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President: Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone)

Members:

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China	Mr. Lei Zhao
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Republic of Korea	Ms. Sun Min Lee
Russian Federation	Mr. Shulgin
Slovenia	Mr. Langerholc
Switzerland	Mr. Carpenter
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Byangoy
United States of America	Mr. Curiel

Agenda

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

The new agenda for peace — addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention

Identical letters dated 30 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2024/581)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council 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 Greece.

Mr. Sekeris (Greece): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, for selecting the important topic of peacebuilding and sustaining peace for your presidency's high-level open debate meeting, a landmark event in the work of the Security Council this month. I also thank the briefers for their informative contributions to today's discussion.

Peacebuilding stands at the crossroads of efforts to prevent and resolve conflict and to invest in building national institutions and bridging divides between communities. All those critical objectives are part of the Secretary-General's A New Agenda for Peace initiative, which Greece has supported since its outset and considers a significant step towards further enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in view of the forthcoming Summit of the Future, to be held next September.

I wish to highlight today the contribution of peacebuilding tools in the increased sustainability of national institutions, one of the pillars of conflict prevention. Peacebuilding provides a road map and tools to not only build effective institutions, but also in strengthening them in order to be able to sustain themselves. That is especially important at a time and in a world of multifaceted security challenges that unfortunately lead to the loss of legitimacy and accountability. Strong institutions are capable of guaranteeing social justice, protecting human rights and safeguarding State cohesion, parameters that best ensure achieving sustainable and long-standing peace and preventing the occurrence of the failed State phenomenon.

Another dimension that ought to be taken into consideration is the fact that conflict prevention, being essentially a cooperative approach, ensures that our actions are not only coordinated, but also more effective and sustainable. It is within synergies, whether on a global, regional, subregional or bilateral level, that we find the strength to address the multifaceted nature of

modern conflicts, regardless of whether they arise from political, economic or environmental pressures. In that regard, I would like to refer to the African Union's Agenda 2063: the Africa we want, which serves as a very useful blueprint for that endeavour.

Greece acknowledges the importance for the international community of achieving a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, aiming at enhancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Investing in individuals by advancing their skills and informing their experiences provides the essential foundations upon which a sustainable peace architecture should be designed. To that end, we welcome the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in advancing those priorities and commend its new initiatives and forward-looking agenda, as described in its latest report on its seventeenth session (S/2024/153).

As an incoming elected member of the Security Council, I would like to assure you, Mr. President, that my country will strive to contribute to this issue and add its own voice throughout its tenure and contribute to our common objectives and endeavours for greater conflict prevention results globally.

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

Mr. Lagdameo (Philippines): The Philippines welcomes this timely debate on peacebuilding and conflict prevention as part of the New Agenda for Peace. We also look forward to the Summit of the Future in September and the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture as important steps in strengthening and updating the United Nations toolbox for the prevention of conflict and its recurrence, with women and peace and security and youth, peace and security perspectives, as highlighted by the Secretary-General in the New Agenda for Peace.

As a nation championing peacebuilding and sustaining peace, our success in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao in the southern Philippines is the centrepiece of our experience in building peace and forging new paths of cooperation through political solutions and inclusive peacebuilding. For decades, conflict in the southern Philippines stemmed from historical injustices against the Moro people. Through years of negotiations, we achieved a comprehensive peace agreement in 2014 that addressed the root causes by establishing a new autonomous region with meaningful self-governance.

The passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2018 and the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao in 2019 were pivotal milestones. The political track was complemented by a normalization process to decommission combatants and transform conflict-affected areas. In its first year, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao accomplished several major feats, including forming a transitional Government, drafting a regional budget and overseeing the decommissioning of thousands of fighters. Those early successes demonstrate the dividends of peace.

The normalization track involves comprehensive socioeconomic development programmes for former combatants and their communities. That includes social protection, capacity-building, livelihood support and infrastructure development. By addressing the needs of affected populations, we aim to sustain peace and prevent conflict relapse.

Women contributed greatly to the success of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. They were negotiators, researchers, educators and community organizers. We forged the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao across more than half a century of fighting between warring factions and clansmen. Peace is indeed possible and patience pays. They are the best way forward with the least hurt and loss. Compassion as strategy lays the strongest foundation for lasting peace after bitter conflict; there is no fresh reason to look back in anger.

Our experience highlights key elements for successful conflict prevention and peacebuilding: first, inclusive political processes that address root causes of conflict; secondly, complementary security and development tracks; thirdly, socioeconomic programmes to support the transition of former combatants; fourthly, building trust between parties through consistent engagement, and fifthly, international support for capacity-building and development.

The gains in Mindanao are encouraging but not irreversible. Challenges remain, including coalition-building in the new Government and the presence of smaller militant groups. Sustained commitment from all stakeholders is crucial. As we implement the peace agreement, we are already seeing improved security, increased investments and new opportunities in the Bangsamoro region. Peace has brought prosperity within reach for millions of Filipinos.

The Philippines experience offers lessons for addressing protracted conflicts. First, patient, persistent dialogue can overcome decades of mistrust. Secondly, political solutions must be paired with concrete socioeconomic benefits. Thirdly, normalization of former combatants is a long-term, multifaceted process. Fourthly, building inclusive governance takes time and sustained effort.

We encourage the Security Council to prioritize comprehensive, context-specific approaches to conflict prevention. That includes supporting inclusive political processes, investing in socioeconomic development and sustaining long-term peacebuilding efforts.

The Security Council must advance the enabling participation of all actors in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts through collaboration between peacekeeping and political missions, while bridging the mandates of other United Nations agencies and beyond. Those efforts must translate into early warnings on potential conflicts, concrete preventive actions and transition plans for peace operations ahead of their withdrawal.

The New Agenda for Peace should emphasize holistic strategies that address root causes while delivering tangible peace dividends. It should also recognize the critical role of regional organizations and neighbouring countries in facilitating dialogue and supporting implementation.

As partner, pathfinder and peacemaker, the Philippines is ready to bring our experiences and insights to the Security Council as a non-permanent member candidate for the period 2027 to 2028, to demonstrate a focused and effective approach to peace and security challenges as we collectively work towards a more peaceful and prosperous world. That is our commitment to inclusive, intergenerational and lasting peace.

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

Ms. Rodríguez-Mancia (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Sierra Leone for convening this important open debate, as well as the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Ms. Spehar, and the briefers, for their valuable contributions and tireless efforts on the issue.

The Republic of Guatemala firmly believes that peacebuilding must be based on participatory

and inclusive democracy. That implies effectively addressing challenges to democracy and development, in which the fundamental requirement is to involve all actors, promote local ownership, collectively identify problems and build sustainable solutions based on consensus and unrestricted respect for human rights. We also recognize the indispensable role of women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the differential impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

Inclusive peace and democratic governance are fundamental pillars for sustainable development and global peace. In that sense, the empowerment of all actors, including women, Indigenous peoples and youth, is crucial to bring unique and valuable perspectives to the negotiating table, through a deep understanding of the roots of conflicts and the real needs of affected communities.

We agree with the concept note (see S/2024/581) regarding the importance of prioritizing the implementation of preventive measures to address the root causes of conflicts, rather than mitigating their most obvious consequences. Conflict prevention not only allows us to avoid the human tragedy and devastating impacts of conflict but is also much more cost-effective, considering the political, socioeconomic and financial costs involved. The Council must incorporate the prevention and peacebuilding approach into its decisions and mandates, including those of peace operations.

The Republic of Guatemala remains committed to creating a safer and more just world for all. Our participation in the peacekeeping operations of the Organization demonstrates that peacebuilding is more effective through multilateral actions that allow for the peaceful resolution of disputes, based on dialogue, cooperation and diplomacy.

It is essential to work on strengthening multilateralism, to enable the United Nations to respond to the new challenges that threaten international peace and security. We therefore reiterate our support for the New Agenda for Peace, which addresses critical issues that should be reflected in the Summit of the Future, as a necessary step towards the promotion of international peace and security.

The Security Council should also benefit from greater interaction with the membership and with other United Nations organs, including the Human

Rights Council. We maintain our strong support for the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and its integrated approach.

Guatemala will continue to promote preventive diplomacy; early-warning systems; the responsibility to protect; general, complete, verifiable, irreversible, transparent and time-bound disarmament; and mediation as means to prevent conflict.

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

Mr. Zahneisen (Germany): I would like to start by congratulating Sierra Leone on a strong and remarkable Security Council presidency and for organizing this timely open debate today.

Germany shares the Secretary-General's assessment in the New Agenda for Peace. We urgently need to enhance the existing United Nations toolbox if we want to be successful in tackling the challenges that we all collectively face. Peacebuilding is one such critically important tool. To strengthen it, it is our conviction that we must pay particular attention to the following three aspects.

First, we need to ensure an integrated approach to conflict resolution and prevention. That, in turn, needs to be supported by adequate funding. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture, including the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Fund, plays a crucial role, as it provides both political support and flexible and targeted funding to address the root causes of conflict. Germany is proud to be the largest long-term donor to the Peacebuilding Fund, and we are equally proud to have spearheaded initiatives on innovative financing for peace. I would also like to note that building and sustaining peace require strong local and national ownership, backed by the international community. We therefore welcome the PBC's written advice on today's debate, and we would like to see the link between the PBC and the Security Council further strengthened.

Secondly, we need to step up our efforts to address the climate crisis, which is a key risk to global peace and stability. We strongly support the Climate Security Mechanism. It is our conviction that the Mechanism is critical in mainstreaming climate, peace and security within the United Nations system.

Thirdly and finally, conflict prevention and sustaining peace are possible only with the full,

equal and meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups. Peace processes and national prevention efforts implemented through national prevention plans have to be designed in a gender-responsive manner to ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are properly met, so that they can develop their full potential as powerful agents of change. That is why Germany supports initiatives such as the African Women's Leaders Network.

Allow me to conclude with a short comment on the Summit of the Future. As co-facilitator, together with Namibia, we are very much encouraged by the substantive input on peacebuilding and prevention that Member States have provided consistently throughout the negotiations. We firmly believe that the Pact for the Future has the potential to deliver effective action on governance reforms in the area of international peace and security, provided that we all pull together.

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

Ms. Oehri (Liechtenstein): Today's debate takes place at a time with the most conflicts worldwide since 1945. Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Israel's large-scale bombardment of Gaza and a range of further situations, including the Sudan, Syria and Myanmar, have caused widespread civilian harm and violated international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace must undoubtedly be at the centre of this very Organization and our common efforts.

