libya and Morocco, and we stand in solidarity with them at this difficult time.

During our briefing yesterday (see S/PV.9417), I shared that I had recently returned from a trip to Chad's border with the Sudan. The refugees that I met with were deeply traumatized. Women and girls had been victims of sexual violence, and children and babies were severely malnourished. This is a grave humanitarian emergency. And while the aid workers I met are heroically working to save lives, they need the international community to provide them with more resources. I encourage everyone in this Chamber and others to give more.

This moment calls for bold action. It calls for breaking out of our business-as-usual model; it calls for thinking holistically about how we address increasingly protracted crises; and it calls for everyone, not just Member States, but everyone with the means, to do their part. And that is why today's debate on how to better engage the private sector is so important.

In recent years, four of the largest logistics corporations — UPS, Agility, Maersk and DP World — regularly joined forces in the logistic cluster, led by the World Food Programme. The Connecting Business initiative of the Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs has broken ground, creating a network of independent chambers of commerce and private foundations committed to humanitarian response efforts. In places like Haiti, where gang violence is impeding humanitarian access, the private sector is playing a vital role. Through Airlink, a disaster logistics non-profit commercial and private aviation organization and partner of the United States Agency for International Development, we have created a humanitarian air bridge. Commercial airlines have donated capacity on their existing routes to transport aid, while logistics providers ensured the smooth movement of life-saving supplies. The result was a watershed partnership that ensured cholera treatment reached people in need.

The private sector has also stepped up to provide aid to the Ukrainian people, who are suffering from the devastating consequences of Putin's brutal war of aggression. Last year, private sector organizations contributed cash and in-kind assistance to the Ukrainian response, as well as elsewhere in the world, and the World Central Kitchen, a pioneer in public-private partnerships, has worked with local restaurants to feed refugees on Ukraine's border and around the world. Earlier this year, the private sector also contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the earthquake response in Türkiye. Closer to home, the United States has been proud to work with organizations like the Tent Partnership for Refugees, which has mobilized its 300-plus corporate members to help refugees become job-ready and to provide them with work.

These examples are only a scratch of the surface. For too long we have turned exclusively to the private sector for financing. To its credit, it has shown enormous generosity. But in 2023, we know they have so much more to offer. Their capacities, know-how and innovations are tremendously needed. The public sector must do more to proactively work with the private sector, especially as we look to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. The public sector must harness the expertise of the private sector and translate it into action. It is past time to invest and scale up this relationship, and it is past time for us to welcome the private sector through the front door. The world's most vulnerable are counting on us. Let us act with urgency, and let us move forward in solidarity.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on

the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after three minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, and to thank Albania for convening this important meeting to consider ways to advance the various partnerships to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian assistance. I also thank all the briefers — from the World Food Programme, Goldman Sachs and Mastercard, respectively.

I join all those who expressed their condolences for the victims of the recent earthquake in the Maghreb and the floods in Libya. Egypt expresses its solidarity with the two fraternal peoples and countries.

It is worrisome that reports of the United Nations estimate that 345 million people are facing severe food insecurity, which portends a real catastrophe, as humanitarian needs have reached record levels, and that 360 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance. Accordingly, I would like to present Egypt's vision of how to overcome those challenges.

First, Egypt stresses the need to address the root causes of the increasing humanitarian needs through a comprehensive approach aimed at integrating the achievement of sustainable development, on the one hand, with considering the urgent need to settle conflicts and humanitarian crises in accordance with fixed standards consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, on the other — all while boosting economic growth rates and employment, eradicating poverty, preserving State institutions and building their capacities to face various challenges so as to ensure sustainable peace and stability. I also echo the remarks of Mr. Harold Agyeman, Permanent Representative of Ghana, with regard to peacebuilding.

Secondly, Egypt notes the close link between the high rates of hunger and food insecurity and the increasing rates of armed conflicts, which confirms the need for concerted international efforts to quickly achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, on eradicating hunger and achieving food security. My country calls for humanitarian partnerships to take that into account.