The right of peoples to self-determination is a cornerstone of the Charter of the United Nations and a basis for the full enjoyment of all human rights. At the same time, full respect of that right is an important but, regrettably, an often-neglected component of conflict prevention. Liechtenstein has long noted the significant proportion of conflicts that are triggered when communities, including minority groups, call for States to be more responsive to their demands for a greater degree of internal self-determination. Consequently, a better understanding of the relationship between self-determination and conflict can help in building sustainable peace. Liechtenstein's *Handbook on the Prevention and Resolution of Self-Determination Conflicts* has brought new insights, and we stand ready to further engage with Member States and all other interested parties on the application thereof.

The Charter of the United Nations is also clear on the use of force between States, and we deplore the worrisome global trend of the illegal use thereof by some States instead of embracing the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes. The illegal use of force must be prevented, and accountability for violations involving the illegal use of force must be ensured, in particular through the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC) over the crime of aggression. In that regard, Liechtenstein welcomes today's ratification by Ukraine of the Rome Statute and its crime of aggression amendments.

Conflict prevention and resolution can be successful and sustainable only when they are fully inclusive. There is clear evidence that the inclusion of women in peace talks increases the probability of lasting peace agreements, and women's full, equal and meaningful participation across all peacekeeping operations improves mandate delivery. The women and peace and security agenda must therefore feature across all agendas and country situations, and the empowerment of women as agents of change must be a priority.

The inclusion of gender and youth perspectives is also an integral part of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which supports peace efforts in conflict-affected countries. The New Agenda for Peace calls for elevating the work of the PBC, which plays an essential bridging function in the increasingly frequent situations where peacekeeping operations are discontinued or scaled down. Liechtenstein has strongly supported that path and has suggested that the Security Council agree to receive and consider written advice from the PBC, where appropriate, on a regular basis. The Pact for the Future presents an opportune moment to further the design of the future of peace operations, based on new needs and models.

The PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund have also addressed crucial issues of transitional justice, and we encourage further engagement by the PBC on transitional justice as a stand-alone topic. Accountability and transitional justice are key components of conflict prevention and sustainable peace. In that context, Liechtenstein reiterates the crucial nexus between peace and security and justice, and especially the relationship between the Council and the International Criminal Court, including the former's responsibility of making relevant referrals to the ICC, in line with our common efforts to achieve a just peace.

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

Ms. Pavluta-Deslandes (Latvia): Latvia welcomes this open debate on peacebuilding and highly values Sierra Leone's leadership by facilitating inclusive discussion on this important topic. We also thank the briefers for their valuable insight.

As stated in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, instability, violence and the potential for conflict are not restricted to only a few States. Indeed, peace can never be taken for granted in any country or region. In order to turn the rising tide of conflict and instability across the globe, the international community must work together towards a more comprehensive approach to peacebuilding. It should be grounded in the fundamental principles of the rule of law and accountability, which are the cornerstone of peace and development.

In our view, the New Agenda for Peace offers important elements that could form such an approach. The ongoing negotiations on the Pact for the Future provide a unique opportunity for Member States to reflect on those elements and chart a path towards their implementation. Therefore, let us offer a few reflections in that regard.

First, Latvia joins Sierra Leone and other States in supporting the promotion of nationally led prevention strategies. They can be a valuable instrument for use by States in mobilizing national institutions to achieve their peacebuilding and prevention goals. We expect that the Pact for the Future, and in particular the upcoming peacebuilding architecture review, will provide further guidance for the Peacebuilding Commission to assist States in developing such strategies.

Secondly, successful prevention efforts require an inclusive approach that ensures the full participation of women. While they often bear the brunt of conflicts, women and girls are frequently sidelined in the peacebuilding and prevention processes. In order to counter that, Latvia has been actively contributing to shaping global policies on gender equality, including in the Executive Board of UN-Women and the Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as by advocating for the women and peace and security agenda. We are also implementing practical projects in Africa, Central Asia and elsewhere aimed at facilitating women's participation in business and governance.

Thirdly, it is important to address the disruptive impact of illicit small arms and light weapons on sustainable development. We commend the initiative on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030. It serves as an example of regional leadership aimed at addressing both the security and the development aspects of conflict prevention. It is important to continue seeking ways for the United Nations system to better support such regional efforts. In that regard, we welcome the results of the recent Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, where we served as Vice-Chair. The outcome document highlights the need to address issues pertaining to illicit small arms through the development lens, preparing the ground for further work on that matter during the next review cycle.

Latvia will continue to advocate for the peacebuilding and prevention agenda both in words and in deeds, including through continuous voluntary financial support to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions, namely, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

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

Mr. Vasconcelos (Mexico): I deliver these remarks on behalf of the Human Rights and Conflict Prevention Caucus in New York, co-chaired by Germany and Switzerland, and its other members — Albania, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Gabon, Guatemala, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Uruguay.

One month ahead of the Summit of the Future, the world is suffering from multiple humanitarian crises and armed conflicts and from disregard for the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions. We thank Sierra Leone for providing this opportunity to discuss possible solutions under the theme of conflict prevention, and we extend our gratitude to the briefers for their contributions. As Benjamin Franklin said, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

The Caucus strongly supports the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. It contains a powerful prescription and remedy, reminding us that

peacebuilding and sustaining peace can be achieved only with an inclusive approach that integrates sustainable development, human rights, the rule of law and good governance practices.

The Caucus would like to mention three areas that require concrete action.

The first area is governance. Peace and security are built on the pillars of equality, human rights, the rule of law and good governance with strong institutions. Weak governance structures undermine efforts to create or maintain peace and security. As evidence has shown, when individuals are denied their rights and freedoms, the likelihood of unrest and violence increases. The Caucus therefore prioritizes the protection of human rights, strongly condemns any violations and underscores the importance of accountability for such violations.

Secondly, treatment without prevention is unsustainable. Conflict prevention requires targeted conflict management and peacebuilding efforts, but they must be done together with broader efforts to address drivers of conflict. Sustainable development is a vital part of building resilience to violence, helping to mitigate the risk that economic and social inequalities, including gender inequality, poverty and hunger, unemployment and the lack of access to essential services, might contribute to social instability and conflict. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is therefore paramount to leading towards peace and stability.

Thirdly, the Caucus stresses the importance of the participation of women and marginalized groups in early warning, prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. The promotion of women's full, equal, safe and meaningful participation in inclusive peace processes in national, regional and global frameworks is indispensable for lasting and sustainable peace and security.

In the New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General calls on all Member States to prioritize conflict prevention and sustain their commitment to peace and security. We fully support that call, encourage all Member States to take collective action to that end and build on the recommendations contained in the policy brief. We must strengthen our collaboration to create and develop a framework that not only addresses immediate peace and security concerns, but also lays the foundation to long-term stability and sustainable

development. In particular, we urge all Member States to invest in national prevention approaches that are inclusive, locally rooted, conflict-sensitive and that place human rights at their core. An inclusive dialogue is needed that encompasses all stakeholders, including women, on national, regional and global levels. We must strengthen the Peacebuilding Commission, which plays a crucial role in addressing the roots of conflict and the linkages between promoting peace and development. The Caucus supports greater consideration of human rights in the work of the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, including through appropriate briefings, which is essential for both early action and rapid response mechanisms.

Let me end by calling upon all Member States to make the most of the upcoming Summit of the Future and use that opportunity to place conflict prevention and human rights at the forefront of peace efforts. Let us join ranks to strengthen resilience and comprehensively address the root causes of conflict, violence and insecurity, including by accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

(spoke in Spanish)

I shall now speak on behalf of my country, Mexico.

Mexico has promoted public security strategies linked to development, while addressing the issue in a comprehensive manner, with a vision of ensuring human security. We have in place inter-institutional coordination for the promotion of the culture of peace and the rebuilding of the social fabric, which seeks to articulate effective governance for communities in situations of vulnerability and conflict.

We firmly believe that disarmament is the key to achieving sustainable peace. Our region, Latin America and the Caribbean, has been a pioneer in the eradication of nuclear weapons since the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1969. We also support the proposal to prioritize preventive diplomacy, including mediation. In 2023, along with 10 other countries of the region, Mexico established the Ibero-American Network of Women Mediators to promote women's participation in peace processes. Mexico also supports the Peacebuilding Commission as a key player in the New Agenda for Peace. We underscore the importance of strengthening its preventive role in the forthcoming review of the peacebuilding architecture. My country will continue to promote the interconnected role that

the principal organs of the United Nations must play in order to take advantage of their presence in the world, not only in terms of the prevention of armed conflict, but also in addressing and preventing natural disasters, epidemics and pandemics.

The President: I once again wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council 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 South Africa.

Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa): We would like to thank Sierra Leone for organizing this open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with a specific focus on conflict prevention.

As a country that has experienced transition, South Africa believes that conflict can be avoided and peace can be sustained through nationally determined and context specific peacebuilding and policies aimed at the continued sustenance of peace. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) remains a good convening and advisory platform to support countries emerging from conflict in their often-difficult journeys to sustained peace. The success of the PBC remains its flexibility to ensure that countries drive their own peacebuilding priorities. As we are aware, peacebuilding must be adaptive and context-specific for it to hold lasting results. It is for that reason that we would caution against attempts to impose inorganic peacebuilding models on countries. South Africa firmly supports the broader prevention agenda, which finds some traction in the PBC. However, we believe that conflict prevention is broader than the support provided by the PBC, as that means something different for each unique country context.

We note that national prevention strategies are not a new approach. Many countries, including South Africa, have no single comprehensive violence and conflict prevention strategy but various sectoral strategies or policies based on national priorities that, together, can be considered a prevention framework. We also recognize that national prevention strategies may provide umbrella approaches towards improving some forms of conflict, while countries may also create different approaches towards conflict prevention. It is for that reason that we called for the Secretary-General

to report on different prevention approaches in the draft of the Pact for the Future. That broad overview would provide the United Nations with a good foundation on how it can support existing prevention strategies or approaches in each specific context. Critically, at its core, conflict prevention relates to the expansion of the impact of development to a point that violence, in particular violent conflict over scarce resources, becomes redundant. We therefore firmly support the idea of development-focused conflict prevention, with the attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals being a vital component of that approach.

To support development with an impact in developing countries, we need to fully back initiatives such as innovative financing for peacebuilding, international tax regulations or structures, debt restructuring and debt swaps, and to prevent illicit financial outflows, especially from Africa, and insist on the broader reform of the international financial architecture.

In 2024, we cannot truly separate the domestic from the international, as they are inextricably linked in both conflict and development trajectories. A new agenda for peace cannot afford to ignore such political dynamics in conflict prevention, if it were to make a meaningful difference.

The Peacebuilding Fund remains a critical source of financing for peacebuilding. However, the Fund remains constrained by limited voluntary donations, which should be used primarily for countries emerging from conflict until the Fund is enhanced by assessed contributions as per General Assembly resolution 78/257. South Africa would furthermore like to see greater involvement by Fund recipients in meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). That would provide a better perspective in terms of peacebuilding impact, which could further improve the advisories of the PBC.

In conclusion, peacebuilding and sustaining peace must be addressed through a variety of initiatives at domestic, regional and international levels. They should be the collective responsibility of all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector.

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

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): We are grateful to Sierra Leone for organizing today's meeting and affording us the opportunity to exchange views on the most

effective approach to developing conflict prevention mechanisms and addressing threats to peace from the global, regional and national institutional perspectives.

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union.

We fully support the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace and its emphasis on conflict prevention. Regional organizations are crucial partners in addressing root causes of conflicts due to their proximity to hotspots. Enhanced cooperation among the United Nations and regional and relevant international organizations is essential for effective conflict prevention, peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Poland greatly appreciates the contributions of the Peacebuilding Commission to supporting peacebuilding activities in the world's most vulnerable regions, including through the Peacebuilding Fund. We are proud to be a member of the Commission and have actively contributed to its peace efforts in conflict-affected countries by sharing our knowledge and experience. During our tenure, we have advocated for building State and societal resilience, inclusive peace processes and strengthening the rule of law.

We are strongly devoted to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on poverty reduction and social cohesion. Addressing the root causes of instability, such as economic inequality and social exclusion, is essential for building sustainable peace and prosperity. Poland underscores the importance of building State and societal resilience as a cornerstone of that effort, while emphasizing the crucial roles of women and youth as agents of change and contributors to peacebuilding. By preparing for, and effectively responding to, external and internal shocks we can mitigate risks and create more stable environments. In line with that commitment, we are actively engaged in the Economic and Social Council to advance resilience-building initiatives globally.

To complement global efforts, we are implementing domestic policies to enhance living standards and job creation. A key strategy in that regard involves strengthening of our public employment services to improve job placement efficiency, reduce job search times and ultimately increase employment and access to high-quality work. We are eager to share our best practices in job creation and good governance, as those

are fundamental to fostering economic stability, social harmony and long-term peacebuilding efforts.

In conclusion, Poland is committed to working closely with the international community to address the complex challenges facing us today. By prioritizing conflict prevention, promoting sustainable development and building resilient societies, we can foster a culture of peacebuilding and security.

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

Mr. Ćurić Hrvatinić (Croatia): Croatia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to thank the briefers for sharing their valuable insights. And I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this timely and important debate as we approach the Summit of the Future, where conflict prevention will be discussed. We believe that this meeting can provide valuable inputs for our Heads of State and Government.

Conflict increasingly plagues societies worldwide, and its repercussions are far-reaching. Therefore, addressing this complex issue requires determination within a multifaceted approach. Investing in conflict prevention and identifying root causes of conflict is imperative as a long-term strategy to avoid the devastating human, economic, social, environmental and other costs of conflict.

At the global level, we need to strengthen multilateral cooperation with the United Nations at its centre. The successful prevention and resolution of conflicts requires us to recognize the interconnectedness of issues such as climate change, manifold inequalities, economic instability, violent extremism and terrorism, to name just a few, as potential conflict drivers. At the same time, promoting international norms and standards and sharing best practices and lessons learned is indispensable for improving capacities for conflict prevention. The Peacebuilding Commission is optimally positioned to play a pivotal role in that regard as a collaborative platform connecting all three pillars of the United Nations.

At the regional level, we need to support the establishment and strengthening of regional organizations and cooperation frameworks related to conflict prevention, including early-warning

mechanisms and cross-border cooperation, as well as links between global and regional levels. There again, the Peacebuilding Commission serves as a good example owing to its established body of work, expertise and experience in cooperation with diverse partners and organizing of annual meetings, such as with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The establishment of a sustainable peace network could also be considered to further strengthen global and regional cooperation.

At the national level, good governance, the rule of law, democratic institutions, transparency and accountability tools are essential. The implementation of inclusivity and social justice-oriented reforms, the development of national conflict prevention strategies engaging women and youth as well as other relevant stakeholders in conflict prevention are fundamental building blocks for any sustainable peacebuilding and prevention of conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission has already held several meetings with countries to present their national strategies for prevention and sustaining peace and can be further strengthened in that regard.

To conclude, we strongly believe that following concepts are essential for conflict prevention: preventive diplomacy to address underlying tensions and prevent conflicts from escalating; early warning and early response to address conditions and emerging crises in a timely manner; conflict analysis and national prevention strategies to identify both root causes of conflict as well as the efficiency of implementation measures; and finally, capacity-building for Government officials, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Ms. Shaheen (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like, at the outset, to thank His Excellency Mr. Timothy Kabba, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, for convening the important meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. I also appreciate the valuable statements made by the briefers.

As we focus on finding solutions to the escalating crises around us, we cannot overlook the importance of addressing the root causes that lead to the outbreak of conflicts in the first place. In the context of the comprehensive approach to sustaining peace, practical

efforts must be made, including those on preventive diplomacy, to prevent and resolve conflicts, support recovery in post-conflict situations and prevent a resurgence of conflicts. The Council should also use the tools available to it to achieve those goals, in close coordination with the Peacebuilding Commission. As for establishing peace, the principles of communal tolerance and peaceful coexistence must be promoted along with countering hate speech, misinformation and disinformation, which so often cause and fuel conflicts.

Likewise, challenges such as food insecurity and forced displacement, which cause conflicts and crises, can be avoided by taking early actions to mitigate the effects of climate change and by coordinating and expanding international efforts so as not to be limited to addressing and managing the effects of climate change alone, but also to include preventive measures. In that regard, my country believes that effective peacebuilding requires focusing on the following three areas.

First, peacebuilding requires strengthening the rule of law. That will require developing policing strategies, especially in the countries suffering from deteriorating security conditions. Those strategies must focus on enabling countries to use advanced technology in police work, early-warning systems and training law enforcement forces according to best practices. For our part, my country attaches special importance to capacity building by supporting relevant initiatives, foremost of which are the 2024 United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit and the annual workshop on Managing the Performance of United Nations Police Commanders in Peacekeeping Operations.

Secondly, we must invest in good governance based on the rule of law. Strong institutions are the most important pillars of a country's stability. Therefore, it is important for countries that have outstanding experience in Government work and provide excellent services to their people to share their expertise with other countries, especially through knowledge exchange programmes. In 2018, my country began implementing a programme that has supported about 35 countries, including seven countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, to stay abreast of global trends and keep up with development.

Thirdly, women must be enabled to participate fully, equally and meaningfully in work and development sectors, including the security sector. That has been the rationale of the United Arab Emirates programme

for providing training to women cadets from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, in close cooperation with UN-Women, as well as the Global Workshop on Women, Peace and Security in Police Peacekeeping, to be hosted by my country in December. With many successful examples of women playing important roles in peacebuilding, mediation and conflict prevention, including in the Central African Republic, we can still achieve more if we dedicate our collective efforts to that end.

In conclusion, peacemaking requires, in the first place, respect for humankind and a commitment to international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. As we approach the holding of the Summit of the Future next month, and in the light of the vision of the New Agenda for Peace, the international community has an opportunity to reiterate its commitment to peacebuilding and integrating it in multilateralism, so as to ensure a better tomorrow for current and future generations.

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

Ms. Sameer (Maldives): I thank Sierra Leone, in its capacity as the President of the Council for this month, for organizing this open debate.

If peacebuilding and sustaining Peace are the outcomes we want, the effective means through which they can be achieved is conflict prevention. Once that is ensured, the modalities of the means must then be geared towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For how can we dream of peace, let alone sustainable peace, within the barriers of poverty? How can we dream of the de-escalation of conflict within the conditions of hunger? How can we dream of local and international cooperation if inequalities within and among countries persist? If the United Nations wants us to dream, then resources and finances must be mobilized to make prosperity and sustainable development a lived reality.

There is no doubt that conflict stems from fragile political and social structures. In order to strengthen those structures, policies and aid must be geared towards raising the productive capacities of States. Such policies and aid must not be implemented through a one-size-fits-all model; they must factor in the local context and the root causes of political upheaval that leads to conflict within a country or region. They must also factor in the local needs that should be met first

to build peace and later to sustain it. That is the key to effective conflict prevention.

The Maldives has always promulgated the importance of good governance. The current Administration, in efforts to bridge the Government-citizen nexus, launched the Citizens Voice portal, a plea-submission mechanism through which citizens can bring their concerns directly to the President. The Administration also held three public sessions with the President and Cabinet Ministers from January to April this year, to engage in dialogue with citizens and answer questions relating to public policy.

Tangible social benefits resulting from enhanced productive capacity is also an area of prominence, essential for countries like the Maldives and other small island developing States (SIDS) to maintain political stability and to extricate individuals subsumed in vulnerable conditions that subject them to violence. To that end, the Antigua and Barbuda agenda for SIDS envisages a legacy through building resilient economies that goes hand in hand with peace building and the subsequent achievement of sustaining peace. We are hopeful that those concepts will also be mirrored in the outcome documents of the Summit of the Future.

International cooperation and understanding on any shared global issues are pivotal. There is a local idiom that says that if you pull just one end it will not tighten; but its deeper meaning is that, if a particular circumstance requires collaboration, if only one party is engaged in it, then it will not reap any results. To that end conflict prevention and the pursuit of peace necessitate collaboration. And without the support of developed countries with the resources to invest in productive capacities that will aid in the achievement of the SDGs, the multiplier effect of conflict prevention will never materialize.

Today, as we speak about concerted efforts in promoting global peace and security, we must focus on the most pertinent issues at hand. In that regard, we must understand and address the gaps in the multilateral system that have led to the failure in delivering peace in the Middle East. We must take enhanced measures to put an immediate end to genocidal acts being committed by Israel in Palestine. We must seek a two-State solution to the conflict through the establishment of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with the pre-1967 borders.

Before concluding, let me reiterate the commitment of the Maldives to engaging with the Council and all its mechanisms focused on conflict prevention and the pursuit of peace within the United Nations framework.

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

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): At the outset, I would like to thank the Sierra Leone presidency for organizing this high-level open debate.

Today we stand at a crossroads in our pursuit of global peace and security. We face a multitude of challenges in our efforts to build and sustain peace, from geopolitical tensions and rising conflicts to economic disparities and social unrest. Traditional approaches to responding to conflicts are no longer sufficient. As recognized in the New Agenda for Peace, we need a paradigm shift towards prevention with special attention to sustainable peacebuilding strategies at all stages of the conflict cycle — before, during and in post-conflict situations. In that context, let me highlight a few points today.