Thirdly, Egypt stresses the need for concerted international efforts to support countries hosting increasing numbers of migrants and refugees, displaced

due to humanitarian reasons, especially in the light of the global economic crisis that is casting a shadow on developing countries. Egypt notes that it hosted nearly 9 million migrants and refugees from 58 countries. We are committed to ensuring that they can enjoy all basic services while they live and share their daily lives with Egyptians outside of refugee camps. Ensuring the sustainability of the efforts of countries hosting those affected by humanitarian crises, including Egypt, requires increased international support.

Fourthly, Egypt urges the private sector to play a greater role in bridging the funding gap between donor contributions and the needs of humanitarian operations. We stress the importance of ensuring that efforts to expand the number of partners providing humanitarian assistance should not take place without considering two main points. The first is full commitment to the principles of humanitarian action, namely, neutrality, independence, non-politicization and non-interference in the internal affairs of beneficiary countries. The second is recognition that partnerships with various actors, including the private sector, should not be a pretext for States and donors to not honour their financial commitments to humanitarian operations on the basis of the principle of international solidarity.

Egypt continues its national efforts, through the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development, to provide capacity-building support to African States. Egypt is committed to supporting the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and stresses the responsibility of the private sector at the national level, as well as the responsibility of the international community.

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

Mrs. Güven (Türkiye): I would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening an open debate on this important topic.

Humanitarian needs across the world are surging in an era marked by overlapping crises, natural disasters, conflicts, inequalities and increased uncertainty. The lack of progress, even regress in some of the Sustainable Development Goals is a great concern for us all. The current level of development financing and other means of implementation are far from satisfactory. Investment gaps are hardly narrowing. Funding for humanitarian operations is decreasing day by day. The gap between funding requirements and

donor contributions puts immense pressure on both recipients and donor countries. Exploring innovative approaches is therefore key to making humanitarian operations more effective and inclusive. Finding long-term solutions to humanitarian crises is a necessity for the promotion of the humanitarian-development nexus.

Against that backdrop, Türkiye has capitalized on the fundamentals of its enterprising and humanitarian foreign policy. My country has advocated for global cooperation and effective multilateralism, as reflected in its comprehensive and long-standing partnership with the United Nations. That partnership has also enabled the private sector to play its role. In that regard, we hosted the first World Humanitarian Summit, in 2016. The Summit also served as a unique platform for Governments, the United Nations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss new ways to address the most pressing global challenges.

Türkiye's solid partnership with the United Nations, complemented by the private sector, has also made the difference in addressing conflicts unfolding in our region. Türkiye, together with the United Nations, played a key role in the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The Initiative ensured the export of over 33 million metric tons of grain and foodstuffs. Through commercial vessels, the Initiative proved itself to become a textbook example of good public-private humanitarian partnership. Türkiye is continuing its efforts to resume the Initiative by taking into account the concerns of all stakeholders involved.

Türkiye's partnership with the United Nations has also been designed to promote the humanitarian-development nexus and to strengthen the role of the private sector in that equation. In that respect, Türkiye is the co-founder of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development, facilitating the contribution of the private sector towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Türkiye also hosts and supports the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries. The Bank plays a crucial role as an important global actor in the development efforts of the least developed countries in science, technology and innovation, together with relevant partners within and outside the United Nations system, including the private sector.

Last but not least, Türkiye's long-term recovery vision, which was set in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes that hit Türkiye, is based on the principle of build back better. It is indeed a good example of the multi-stakeholder collaboration among Governments, international organizations and the private sector. The vision is developed by the Turkish authorities with the contributions of the UNDP, the World Bank, the European Union and supported by close cooperation among the public and private sectors, as well as NGOs. It aims to build greener and smarter with disaster resilience and energy efficiency while building permanent housing in the earthquake-affected areas.

It is our collective responsibility to find adequate ways and means to fill the gaps and explore new ways of collaboration among different actors in the humanitarian and development fields. To that end, Türkiye will continue to utilize its potential emanating from its strong State tradition, central geographical position, robust institutions and strong human resources.

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

Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa): We thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate. It is especially pertinent considering the national disasters that have occurred in Morocco and in Libya. We convey our sympathies to our sister countries. We thank those that briefed us today on this topic.