First, we must focus on preventive diplomacy, early-warning systems and prompt actions. We need to focus on a whole-of-system approach, utilize appropriate tools and mobilize resources while responding to early signs of conflicts. Nepal sincerely believes that the Secretary-General's good offices can play a crucial role in mediation, facilitation and meaningful dialogues to prevent conflict and secure peace, by bringing all political actors together and nurturing trust and collaboration among them.

Secondly, drawing on its own experience with peacebuilding, Nepal stresses the need to ensure a nationally owned, nationally led and nationally driven peace process and peacebuilding efforts to ensure their legitimacy and effectiveness.

Thirdly, addressing the root causes of conflict is a must. Considering the mutually reinforcing relationship between peace and sustainable development, we need to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). If SDG targets are severely off-track, we need renewed commitment, solidarity, financing and action to get those development goals back on track with due priority and urgency.

Fourthly, we must ensure that all voices, including those of marginalized and vulnerable communities, are heard and taken into consideration in political

processes, governance and decision-making. We stress that the meaningful participation of women, youth and ethnic and religious minorities is vital to building a resilient governance architecture and institutions.

Fifthly, stronger partnerships and collaboration between international organizations — including international financial institutions, the United Nations and regional organizations — and the private sector are crucial. Those partnerships are important in identifying and addressing early warning signs of conflicts and promoting inclusive development. Similarly, robust regional partnerships are vital in addressing shared challenges such as cross-border terrorism, organized crime and migration.

Sixthly, we emphasize regular dialogue and robust cooperation among the United Nations system, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to further unleash tools for prevention and peacebuilding, while recognizing the humanitarian-peace-development nexus. We look forward to the 2025 peacebuilding architecture review to integrate prevention systematically.

Lastly, as the largest troop- and police-contributing country, Nepal emphasizes the need for a smooth and sustainable withdrawal of peacekeeping operations so that peace gains can be preserved and promoted.

In conclusion, for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, we need a comprehensive approach that promotes inclusive dialogue, ensures sustainable development and addresses the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality and exclusion. It is incumbent upon us to support countries in need with adequate resources, capacities and technologies.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to creating a world where conflicts are prevented before they begin and where peace and stability are not just aspirations but realities for all. As a post-conflict country, Nepal stands ready to share its experience and lessons learned in building and sustaining peace and preventing potential conflicts.

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

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I thank you Mr. President; it is a pleasure to see you preside over the Council. I extend my gratitude to Sierra Leone for convening this important and timely discussion. We extend a

warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Musa Timothy Kabba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone, who earlier presided over the debate. We also thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, the Commissioner for Political Affairs and Peace and Security and the other speakers for their insightful interventions.

It is said that all politics is local; so is building and sustaining peace and security. We value the concept of nationally led violence-prevention strategies outlined in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. The success stories of peacebuilding and conflict prevention — for example, in Sierra Leone — owed much to an enlightened approach to building trust and inclusion at the community and national levels. In Pakistan's experience too, fighting terrorism on our border regions was successful due to the support, assistance and participation of local communities. Pakistan's updated national action plan to combat terrorism, which we have called *Azm-e-Istehkam*, or "Resolve", relies on working with local communities to exclude and eliminate violence, violent extremism and terrorism. The provision of security and basic needs and services is essential to building social cohesion, trust and success against the forces of violence, crime and terrorism.

However, such national strategies for conflict prevention are necessary but insufficient to address the complex crises that we face in Africa and elsewhere. The proliferation of most of those conflicts has been caused by both endogenous and exogenous factors, which must be understood and addressed. The root causes of those conflicts range from the legacies of colonialism, internal struggles for scarce food, water and pastures, external competition for precious national resources, efforts at regional or global hegemony and interventions designed to suppress the struggle of peoples to reclaim their own political and economic destinies. The consequences of foreign occupation are nowhere as clear as in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and in Palestine. It is the clear responsibility of the Council to end Israel's genocidal war in Gaza.

National strategies for conflict prevention can be successful, but only if they are accompanied by other regional and international measures to address some of the main causes of conflicts — poverty, unemployment, injustice, the exploitation of national resources and external intervention. Unfortunately, international strategies to address those root causes of terrorism,

violent extremism and criminal activity have been either absent or inadequate or have proved counterproductive. For instance, the countries of the Sahel and other conflict zones require massive economic and financial support to overcome poverty and destitution, which is a cause of conflict. Yet, despite promises, international solidarity has been in short supply. That was vividly illustrated during the coronavirus disease pandemic. Most of the countries in conflict zones are also in dire debt distress. Yet only four have succeeded in securing a partial, and not so very generous, restructuring of their debts.

On the contrary, when conflicts have erupted, the response has often been to impose sanctions, which mostly punish the poor and exacerbate the drivers of conflict. Or the response is to resort to some form of intervention, which is mostly counterproductive. What is required is a comprehensive and integrated strategy that offers regional and international support to national efforts for conflict prevention and dispute resolution. Such a strategy must include economic and financial support to the States in distress to create employment and generate trust and hope; capacity-building, to enable Governments to provide the basic services needed by local populations; an end to external exploitation, which fuels violence and terrorism; good faith efforts to resolve conflicts at the local and regional levels; regional and international support for security and counter-terrorism operations; and a review of ill-considered sanctions that mostly punish common people.

We trust that this timely debate in the Council will inspire new thinking to build effective approaches to preventing conflicts, resolving disputes and building peace in the numerous countries that are in conflict today.

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

Ms. Moutchou (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the holding this important debate and to welcome the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone and of all the briefers.

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its full support for the New Agenda for Peace, which confirms the urgent need to strengthen multilateral efforts and to work for peace in a complex and tumultuous international

context. The Agenda offers concrete recommendations for finding solutions to our common challenges and to new and emerging threats.

Morocco's commitment to peace, tolerance and international security takes the form of the implementation of several initiatives at national, regional and international levels in the context of a comprehensive, multidimensional and targeted approach. In that context, my delegation would like to refer to the following elements.

First, I would like to refer to Morocco's role in initiating several United Nations documents that enshrine interreligious and intercultural dialogue and prohibit and criminalize hate speech, such as General Assembly resolutions 73/328 and 77/318, as well as resolution 75/309, which proclaims 18 June as the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, to be observed annually. In that context, we must recall the speech made by His Majesty King Mohammed VI to the fifteenth summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, on 4 May, in which His Majesty stressed:

"We are deeply concerned about the rise in hate speech, which is claiming more and more victims. That scourge, by fuelling the cycle of violence and instability, poses a serious threat to peace and security in many regions of the world."

His Majesty also affirmed that resolution 77/318 "will make it possible to make a qualitative leap forward in terms of the efforts to combat extremism and hate speech".

Secondly, Morocco recognized very early on the nexus between peace, security and human development. To that end, it has implemented several initiatives that place human development at the centre of its national strategies, notably through the national initiative for human development, the third phase of which benefits from 18 billion Moroccan dirhams in funding over five years and is focused on boosting human capital, combating social exclusion and poverty and promoting the economic inclusion of young people. Morocco also deems education a fundamental and key element in ensuring development and the maintenance of a culture of peace and in combating the scourges of discrimination and violent extremism. In that context, the Moroccan education system inculcates, from an early age, the virtues of openness, cultural and religious diversity and the promotion of the universal values of human rights.

Thirdly, Morocco makes a consistent contribution to peacekeeping operations. Indeed, the Kingdom is one of the oldest and largest troop contributors in Africa and the world. More than 75,000 members of the Royal Armed Forces have been deployed in 15 United Nations peacekeeping operations on every continent since 1960.

Fourthly, Morocco is keenly aware of the contribution of women as primary sources of early warnings with regard to tensions in social relations; and in terms of their awareness of threats to personal, family and community security; their interpretation of extremism in local discourse; and their role in mediation. The Kingdom is actively involved in a number of initiatives, including on the promotion of mediation and the training of *mourchidates*, that is, women religious guides. Gender equality is the foundation of a just, democratic, peaceful and equal society. In that respect, His Majesty King Mohammed VI emphasized that:

"the issue undoubtedly requires a comprehensive renewal through a profound transformation of antiquated mindsets and the collective conscience."

Lastly, and fifthly, Morocco is actively involved in promoting multilateralism based on peace, stability, solidarity, international cooperation, mutual respect and sustainable development at the global and continental levels, as fundamental and consistent principles in its constructive and fruitful relations, including within the context of supportive and active South-South cooperation. In that regard, Morocco believes that the Summit of the Future will be a vital opportunity to consolidate our shared commitments, strengthen confidence in global priorities and support good governance capable of finding multilateral solutions for a better future.

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

Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to highlight some additional points.

At the outset, let me express our appreciation to Sierra Leone for convening this momentous high-level open debate. I would also like to thank the briefers for their insightful presentations and assessments of the trends on the ground.

This debate is held at a critical moment. The Secretary-General's proposal of a New Agenda for

Peace has given new impetus to our efforts to boost collective security by putting prevention at its centre. The preparations for the Summit of the Future are in their final phase. The upcoming peacebuilding architecture review in 2025 will provide an opportunity to further improve the work of the United Nations on peacebuilding. And the General Assembly answered the growing peacebuilding demand by introducing assessed contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund.

Building upon our commitment to strengthen multilateralism amid extremely concerning global conflict trends, I would like to offer a few observations on how to increase the effectiveness of prevention efforts with a specific emphasis on implementation and the impact on the ground, taking into account our experience as President of the Economic and Social Council and our membership in the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2022 and 2023.

The two dedicated meetings — the Economic and Social Council special meeting entitled “Unleashing the transformative power of Sustainable Development Goal 16: Improving governance and reducing corruption”, held in May 2023, and the joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the PBC entitled “The importance of the Sustainable Development Goals in linking peace and development on the ground”, held in June 2023 — further highlighted the interlinkages between prevention, development and security and provided ideas on how to make prevention more effective by operationalizing national, regional and global frameworks and initiatives.

The following elements stood out as essential if we are to build effective prevention strategies.

First, for peacebuilding processes to lead to lasting peace and sustainable development, they must be anchored in nationally owned and led efforts and better supported by the United Nations Common Country Analysis and the Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

Secondly, inclusivity is key in identifying and advancing national peacebuilding priorities. Therefore, listening to and taking into account the voices and perspectives of local partners on the ground should be further strengthened.

Thirdly, the well-established linkages between peace, development and human rights substantiate both the need for a comprehensive approach to support

countries in addressing the root causes of conflict, as well as the need for a better coordination of the work of the United Nations entities and their development partners on the ground.