Armed conflict continues to cause and significantly contribute to the worsening global humanitarian crisis. It is the main cause of forced displacement, including internal displacements, and protracted refugee situations. The emergence of new conflicts also further exacerbates already dire humanitarian situations.

While South Africa's particular humanitarian risk profile is primarily weather-related, we focus on providing humanitarian assistance in conflict-induced humanitarian contexts.

The South African Government continues to establish public-private partnerships and recognizes that innovative partnerships can leverage local and industry expertise to strengthen emergency preparedness and response. That also addresses challenges of limited resources and other constraints to response.

The provision of humanitarian assistance often requires the need to strengthen partnerships with the United Nations and other humanitarian actors.

That necessitates that we support United Nations-led humanitarian responses that recall the Guiding Principles for Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action and ensures that the main humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality are respected and adhered to. Advancing public-private humanitarian partnerships that respect those principles could further help in strengthening coordinated humanitarian responses and making them more efficient and impactful. We believe that we should prevent companies that are involved in conflict from engaging in humanitarian action to avoid the obvious conflict of interest.

The private sector can mitigate the occurrence of conflict-driven humanitarian crises through clear arrangements and procedures on the distribution of humanitarian assistance. That includes the distribution and mobilization of resources; establishing new finance mechanisms for humanitarian relief in collaboration with relevant agencies; the focus on sustainable financing mechanisms, such as risk transfer or insurance, to enhance resilience within States; and providing enhanced technology for effective response. South Africa has also leveraged partnerships to provide relief items through wholesale and retail stores by voucher system. That safeguards livelihoods in the various sectors and ensures a return to normal operations.

South Africa will always maintain that conflict should be prevented first to avoid the consequent humanitarian situations. Likewise, it is important to strengthen resilience at all levels and address climate-induced humanitarian crises.

Finally, we reiterate that public-private humanitarian partnership should be undertaken in a manner that upholds the humanitarian principles, as well as through cooperation with the United Nations system and recognized humanitarian partners.

The President: I now give the floor to Mrs. Samson.

Mrs. Samson: I join others in expressing the solidarity and the condolences of the European Union (EU) to Morocco and Libya. We stand ready to support them and are already doing so.

I am pleased to speak today on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

The candidate countries Türkiye, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the potential candidate country

Georgia, as well as Monaco, align themselves with this statement.

The gap between humanitarian needs and donor funding is alarming. The combined impacts of climate change, rising food prices and armed conflicts worldwide, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, have pushed humanitarian needs to unprecedented levels. The international community should find creative new ways to address the gap and achieve a more balanced funding structure. Involving private sector actors, in partnership with traditional public sector actors, can improve the humanitarian response, particularly in two ways: logistics and financing.

Logistics represents 60 to 80 per cent of all emergency humanitarian spending. Optimizing logistics will therefore help to close the funding gap. The private sector can contribute specific logistical skills, including supply chain management. New practices and perspectives from global and local companies can increase efficiency and even improve humanitarian access. One example is the Logistics Emergency Team, which is comprised of four of the largest global logistics and transportation companies, working together to support the Global Logistics Cluster and providing pro bono support for emergency response and large-scale natural disasters.

The EU is increasing its collaboration with the private sector to fill logistical gaps in humanitarian operations. We encourage strategic supply chain management, following the humanitarian logistics policy. New initiatives such as the European Humanitarian Response Capacity can also contribute to that collaborative spirit.

The EU also welcomes the Secretary-General's proposal for an emergency platform, which should involve relevant actors from all parts of the world, including the private sector, civil society and subject matter experts. We are committed to engaging in discussions towards an ambitious outcome document of the Summit of the Future that includes that platform.

Funding is another area for partnership. While there is some potential for increasing philanthropic donations, the indications from the private sector itself show greater potential in encouraging private sector investment. Blended finance, which combines public sector donations with private sector investment, has been used extensively in development cooperation. That practice can be expanded, especially in humanitarian

contexts with long-term needs, in which market-building and recovery can replace emergency financing.

The European Commission first committed to exploring humanitarian blended finance in its 2021 communication on humanitarian aid. The Commission has launched pilot projects to demonstrate how humanitarian grants can attract private investment in fragile contexts. The first projects began in 2022, with the International Rescue Committee and the Danish Refugee Council, combining €1.6 million in grant financing, with contributions from development banks and private financiers. The European Union is committed to continuing to pursue innovative ways to bridge the humanitarian funding gap.

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

Mr. Massari (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement just delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

The humanitarian challenge we face is unprecedented. There is little to add to the words of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme today and the many appeals by the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Griffiths. The situation is appalling: the underfunding of all humanitarian initiatives is shown in every report. The private sector can come to the rescue, and public-private cooperation is a natural result of that. We need to act now, and public-private humanitarian partnership is one of the ways to do that. Italy is grateful to the Albanian presidency for placing this subject to the Security Council's agenda.

This year's humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council addressed the involvement of the private sector in the humanitarian response as well. Food security, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and all the other humanitarian crises require deeper and broader partnerships for achieving resilience and sustainable solutions. The humanitarian resolution that was adopted in June (Economic and Social Council resolution 2023/16), albeit through complex negotiations, clearly highlights the importance of strengthening coordination among humanitarian organizations, Governments and civil society actors to ensure a comprehensive and effective response. The private sector is an essential part of that picture.

In order to address and minimize the humanitarian consequences of conflicts, climate change and environmental risks, early warning and anticipatory action are crucial. To realize that we need political solutions, and we need to be faster, more effective and less risk-averse across humanitarian and development efforts — all aspects in which the private sector can contribute to the efforts made by the public sector. Development aid sometimes does not reach those who are most vulnerable. That paradigm needs to shift, and it needs to shift now. In order to address the drivers of food insecurity, we should rely on flexible and urgent funding, especially towards anticipatory action and financing. Starting a humanitarian response before a foreseeable shock is much faster, more dignified, more cost-efficient and saves more lives. Anticipatory action must be applied and improved.

The United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktaking Moment, held in Rome in July, dedicated a whole session to the space industry's contribution to preventing food insecurity. Italy believes that public-private humanitarian partnership should build on such initiatives. Public-private joint efforts can provide the technological added value of solutions designed and engineered by the private sector only. Broader partnerships across the silos of humanitarian action are much needed. That should include partnerships with the private sector, academia, civil society, local and regional actors, women, young people and foundations, as well as, of course, the United Nations, Governments, donors and international non-governmental organizations. That is also the only way to overcome the overarching issue of funding.

Private sector foundations have a large unexpressed potential in leading and encouraging private investments in the humanitarian sector as well. For those partnerships to be successful, we need to work collectively before, during and after crisis. There are limits to what a humanitarian response can achieve, yet our efforts will be more effective if we leverage the unique capacities and mandates that the public sector brings to bear across the entire response.

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

Mr. Malovrh (Slovenia): I would first like to express my appreciation to Albania for organizing this important open debate and extend my gratitude to the briefers for their informative presentations.

The challenges facing humankind today are numerous and severe, ranging from climate change and environmental degradation to economic inequality, cybersecurity, natural disasters, political instability, conflicts and other crises. Those challenges often occur simultaneously, placing a disproportionate burden on smaller developing nations and their communities. It is evident that individuals, or often single States alone, cannot bear those burdens, and that traditional resources are insufficient to address the escalating needs and costs. In the light of that context, it becomes increasingly clear that forging partnerships between the public and private sectors is essential. Such collaborations can serve as a vital complement, pooling expertise and tapping into new and existing resources. They can play a pivotal role in addressing pressing needs and costs, while also leveraging modern technology.

Slovenia actively supports the further development of public-private partnerships in humanitarian affairs, as outlined in our newly adopted guidelines for cooperation with development and humanitarian non-governmental organizations. Past and ongoing practices have demonstrated that such partnerships exhibit great speed, flexibility and cost-effectiveness in addressing humanitarian needs, particularly on the ground where they are most needed. However, it is crucial to uphold certain principles when considering those partnerships, with a particular emphasis on distinguishing between humanitarian and commercial activities. Building local capacities, strengthening resilience, early action and post-conflict rehabilitation are increasingly important aspects to consider. In our assessment, it is imperative to invest more, including through public-private partnerships, in prevention efforts such as education and awareness-raising. That will help mitigate humanitarian crises and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.