Fourthly, making better use of the work of existing United Nations bodies and better coordination is of critical importance. The resident coordinators and the operational activities for development segment and the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council can serve as platforms for breaking down the siloed nature of the United Nations system and the resulting inefficiencies. Optimizing the cooperation on the ground between agencies, funds and programmes to better support national peacebuilding priorities will result in greater alignment between the United Nations and the international financial institutions.

Finally, with an increased interest from countries and regions to engage with the Peacebuilding Commission, there is a growing recognition of the Commission’s important role, and the New Agenda for Peace provides an opportunity, including for the Council, to further strengthen the advisory, bridging and convening roles of the Commission and enhance the impact of its work.

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

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): I thank the presidency of Sierra Leone for convening this important debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, focusing on conflict prevention strategies at the national and regional levels.

Kazakhstan believes that prevention and sustaining peace is a fundamental aspiration of humankind. It is the most effective way to address conflicts and their devastating consequences. In our increasingly interconnected world, marked by both unprecedented opportunities and complex challenges, the imperative to cultivate peace has never been more urgent.

The Secretary-General’s New Agenda for Peace provides a comprehensive framework for strengthening conflict prevention. We believe that its effective implementation requires integrated and concerted efforts at all levels.

At the national level, prevention strategies should be anchored in inclusive participation, respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is imperative to create an environment where all citizens feel empowered and

have a stake in the future of their country. Addressing the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, inequality and discrimination, is also critical. We are therefore implementing large-scale democratic reforms, aimed at enhancing human rights, strengthening the rule of law and building an economically stable and socially just State — a new Kazakhstan, based on the principle of leaving no one behind.

At the regional level, we must strengthen cooperation and coordination mechanisms to identify and address emerging threats. Regional organizations play a crucial role in promoting dialogue, confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy.

We also need to explore innovative ideas to turbocharge the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. New approaches to regional coordination, interconnection and coherence are needed in order to streamline the work of the United Nations. In that vein, we have proposed to establish a United Nations regional centre on sustainable development for Central Asia and Afghanistan in our southern capital, Almaty.

Generating the political will, resources and capacities to support such efforts is essential. We call on all Member States to prioritize conflict prevention in their national agendas and allocate adequate resources for that purpose. The United Nations system, including the Peacebuilding Commission, which has a unique mandate to support our collective efforts to develop and implement prevention strategies, should play a vital role in providing technical assistance and capacity-building support to countries and regions. Peacekeeping operations also continue to be an important tool for sustaining peace. Kazakhstan has been consistently expanding its contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and we fully endorse the Secretary-General's initiative on Action for Peacekeeping.

Our national peacekeeping training centres, such as the Kazakhstan Peacekeeping Training Centre, the Demining Centre and the Military Medicine Centre of Excellence, with their United Nations-recognized courses, will continue to provide training to women and men, as well as civilian and military experts from the region.

Currently there are almost 150 Kazakhstani servicemen in United Nations missions. We are ready to further expand our contribution by sending

specialized military units and military equipment to multiple United Nations peacekeeping operations. This open debate provides a valuable opportunity to contribute to the ongoing negotiations on the Pact for the Future. We support the inclusion of strong language on conflict prevention in the outcome document, which should emphasize the importance of early warning, preventive diplomacy and the need to address the root causes of conflict.

In conclusion, Kazakhstan is committed to working with all Member States to advance the agenda of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We believe that by focusing on prevention, we can create a more peaceful and prosperous world for all.

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

Mr. Fedele (Italy): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the European Union and would like to add several remarks in its national capacity.

One year ago, the New Agenda for Peace sent a clear message: when it comes to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, Member States must find common ground, even in challenging times like the ones we are witnessing today. One year later, the ongoing dramatic crises confirm how true this message was. As the cost of conflict becomes more and more unbearable, it is time to shift the paradigm to a conflict prevention approach grounded on universal values, such as human rights and the rule of law, while remaining fully respectful of national ownership.

The path towards conflict prevention, however, is neither simple nor direct. It needs political will, solidarity and accountability. That means solidarity among countries, based on the guiding principle of leaving no one behind, recognizing that the lack of development is a main driver of conflict, violence and insecurity and, therefore, recognizing the need to accelerate action towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It means the accountability of countries, as a result of a social pact between Governments and their communities. There are liberties to safeguard, human rights to uphold, gender and youth empowerment to achieve and the rule of law to abide by — not only domestically, but also internationally.

Any time a country violates international law, it itself becomes a driver of conflict and insecurity, hampering development. The universal commitments enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, cannot be questioned. Solidarity and accountability, prevention and national ownership must, therefore, go hand in hand.

For all those reasons, Italy fully supports the vision of the New Agenda for Peace: a bottom-up, widespread system of conflict prevention based on the development of national strategies that are anchored in human rights and the rule of law. National prevention strategies should leverage the role of regional organizations and receive effective and concrete support from the United Nations, in full respect of the principles of solidarity, complementarity and national ownership.

When it comes to conflict prevention, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and regional organizations must be on the same page. And regional organizations should be involved in the decision-making process that leads to the adoption of relevant resolutions.

As an excellent step in the right direction, let me mention the recent decision to extend to the African Union a permanent invitation to the Peacebuilding Commission's meetings. It is a decision that Italy has been advocating, and we welcome it with great satisfaction. The African Union's participation in PBC meetings is consistent with the Commission's goals and will bring the added value of a key actor.

Finally, Italy considers conflict prevention a pillar of the New Agenda for Peace and of the Summit of the Future, as well as a guiding principle of the peacebuilding architecture review, with the Peacebuilding Commission at its centre. As we approach the final stages of negotiations, let us make the development of national prevention strategies, developed in full respect of the principle of national ownership, a concrete deliverable of the Pact for the Future.

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

Mrs. Tahzib-Lie (Kingdom of the Netherlands): I would like to begin by expressing my country's sincere gratitude to Sierra Leone for organizing today's important debate, and I thank all the briefers. This debate enables us to learn from each other's

best practices and share our national perspectives on conflict prevention.

In addition, in the context of the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, national ownership and leadership are key to effectively address the complexity of the issues at hand. We believe that all States need to invest in addressing the root causes of conflict.

First, in order to prevent conflicts from escalating and to sustain peace, we have to focus on strengthening the social contract between people, communities and authorities. Institutional and interpersonal trust can be built when we put people's security, needs, experiences and ideas for solutions at the very centre of all of our efforts. We also refer to that as a people-centred approach, which includes equal access to justice and integrating physical protection, mental health and psychosocial support into our conflict prevention efforts.

Secondly, we all need a functioning legal order that ensures adherence to the rule of law, as that allows us to address grievances and injustices in a peaceful and effective way. When issues are left unaddressed or the road to justice is blocked, people may seek redress through violent means, and displacement and irregular migration can emerge.

Thirdly, the Kingdom of the Netherlands believes that integrating a psychosocial lens in prevention and peacebuilding efforts will mitigate the impact of conflict, particularly since a psychosocial lens contributes to building trust and resilience at the individual and local community levels. We therefore welcome the increased attention for the psychosocial aspects of peacebuilding, especially by the Peacebuilding Fund. As a donor to the Fund, for example, my country has supported projects by the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration. Those projects improve psychosocial support and mental health care for young people affected by conflict in Somalia.

Fourthly and lastly, as an incoming member of the Peacebuilding Commission for the years 2025 to 2026, the Kingdom of the Netherlands looks forward to fostering cooperation and bridging the gap between people and authorities. We strongly believe that it is vital to put people's needs and aspirations at the very forefront of all of our efforts.

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

Mr. Vichankaiyakij (Thailand): Allow me, first of all, to express our thanks and gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this very timely and relevant debate against the backdrop of growing conflicts across the globe. We would also like to express our thanks to all the briefers for their summaries and insight.

Thailand welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative on A New Agenda for Peace. It is crucial that we make progress on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

I wish to take this opportunity to highlight the following points.

First and foremost, let us address all the root causes of conflicts, including socioeconomic disparity and marginalization, poverty, inequality within and among countries and division around the world. Key to help to prevent those causes is for us to speed up efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular in areas of people's empowerment, education, health care provision, work and inclusive participation in decision-making at all levels.

Secondly, conflict prevention requires inclusive multi-stakeholder engagement in addressing fundamental inequalities. We need to place emphasis on empowerment and the participation of all peoples in the peace continuum. Thailand supports the women and peace and security agenda. As recognized in resolution 1325 (2000), armed conflicts do impact women, and therefore women have a role and make contributions in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. All forms of violence against women and girls must be eliminated. On the other hand, education and equal opportunities in decision-making are essential to empower women. In addressing economic and social issues, young people can play a vital role through their unique ability to promote a culture of peace and interfaith and intercultural dialogue, as well as bridging different groups and generations.

Thirdly, countries in affected regions must be engaged in identifying pathways for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We support A New Agenda for Peace in its call for stronger partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations. In our region, South-East Asia, through our norm-building and community-building efforts and practical policies based

on our challenges, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has made progress on preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. Thailand strongly believes that a reformed Security Council must reflect a broader geographical representation, cross-regional balance and greater representation of developing countries.

Fourthly, policies to prevent conflict must be driven by domestic stakeholders and guided by respective national interests and priorities. Thailand believes that it is essential to provide financial and technical support for stakeholders for conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

Thailand's efforts are guided by our principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, which aligns closely with the SDGs. Through the Thailand International Cooperation Agency and our peacekeeping operations in United Nations missions, Thailand integrates a people-centred approach in its technical cooperation and capacity-building programmes for countries affected by conflicts. Those programmes aim to respond to the needs of the local communities in such areas as agriculture, water and land management.

The Summit of the Future is just around the corner. It will be a great opportunity for us to work on conflict prevention through the New Agenda for Peace. It is a chance for us to demonstrate the strength and depth of our efforts, through diplomacy and dialogue, in overcoming differences and hostilities.

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

Ms. Landi (Denmark): I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark. We thank Sierra Leone for organizing this important open debate and extend our gratitude to the briefers for sharing their insights on strengthening conflict prevention efforts.

Today we are one month away from the Summit of the Future, a watershed moment that will test our ability to reinvigorate multilateralism. I will share three points.

First, prevention and sustainable peace are best achieved through whole-of-society approaches based on collaboration between authorities and civil society at all levels. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. National ownership ensures that conflict prevention measures are tailored to the unique political, social and economic

contexts of each country, in order to ensure legitimacy and effectiveness. The Nordic countries recognize the importance of effective national and regional prevention strategies as well as the need for adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding.

Secondly, investing in local infrastructure for peace and strengthening local institutions is key. Effective, accountable and inclusive local governance has proven important for the management of conflicts, the protection of human rights and addressing root causes of conflict. As outlined in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, the United Nations has a role in supporting national capacities for prevention and peace.