Furthermore, we must emphasize the importance of the protection of human rights, especially for individuals in vulnerable situations. Slovenia places special emphasis on food security, access to drinking water and the fight against gender-based violence in our humanitarian aid efforts. We are proud to have initiated projects in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and countries such as Uganda, South Sudan and Lebanon.

I would also like to highlight the absolute necessity of the unhindered provision of humanitarian aid, particularly in the midst of armed conflicts, when humanitarian aid becomes the only lifeline.

Collaboration with the private sector can significantly enhance aid delivery, given its flexibility, human resources and access to modern technology. That, in turn, can lead to cost reductions and ultimately increase the quality and quantity of aid delivered.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize our recognition of the need to enhance humanitarian assistance and acknowledge the potential for the further development of public-private partnerships. However, we must always prioritize the well-being and interests of the people at the centre of those efforts.

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

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's heartfelt condolences to the peoples and Governments of Libya and Morocco.

The topic of today's open debate is particularly relevant, as we are now witnessing humanitarian needs rising virtually everywhere, stemming mainly from conflicts and natural disasters. Meanwhile, the funding gap between those humanitarian needs and the resources required to address them continues to widen. Simultaneously, the increasingly complex and intertwined nature of humanitarian crises necessitates greater engagement from the private sector, with its resources, experience, advanced technology and logistics capacities. That is why partnerships with the private sector have proven both effective and efficient in numerous humanitarian aid operations across the globe.

Given that no country or region can enjoy true peace and security unless the humanitarian needs of its inhabitants are met, public-private partnership is a welcome trend, as it helps to alleviate and prevent the root causes of humanitarian situations. Encouraging such partnerships can serve to assist in the implementation of humanitarian-development-peace nexus programmes. In addition, public-private partnerships can be used as an opportunity to bring in private social entrepreneurs who leverage cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the blockchain, into the humanitarian assistance domain. A notable example is the collaboration between the World Food Programme and Mastercard. Mastercard's digital technology and electronic prepaid cards have enabled millions of Syrian refugees to purchase food and other necessities without having to wait in long lines. In a similar vein, the role of the United Parcel Service in

the delivery of humanitarian aid is now indispensable in many regions. Additionally, IKEA's partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been crucial in delivering 80,000 innovative refugee housing units to displaced people in 80 countries worldwide.

The Korean Government is increasingly expanding its cooperation with private partners for humanitarian aid operations. Today Korea's public-private partnerships encompass a wide range of emergency relief, disaster risk reduction, early recovery, aid for refugees and displaced people and gender-based violence prevention. Examples where we have witnessed positive outcomes include the assistance provided by Korean non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to female Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh in 2018. The NGOs demonstrated their experience, know-how and sensitivity in psychosocial counselling and trauma therapy for the victims of sexual violence. Korea has been similarly engaged in refugee community assistance in Kenya and Uganda, emergency health care and food assistance in areas affected by the coronavirus disease in Peru and the Philippines, drought response efforts in Ethiopia and rapid emergency assistance for earthquake-stricken communities in Türkiye this past February.

As an incoming member of the Security Council, the Republic of Korea is committed to assuming greater responsibilities and increasing its contributions to the international community. To that end, we are planning an unprecedented increase in our humanitarian aid budget for next year. We will be continuing our efforts for more effective and efficient humanitarian assistance with creative and innovative public-private partnership projects.

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

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): On behalf of the Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and, my own country, Denmark — I would like to thank Albania for convening today's open debate and for the opportunity to advance the Security Council's discussions on public-private partnership solutions and their role in addressing humanitarian needs in the context of international peace and security. Let me also thank all the briefers for their valuable insights.

We would like to focus on three issues — the private sector as an invaluable actor in saving lives,

the private sector as a key source of innovation and the need for strengthened coordination among all actors, including the private sector, in addressing current and future humanitarian needs.

First, in a world where humanitarian needs are fast outpacing the funding available for life-saving aid, as we have heard today, there is an urgent need for all actors to step up. In recent years we have seen an increase in private-sector funding for humanitarian emergencies, based on the principles of solidarity and responsibility-sharing. That trend is a welcome and much-needed development. The Nordic countries have a long tradition of providing humanitarian relief and are frequently among the top humanitarian contributors globally. However, we can all do more to create synergies and further collaborate with the private sector. The Black Sea Grain Initiative was an example where the public and private sectors came together to avoid a further deterioration of the global food crisis. We deplore Russia's decision to withdraw from it and call on Russia to resume the Initiative.

Secondly, the private sector creates 90 per cent of job opportunities in the developing world and thereby provides an essential pathway to self-reliance. Businesses bring expertise and resources to build local markets that can provide sustainable access to goods and services. The further development of local economies benefits and empowers communities and reduces dependency on humanitarian aid. The private sector is helping to innovate further in several key areas of humanitarian action, from logistics and shelter to communications and information technology. The Council has often discussed the digital transformation of peacekeeping, which is inspired to a large extent by the technological advances available within the private sector. Technological advances in the private sector hold similar promise for humanitarian actors.

Thirdly, the growing complexity of today's humanitarian emergencies is so vast that an adequate response is impossible without the coordinated action of all relevant actors, including the private sector. We need to ensure that we have an inclusive humanitarian architecture in place that enables the meaningful participation of the private sector. Where relevant, our programming and operating models should streamline private-sector engagement across sectors and provide openness and predictability on opportunities for collaboration. That is especially important in the context of the Nordic countries' commitment to developing

localized solutions, which truly engage and empower communities for the benefit of peace and stability.

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

Mrs. Kamboj (India): I thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening today's crucial open debate. We agree with you that maintaining international peace and security is a fundamental goal outlined in the Charter of the United Nations. And it is a fact that traditional diplomatic and military approaches alone are no longer adequate to addressing the complex challenges that threaten global stability today.

So what is the path forward? If we are to tackle those challenges effectively, there is a growing need to foster stronger public-private humanitarian partnerships, which represent a progressive approach to addressing global peace and security challenges by providing a unique platform for collaboration among Governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society and private-sector entities. It is essential, however, to put guardrails in place, strike the right balance between interests, maintain ethical standards and ensure accountability as a prerequisite for the effectiveness of those partnerships.

As far as my country, India, is concerned, it has been a proponent of public-private partnerships in humanitarian and disaster relief operations both internally and abroad. To that end, the National Disaster Management Agency of India has collaborated with multiple stakeholders to leverage their strengths, resources and capacities to effectively address challenges in disaster management. During natural disasters, public-private partnerships have proved highly effective in mobilizing resources and providing financial support, technology, essential supplies and even manpower.

In the international arena, India has consistently been a reliable first responder in humanitarian and disaster relief situations. Whether through Operation Kaveri in the Sudan, Operation Dost in Türkiye, Operation Ganga in Ukraine, Operation Shakti in Afghanistan and even Operation Rahat in Yemen, we have worked seamlessly with multiple stakeholders on the ground to ensure early relief and recovery. Our actions are rooted in an ethos that views the world as one vast family, and as Prime Minister Modi stated at the recent and successful Group of 20 Summit in New

Delhi, that human-centric development paradigm will remain our guiding principle in future.

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

Ms. Rodríguez Mancía (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the delegation of Albania, in particular Albania's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, for presiding over the Security Council for the month of September and convening today's important open debate. We also thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and Mr. Cohen and Mr. Miebach for their inspiring contributions.

I would like to begin by expressing our solidarity with the Government and the people of Morocco following the devastating earthquake that just occurred there, as well as with the people and the Government of Libya in the wake of the effects of Storm Daniel. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and wish a speedy recovery to the injured and rapid rebuilding for the communities affected.

Protracted crises caused by conflicts remain a driver of humanitarian needs, in particular among civilians, who are the worst affected by armed conflict. Conflicts increase the likelihood of famine and malnutrition, in particular for women and girls. The myriad current crises, especially armed conflicts, including the illegal, unjustified and unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and its continued actions imperilling global food security, have resulted in a macroeconomic destabilization of food prices, which in turn has had devastating consequences. They include forced displacement and the loss of access to livelihoods and income, thereby requiring the deployment of a humanitarian response.