Thirdly, ending violent conflict and sustaining peace will always depend on tackling exclusion. Inclusive sustainable development is a cornerstone of conflict prevention. That includes access to basic services and decent jobs, in particular for marginalized groups; the protection of civic space; women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in decision-making; and young persons' participation in peacebuilding and political processes. The Council may bring attention to inclusive peace approaches and work towards the accelerated implementation of the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas.

The Nordic countries support the principles outlined in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. Throughout our engagements, the Nordics work towards ensuring that views and opinions of all countries are heard, not least those countries affected by conflict. We also support strengthening the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission for the Council through regular engagements and advice.

In conclusion, the Summit of the Future in September is an opportunity to come together to signal our commitment to reform global governance, deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthen conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts at all levels. We cannot afford to fail.

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

Mr. Ferreira Silva Aranda (Portugal): Portugal's stance on foreign affairs has always been guided by the need to invest in preventive diplomacy — a principle that also steers the work of the United Nations. Therefore, Portugal would like to commend Sierra Leone for convening this important open debate.

A serious commitment to conflict prevention is essential. To that end, the implementation of the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace is urgently needed in order to strengthen the capacity to anticipate and adapt to new risks, with greater investment in prevention and peacebuilding and increased attention to all forms of violence.

Portugal would like to underline the following five points.

First, shifting the focus of the United Nations from conflict management to conflict prevention must be at the core of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. That would allow us to break down silos at the heart of the United Nations system and foster greater coherence and integration among the three pillars of the United Nations. Portugal fully supports the recommendations put forward in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace policy brief, namely, to create a mechanism within the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to mobilize political and financial support for the implementation of national and regional conflict prevention strategies, and to formalize the Commission's relationship with international financial institutions and regional development banks in order to align financing instruments with national priorities.

Secondly, the PBC has a privileged convening role in addressing contemporary threats to international peace and security. Recent engagements with the PBC, such as that of the Gambia, have proven that peacebuilding works. Its results are even more evident when there is strong political will at the national level and a fully inclusive approach that guarantees the participation of women, youth, vulnerable groups and victims of past conflicts and human rights violations — overall, of representatives of civil society. Moreover, the PBC has encouraged an all-inclusive approach to peace by deepening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, namely, the African Union, and encouraging the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda.

Thirdly, peacebuilding and sustaining peace are increasingly important in the context of transitions and drawdowns of traditional United Nations presences on the ground. Conventional peacekeeping, while still one of the best United Nations tools to address violence and widespread conflicts, lacks the adaptability and comprehensiveness needed to tackle the root causes

and aftermath of those conflicts. Those strategies must therefore become integrated components of the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

Fourthly, in line with the New Agenda for Peace, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding depend on adequate, predictable and sustained financing, including through domestic resources and voluntary and assessed contributions from Member States, in particular to the Peacebuilding Fund. While welcoming the consensus reached on the use of assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund, we recognize that additional steps are needed, and Portugal has raised its voluntary contributions to both the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Peacebuilding Fund.

Fifthly and lastly, without sustainable development and human rights there is no peace or security. Therefore, prevention and peacebuilding are both conditions and consequences of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I would like to conclude by underlining that prevention is the backbone of the United Nations. Even though the concept is firmly embedded in the Charter of the United Nations, the Summit of the Future offers the perfect opportunity for the international community to come together and renew its commitments to a comprehensive approach to peace and security and to make prevention the indispensable approach to addressing the multiplying issues that we all are facing. The Council is central to that approach.

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

Mr. Ragutthalli (India): Let me begin by congratulating Sierra Leone on its historic presidency of the Security Council. I also would like to thank Sierra Leone for organizing this open debate and the briefers for their insights.

We are living in a world that is increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace, security and prosperity, while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. Conflict settings in recent times have also become more complex and uncertain, particularly in parts of Africa and West Asia. Terrorists, armed militia, organized criminal groups with external support and the misuse of emerging technologies are also having a profound impact on conflict dynamics.

We therefore need to recognize that conflict prevention is complex and multidimensional and calls for a holistic approach. A comprehensive approach focusing not just on the political process, but on sustainable development and inclusive economic growth is therefore inevitable. Resolution, reconciliation, recovery and reconstruction are also critical aspects of prevention strategies.

In that context, let me offer the following observations for consideration.

India recognizes the primacy of national Governments and authorities in identifying and driving priorities, strategies, and activities for sustaining peace. What is necessary is to work closely with Member States, in line with their national requirements and needs, rather than advocating prescriptions and solutions from outside.

As the world's largest democracy, we are convinced that representative and inclusive governance structures will help stabilize peace, safeguard fundamental rights and protect the rule of law. Equitable development is also a key component of building and sustaining peace.

A strong and effective partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations is a prerequisite, particularly in the context of Africa. Given the fact that nearly 70 per cent of Chapter VII mandate resolutions are on Africa, continuing to deny Africa representation in the permanent category of membership is a blot on the collective credibility of the Council. India has always supported the Ezulwini Consensus and called for permanent African representation in an expanded Council. Those who continue to deny the expansion of the permanent category and Africa's rightful place in it must be called out.

Terrorism is a global threat not only to peace and security, but also to development. No global prevention mechanism can be complete without a comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism. We reiterate the urgent need for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The prevention paradigm cannot ignore the resources needed for socioeconomic development. The governing architecture of the international financial institutions is in need of structural changes, with greater representation of the global South. Similarly, there is a need to fulfil unkept promises, such as that of climate financing.

India has always played an important role in both peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We have engaged in peacebuilding through extensive development partnerships with countries in the global South. The cumulative value of India's development projects now exceeds \$40 billion, encompassing soft loans, grants and capacity-building training programmes. In particular, I would like to highlight the India-United Nations Development Partnership Fund, which is a testament to India's unwavering commitment to multilateralism and global development.

At the third virtual Voice of the Global South Summit, hosted recently by India on 17 August, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi proposed a comprehensive global development compact on behalf of India. India's development journey and experiences with development partnerships will serve as the foundation of that compact. That is a testimony to India's close partnership with the global South.

Finally, we draw upon our experience of both peacekeeping and peacebuilding to caution that conflict prevention is best left to bodies that are mandated and configured to do so. Assuming such a role without any deliberation or preparation on the issue is a recipe for failure.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that earlier we heard a delegation repeat once again its falsehood about my country. I will not dignify that falsehood with a response, in the interest of time. Such remarks deserve nothing but contemptuous dismissal.

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

Mrs. Narváez Ojeda (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Republic of Sierra Leone for the opportunity it has given us to participate in this open debate, and we congratulate it on its leadership. We also welcome the statements made by the Member States, which call on us to keep working on conflict prevention.

We know that the current geopolitical landscape is quite different from the one we knew some years ago. Today the international scenario is much more fragmented and, at the same time, interdependent in innumerable areas linked to development. Against that backdrop, it is essential that we strengthen our multilateral action on the basis of political will focused on prevention on behalf of all Member States. Only from that perspective and with the conviction of

maintaining an environment of peace will we avoid new tensions and possible sources of conflict that put international peace and security at risk. Conflict prevention and peacebuilding are primary tasks of the Security Council, since it is necessary to address the central causes of conflicts in all their magnitude with greater understanding, considering all the factors involved with the same level of importance, be they political, socioeconomic, financial or human, to name but a few.

Member States are called on to forge a true culture of peace, in harmony with sustainable development and respect for human rights. That work requires the Council's commitment and coordination between its work and that of other organs of the United Nations, such as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, among others. However, above all, as the Secretary-General underscored, it requires us to look beyond our individual interests, as the well-being and future of humankind depend on the solidarity and tacit commitment that we can establish in order to achieve that common goal. Achieving the goals of the New Agenda for Peace requires our institutions to implement prevention programmes as one of their cornerstones, the strategies of which must be aligned with the strengthening of inter-institutional alliances and the development of trust between States and civil society. On that last point, it is necessary to strengthen the full spectrum of human security in order to respond to crises, institutionalize local peace initiatives, encourage community participation in implementing ceasefires, promote inclusive dialogues, foster strategic communication to prevent disinformation and hate speech and, in the long term, promote more responsive and inclusive governments and institutions.

The violence perpetrated by criminal gangs and terrorist groups in conflict situations threatens the security of the entire population, but above all increases the level of risk for specific groups, such as women, young people and girls. It is therefore key that we continue to work towards promoting the empowerment of women and youth as agents of peace, in line with the women and peace and security agenda, which advocates for the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation of women in peace processes, conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding.

The search for peace and the establishment of a coordinated governance system to maintain it over time was the driving force that prevailed in 1945 to unify

States under global governance and so that today we can debate matters such as this. Keeping the values of multilateralism alive will depend on our collective ability to promote dialogue and resolve conflicts in a spirit of full understanding and cooperation. As we have pointed out in various instances, the challenges before us today can only be faced with greater cooperation and willingness on the part of Governments, because even when conflicts and their causes become more complex and difficult to resolve, the only feasible way forward remains a commitment to peace and re-establishing dialogue.

In that regard, the Summit of the Future, which will take place in September, represents the ideal space in which to debate and agree on the multilateral solutions that our States require today, and its dialogue, we hope, will significantly spur on the New Agenda for Peace and its desire to build peaceful and resilient societies. Without effective dialogue between the parties involved in conflicts, the background of our statements seems to fade without concrete actions, while tensions remain, undermining the hopes of the civilian population and putting global security at risk. The challenge of maintaining and promoting preventive actions and a culture of peace is a challenge that we must not abandon. Greater openness to, and willingness to engage in, dialogue are imperatives for all, without losing sight of the collective well-being, in particular that of children, who will inherit the present that we are all building today.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lambrinidis.

Mr. Lambrinidis: I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, as well as Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

We want to thank Sierra Leone and you personally, Mr. President, for organizing this extremely timely open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In the past couple of years, we have seen tremendous support among Member States for the conflict-prevention agenda. This open debate has already been an opportunity to capitalize on that momentum. Since 1945, in the words of Article 1, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, a core purpose of our business here at the United Nations has been “to take

effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace”. In spite of conflict prevention being one of the purposes and principles of the Charter, however, we see a trend of conflict on the rise and a lack of priority given to investment in prevention. The Secretary-General’s New Agenda for Peace set out to correct that and to bring conflict prevention back to centre stage. The Summit of the Future should signal a political commitment to preventing conflict and building peace. The 2025 peacebuilding architecture review should translate that political commitment into concrete action, building on proposals such as the national prevention strategies.