Achieving peace and prosperity in a world of threats requires Member States to find new ways to act collectively and cooperatively at all levels. That requires adapting to the realities of today. The New Agenda for Peace, recently presented by the Secretary-General, is built around the fundamental principles of trust, solidarity and universality. Those principles are the foundations of the Charter of the United Nations in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the mission to prevent and respond to humanitarian crises and conflicts in a coherent and complementary manner, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the humanitarian response architecture through strategic partnerships such as those involving innovation, research and business efficiency, which are necessary to improve the reach of humanitarian assistance.

An important benchmark for public-private partnerships in humanitarian response was the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which ensured global food security and alleviated hunger worldwide with a special emphasis on those regions in conflict. We once again express our regret that the Russian Federation has terminated it.

The adaptation of new techniques, including the integration of new digital technologies and advances in medicine and satellite mapping, are essential to the quality of humanitarian response. Research and business development constitute a critical contribution to protecting the most vulnerable and acting immediately to save lives and improving the security environment and humanitarian response, with a focus on building more resilient and peaceful communities.

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

Mr. Lagatie (Belgium): At the outset, let me express our condolences to the people of Morocco and Libya.

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely and important solutions-oriented debate on advancing public-private humanitarian partnerships. I also thank the briefers for their informative outlines.

I would like to stress the following points in the name of the Benelux countries, namely, Luxembourg, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and my own country, Belgium. We of course align ourselves with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

The principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence are fundamental for humanitarian action. It seems important to recall those key principles of humanitarian aid, as well as respect for international humanitarian law, in this setting, in particular regarding the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the recent withdrawal of the Russian Federation from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which directly affects global food security. The same goes for the blocking of the cross-border mechanism for the delivery of humanitarian aid into Syria.

Ukraine and Syria are unfortunately not the only countries affected. The Security Council is regularly briefed by Under-Secretary-General Martin Griffiths and other United Nations actors about the terrible sufferings that are also imposed on populations in the Sudan, Yemen, Afghanistan, in and around Myanmar, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the Sahel and sadly in many other places around the world. The list of forgotten crises is way too long. There should not be a hierarchy among those crises. They all deserve the same attention from the United Nations, as they all deserve equal political backing and financing from us, as Member States. That is one of the reasons that the Benelux countries greatly resort to core funding.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the principles and good practice of humanitarian donorship to be implemented by donors. They are aimed at improving the coherence and effectiveness of donor action, as well as its accountability. Some of the key elements of good humanitarian donorship could be taken on board by private actors or in the framework of public-private partnerships.

First, we must guarantee the protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities, as well as facilitating their return to normal lives.

Secondly, we must strengthen the capacity of affected countries and local communities in order to ensure that Governments and local communities are better able to meet their responsibilities and coordinate effectively with humanitarian partners.

Thirdly, we must provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and sustainable development.

Fourthly, we must support and promote the central and unique role of the United Nations.

Lastly, we must strive to ensure predictability and flexibility in funding to the United Nations and other key humanitarian actors — for instance, through core funding.

Finally let me, point out some best practices and potential sources of inspiration.

The Benelux countries support innovative humanitarian approaches such as the launch of the first humanitarian impact bond — a financial instrument to

encourage social investments by the private sector for the benefit of victims of conflict — and humanitarian innovation accelerators, which are aimed at supporting technology-powered solutions that address pressing global challenges faced in the humanitarian space. Another creative example is the organization of humanitarian hackathons involving multiple actors in the field of new technologies.

Science and technology are indispensable in addressing today's interconnected challenges. The United Nations and its Member States stand to benefit from a stronger and more flexible interface between science, policy and society while strictly upholding the humanitarian principles. The Benelux countries further welcome the Secretary-General's creation last month of a Scientific Advisory Board. I take this opportunity in my national capacity to stress the important work

initiated by the new Group of Friends on Science for Action.

Lastly, the Benelux countries believe in fostering links between humanitarian aid and sustainable development. The private sector could and should play a concrete role in that regard as well. We call on all donors and humanitarian actors to think outside the box and to analyse how innovations in the fields of research, industry and the private sector could be adapted and scaled up in different humanitarian contexts.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m.