Some say that they worry that conflict prevention is “intrusive”. That is a myth that must be dispelled, as the Secretary-General points out in his New Agenda for Peace. In fact, conflict prevention strengthens the resilience and cohesion of societies. Those societies that have the political will to work systematically on preventing conflict will see that it pays off. In fact, it already has; they have already seen it. The cost of conflict in terms of human suffering and financial losses far exceeds that of prevention. Countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Timor-Leste and Colombia, which have been through bloody internal strife, know that all too well. They are now among those working the hardest on sustaining peace. We should all follow their example: the need for conflict prevention is universal.

In the past few years, we have seen countries from all regions and with varying levels of development, including Kenya, Norway and Mauritania, come forward to showcase their national conflict prevention efforts in the Peacebuilding Commission. We very much welcome that development and want to see a more systematic approach to national prevention strategies. While those strategies remain voluntary, we think that all countries should be encouraged to develop such strategies or plans, and the United Nations should provide support to those that need it. The United Nations country teams, peace operations, the Peacebuilding Fund and specific instruments, such as the peace and development advisers, can be instrumental in that respect.

Of course, prevention has many aspects to it. We must tackle the root causes of conflict, whether they be poverty, unemployment, climate change, lack of access to basic services, lack of trust in institutions and respect for human rights and the rule of law. We may need to use early-warning systems to reduce the risk of cross-border conflict. We may need mediation or

confidence-building measures at the grass-roots level or at the highest international level. Most of all, we need the political will and the courage to acknowledge that prevention is necessary and worth investing in. It is not kumbaya. It will save lives if we do it right.

At the upcoming Summit of the Future, we will pledge our joint commitment to preventing conflict and building resilient and sustained peace. Let us embrace the Secretary-General's call for countries to develop national prevention strategies. That is our chance to make a difference for a more peaceful future.

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

Ms. Bryant (Australia): We thank Sierra Leone for convening today's critical discussion. We note that, in 2006, Sierra Leone was one of the very first States Members of the United Nations to bring its peacebuilding vision to the newly created Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

Australia commends the work of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. But with global conflict at some of the highest levels in history and with humanitarian responses underfunded across the globe, we know we must do more, especially on conflict prevention.

The United Nations peacebuilding architecture review presents a critical opportunity to enhance our peacebuilding tools and approaches. The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace recommends that Member States and regional organizations develop prevention strategies. Prevention strategies can help strengthen local and State institutions, promote the rule of law and enhance inclusivity, equality and social cohesion. Those are issues that affect all States and regions, regardless of size, wealth or level of development. Australia is no exception, with our ongoing effort to promote respect for the rights and traditions of our Indigenous people being just one example.

We applaud the PBC for its groundbreaking meeting in March 2024 when Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste voluntarily presented their national prevention strategies to PBC members. Australia looks forward to taking up a seat on the PBC next year. We have been active in the United Nations peacebuilding agenda since its inception and continue to be a major donor to the Peacebuilding Fund and the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

We look forward to working with all Member States to support conflict prevention and sustaining peace as a priority for our PBC term. We will also draw on our experience in peacebuilding and sustaining peace in our own region, and we will champion an inclusive approach to peacebuilding.

As we prepare for the Summit of the Future and the peacebuilding architecture review, we must reaffirm our commitment to peacebuilding and conflict prevention and to supporting efforts that promote dialogue, reconciliation and inclusive governance. We hope that the Pact for the Future will offer a clear call from our leaders to support that agenda. In doing so, we can achieve a more peaceful and prosperous future for us all.

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

Ms. Ni Mhuircheartaigh (Ireland): Ireland commends Sierra Leone for organizing this debate, for its work in sharing its own experience of conflict and its path to peace and for its broader advocacy, including on the importance of permanent African representation on the Security Council.

Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and adds the following.

Today's debate on building and sustaining peace is a welcome opportunity to reflect on how we, as the international community, can better work together on prevention, particularly in fragile or at-risk situations. Multiple crises across the globe and an upsurge in violent conflict and devastating humanitarian need highlight how pressing it is that we do so. And so we thank the briefers for their insightful reflections.

Today Ireland would like to highlight three priorities for our collective work on conflict prevention.

The first priority regards the root causes and drivers of conflict. Addressing root causes means investing in people, especially women, youth and minorities. It means ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in political and economic decision-making. And it means working together to foster inclusive, resilient societies where the rights of all are respected.

We know that conflicts have their universal truths, but they also have their specificities. The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace recognizes that and

calls for national strategies to address the different enablers of violence and conflict in societies. We support that call. We further call on the Secretary-General to strengthen preventive diplomacy and use all the tools at his disposal, as set out in the New Agenda for Peace. Early-warning and early response measures are also key, particularly when situations are deteriorating. We must utilize the tools at our collective disposal in a coordinated way, and local communities and civil society must be at the centre of any response.

Another key priority is the importance of early and integrated transitions planning. The hard-won gains of peace need to be fostered and protected to prevent fragile and at-risk societies from slipping back into conflict. The legacy and contributions of the men and women who serve on our behalf on the ground as Blue Helmets in fragile and insecure environments must be protected. We call for the full implementation of resolution 2594 (2021) — whose development and adoption were led by Ireland during our recent Council term — to ensure that as a United Nations peace operation draws down, it does so in a way that reinforces peacebuilding objectives. Multiple recent decisions to shrink or close peacekeeping and special political missions with accelerated timelines and without adequate transition planning is concerning.

Furthermore, the United Nations has an important role to play during transitions, at both political and operational levels, to ensure that countries have the commitment and capacity to assume full responsibility for the security and the protection of civilians. And a broader process of engagement must be part of transition planning to ensure that any follow-up United Nations presence is sufficiently resourced and calibrated to engage in peacebuilding.

That leads to our third priority, which regards the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Fund. While the Security Council has the primary role under the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security and must fulfil its responsibilities, other parts of the United Nations must also be engaged to play a stronger and more proactive role in peacebuilding. In fully applying the peacebuilding architecture at our disposal, we should adopt a longer-term perspective, incorporating potential risks, including those relating to climate change and emerging technologies. The Council should deepen engagement with the PBC and make better use of its advice, including on preventive diplomacy. And

the Resident Coordinator system should also support greater engagement with United Nations peacebuilding architecture, including the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund. Adequate, predictable and sustained funding for peacebuilding remains critical. Ireland is proud to be among the top contributors to the Peacebuilding Fund. We welcome the decision to partially fund it through assessed contributions and believe that that should be further expanded.

In conclusion, many peace processes, including our own, have been sustained by lasting support from the international community. We speak from experience when we say that peace is not a one-off event, but rather a process that requires constant nurturing and support. As we prepare for the Summit of the Future and the 2025 peacebuilding architecture review, we have an opportunity to chart a way forward to enhance comprehensive approaches to building and sustaining peace. Ireland stands ready to engage constructively and collaboratively with all Member States and other stakeholders in that regard.

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

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): I thank Sierra Leone for convening this open debate.

Viet Nam values the Secretary-General's vision for renewed international efforts towards international peace and security on the basis of international law, as reflected in the New Agenda for Peace, which underpins the principles of trust, solidarity and universality. The Summit of the Future should be an important opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their broad support for diplomacy, trust-building, peaceful conflict settlement and the centrality of the Charter of the United Nations and national action in that domain.

In today's volatile world, characterized by increasing uncertainties and complexities, challenges to peace range from geopolitical to socioeconomic factors and are also exacerbated by climate-related adversities. Addressing such multidimensional and evolving threats requires a comprehensive approach. It is ever-more critical that security and development and other drivers of conflicts be addressed in an integrated manner. In that vein, I wish to highlight the following points.

First, to build and sustain peace, the United Nations must take a holistic and coherent approach, harnessing the strengths and synergies of its main organs,

especially the coordination between the Council and other key bodies. A concerted and well-coordinated peacebuilding strategy, including a strengthened nexus between humanitarian aid, development and peace, can play a significant role in conflict prevention. In that regard, we welcome the Peacebuilding Commission's advisory and bridging role, which helps bring together all relevant actors, including international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations.

Secondly, to further enhance its effectiveness in addressing conflicts at all stages, from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peacebuilding, the Security Council must make the best use of available tools, including preventive diplomacy, trust-building, mediation and reconciliation and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence. The Council's response, while complying with the basic principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, needs to also take into account the unique circumstances of each conflict situation and must complement, but not supplant, the essential role of the country concerned.

Thirdly, efforts and measures to build and sustain peace should be people-centred, with priority given to addressing the root causes of conflicts, protecting civilians and safeguarding their well-being and livelihoods. Investing in people through education and providing them with economic opportunities can help reduce the likelihood of resorting to violence. Women and youth participation should be encouraged and integrated in national as well as international peacebuilding efforts to ensure that the solutions are inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable. It is imperative to emphasize the importance of preventive measures and robust early-warning systems to effectively address potential risks before they escalate into full-blown crises.

Viet Nam places a high premium on addressing the threats to peace, early and from afar, with a prime focus on socioeconomic development, promoting national unity and solidarity and international cooperation, in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter.

Finally, I take this opportunity to reaffirm Viet Nam's firm commitment to engaging constructively in bilateral and multilateral efforts to sustain peace and prevent conflicts.

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

Mr. Alwasil (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*). At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your presidency of the Council this month. We thank you for holding this very important debate on addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention.

In recent times, we have witnessed a significant increase in international conflicts that threaten international peace and security. That has become of great importance and requires the attention of the international community as a whole, particularly as it requires the unifying and strengthening of international efforts to address the root causes of potential conflicts in order to mitigate their damage and repercussions internationally and control them before they escalate. In that regard, we support the efforts of the Secretary-General to achieve international peace and security through his policy brief on the New Agenda for Peace, which aims to reinvigorate efforts to agree more effective measures to achieve collective security and take more effective steps to manage emerging risks and conflicts.

The current challenges of our world require the international community to be open to the main pillars of the proposed New Agenda for Peace by the Secretary-General, as they aim to enhance the multilateral system and ensure its effectiveness and resilience to contribute to the success of the efforts of the United Nations to settle conflicts through peaceful and diplomatic means. Ultimately, that will enhance the role of preventive diplomacy and reinvigorate neutrality and mediation in resolving conflicts and addressing risks that undermine international peace and security, while taking into consideration the need to respect the sovereignty of States and independence of their national decisions.

Saudi Arabia has made every effort to contribute to enhancing international peace and security regionally and globally. We have played pivotal and historic roles in resolving international conflicts over the past years alongside the United Nations. For example, we continue our efforts to end the conflict in Yemen in cooperation with Oman, the Security Council and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Mr. Hans Grundberg. We also sponsor the current efforts to end the conflict in the Sudan alongside the United States, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, in cooperation and coordination with the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also played an important role in facilitating a prisoner exchange between the Russian Federation

and Ukraine. And we continue to play several roles in conflict resolution within the framework of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

In conclusion, as we hold this debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the unprecedented Israeli aggression against civilians in the Gaza Strip has continued for more than 10 months. That has diminished the chances for peace, undermined international efforts calling for peace and entrenched distrust in the multilateral international system. In that regard, we reaffirm our firm position regarding the Palestinian question and our full support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in line with international resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, in a way that guarantees the Palestinian people's right to establish their independent State along the 4 June 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. My country condemns all unilateral measures and acts of aggression against individuals and property by the Israeli occupation forces. They should stop fully and immediately. We also call upon the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and implement its resolutions regarding the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the unhindered entry of humanitarian assistance.

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

Mr. Mao (Cambodia): To begin, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this crucial open debate on the theme "The new agenda for peace — addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention". This topic has reminded us that it is high time for us to mobilize our efforts to focus on sustaining peace and preventing conflict.

The threats to global peace are growing increasingly complex, extending beyond traditional conflicts to include challenges such as climate change, economic disparity and new emerging technologies. In the light of that, Cambodia fully supports the New Agenda for Peace, which underscores the critical role of preventive diplomacy, dialogue and international cooperation in securing a more stable and peaceful world.

Cambodia's journey from conflict to peace provides a unique perspective on the challenges and complexities of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We have witnessed first-hand the devastating impacts of war and instability, and we speak today with a deep

understanding of the human cost of conflict. Therefore, we stand ready to share our experiences and lessons learned with other nations facing similar challenges.

At the regional level, we firmly believe that regional organizations — in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union and the European Union — play a crucial role in preventing and resolving conflicts. Cambodia reaffirms its dedication to the ASEAN Charter and the principles of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and non-interference. With its rich diversity, the ASEAN region offers unique challenges and significant opportunities for peacebuilding and progress. In that regard, Cambodia is committed to collaborating with our neighbours and partners to strengthen stability and security across South-East Asia and worldwide. We will continue actively participating in regional initiatives that foster dialogue, build trust and enhance cooperation.

Nationally, Governments have a duty to create policies that foster social justice, drive economic development and uphold human dignity. In that connection, Cambodia has made significant progress in rebuilding its society, institutions and economy after decades of conflict. That progress is reinforced by the Royal Government of Cambodia's Pentagonal Strategy Phase 1, which aims to promote inclusive economic growth, ensure social equity, enhance the quality of life for all citizens, strengthen governance and maintain peace and stability to achieve our goal of making Cambodia a high-income nation by 2050. As we approach the Summit of the Future, Cambodia is fully committed to supporting the Pact for the Future, recognizing it as a vital framework for strengthening multilateralism, promoting sustainable development and ensuring that the benefits of peace reach all corners of the globe.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Cambodia's unwavering commitment to the principles of the United Nations and the cause of international peace and security. Cambodia urges all nations to renew their dedication to peace, cooperation and mutual respect to address root causes and overcome the challenges we face today and in the future.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Alves (Timor-Leste): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor and for convening this open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

In the face of sporadic and uncontrolled violence in many parts of the world and regression in the respect for the rule of law and the Charter of the United Nations on the global stage, the task of keeping and sustaining peace demands innovative approaches. If we, as members of the United Nations, truly aspire to a world in which future generations can thrive and live in peace, we must explore and embrace those alternatives. Small actions matter, wherever they occur. When they contribute to peace, even within a single community, they can gradually prevent conflict and send positive ripples across the globe.

I would like to begin by sharing the experience of my country, Timor-Leste, a small island State that restored independence in 2002 after a long period of colonization and occupation by external forces. Beyond addressing the challenges of its colonial past, Timor-Leste faced the critical task of building and sustaining its own internal peace after independence.

Timor-Leste has made significant strides in peacebuilding and sustaining peace since restoring its independence in 2002. The integration of reconciliation and peace initiatives in overall Government programmes and development strategies has been crucial in addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting stability. Timor-Leste's journey from 2010 onwards has been focusing on conflict prevention. As an independent nation with limited resources lacking modern infrastructure, addressing issues such as unemployment and underemployment and providing basic needs and services to its people has been essential.

The establishment of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission played a pivotal role in addressing past human rights violations and fostering national reconciliation. The Commission's efforts to document abuses, provide reparations to victims and promote dialogue have been instrumental in healing the nation's wounds and building a foundation for lasting peace. In addition, Timor-Leste also took the initiative to reconcile with its neighbouring country, through the Commission of Truth and Friendship, to jointly address shortcomings and chart a path forward.

Unemployment and underemployment have been significant challenges for Timor-Leste. To address those issues, the Government has designed programmes

to create decent work opportunities and reduce work deficits. Initiatives such as vocational training, entrepreneurship support and job creation programmes have been implemented to enhance the employability of youth and marginalized groups. Timor-Leste has also worked closely with Australia, South Korea and Japan to send Timorese labour to those countries under specific labour schemes to enable them to both work and acquire income, as well learn new skills to enable them to be self-sufficient when returning home. Those efforts have not only provided economic opportunities but also contributed to social stability by reducing the risk of conflict arising from economic grievances. As we all know, there can be no peace without development and no development without peace.

While recognizing that Timor-Leste's experience cannot be automatically replicated in other contexts, the achievements in peacebuilding offer a valuable success story for other countries. As one of the founding members of the Group of Seven Plus, currently chaired by Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste has shared its experiences and lessons learned with other member States of the Group.

In conclusion, to sustain its success, Timor-Leste will continue to prioritize peacebuilding and development efforts. That includes maintaining a focus on conflict prevention, creating economic opportunities and ensuring the provision of basic needs and services. Moreover, fostering regional cooperation and leveraging South-South cooperation can enhance Timor-Leste's resilience and ability to address emerging challenges.

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

Mr. Mushayavanhu (Zimbabwe): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. I thank all the briefers for their profound insights.

Peace remains an elusive promise for many, so said Secretary-General António Guterres in the policy brief *A New Agenda for Peace*. That poignant situation does not only persist but is worsening, as is evidenced by the current conflicts in various parts of the world. Hence, the importance and timeliness of the theme for this high-level debate.

Let me then proceed by taking the mantra peace begins with me, peace begins with you and peace begins with all of us and matching it to village wisdom, which posits that we should move in concentric circles

in our pursuit of peace. A favourite proverb that is shared in many African languages goes, “When the heart is at peace, the body is healthy.” That highlights the interconnectedness of peace within oneself, within the family, the community, the country and ultimately the world. I will therefore address the theme from the national, regional and global perspectives.

At the national level, we should prioritize addressing social, economic and political drivers of conflict. In Zimbabwe, His Excellency President Emmerson Mnangagwa engages in consultative governance, addressing inequality and fostering reconciliation and social cohesion among diverse communities. By investing in education, employment opportunities and social services and establishing independent institutions to support democracy, entrench human rights and promote accountability, the Government of Zimbabwe builds resilience against potential conflicts. Those initiatives also facilitate equitable and balanced development.

In furtherance of sharing its own experiences and making a contribution to a more just and peaceful world, Zimbabwe has put forward its candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2027 to 2028.

At the level of our subregion, the Southern African Development Community, of which Zimbabwe is the current Chair, has mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution. The Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation has as its objectives conflict prevention, management and resolution. Regionally, the African Union is spearheading a number of initiatives on conflict prevention and resolution that contribute to stability. Nevertheless, all of that is clearly not enough. Hence, the ongoing conflicts in Africa. Our institutions need to be underpinned by adequate financial resources, the provision of technical assistance and the support of local efforts to build resilient communities free of negative external interference. In the end, it is much cheaper to invest in prevention than in resolving raging conflicts.

By embracing the principles and approaches outlined in A New Agenda for Peace, we can take proactive steps to address national, regional and global aspects of conflict prevention. Honouring and respecting the right to self-determination is a crucial aspect of that. As stated by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan,

“More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations.” (SG/SM/7262)

In conclusion, addressing conflict prevention at the national, regional and global levels requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation.

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

Ms. Jiménez de la Hoz (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate, which enables us to reflect on how to strengthen conflict prevention mechanisms in order to address new threats to global peace from a regional and national perspective.

Spain champions investment in prevention, understood from a broad perspective, which includes respect for human rights as a linchpin of sustainable development and peacekeeping. Spain’s strategy for humanitarian diplomacy sets conflict prevention and resolution as one of its fundamental objectives. With the strategy as a framework, Spain seeks to address the causes that generate conflict situations and promote inclusive dialogue processes, thus helping to shape more democratic and peaceful societies that respect the rule of law and human rights. My country also promotes the women and peace and security agenda. In that connection, I would like to mention two specific examples: the Ibero-American Network of Women Mediators, held in June 2023 in Madrid, and, more recently, a seminar on the women and peace and security agenda in Yemen, held in Madrid, with the participation of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen.

In the framework of the preventive diplomacy advocated by Spain, we strongly support the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and its efforts to promote cultural diversity, religious pluralism and mutual respect in order to build and strengthen inclusive societies.

Regional organizations play a key role in strengthening preventive mechanisms. In that context, one of Spain’s priorities is strengthening African international organizations, such as the African Union, in general, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in particular, because of the

special neighbourhood and interdependence links with West Africa and the Sahel, focus regions for my country. In 2023, Spain announced a contribution of €50 million to the African Union, in general, and an additional €20 million to the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development. In recent years, our annual contribution to ECOWAS has been around €4 million.

Spain is also developing a new Spain-Africa strategy, which seeks to renew and strengthen its close relationship with the continent. Within the framework of that strategy, Spain will remain committed to promoting prevention mechanisms, supporting and accompanying peace and demobilization processes, advocating the inclusion of development and good governance in European peace and security policies on Africa and supporting stabilization policies, including the provision of public services, such as health, education, security and justice.

Finally, returning to the context of the United Nations, I note that the Pact of the Future provides an opportunity to strengthen conflict prevention mechanisms in order to address global threats, in line with the New Agenda for Peace.

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

Mr. Muhamad (Malaysia): Malaysia thanks Sierra Leone's presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's open debate, and the briefers for their invaluable insights.

Our delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Bangladesh on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The topic of this debate is both timely and crucial as we navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world fraught with numerous challenges that threaten global peace and security. In that context, the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace remains a relevant reference.

The pursuit of peace is a shared responsibility, underpinned by collaboration, creativity and a deep commitment to our shared humanity. In that spirit, Malaysia's national policy, guided by the Malaysian Madani principles, embodies the values of inclusivity and participatory governance. It acknowledges that enduring peace can be achieved only when all segments of society are empowered to contribute to the nation's

development. The principles of Malaysia Madani are rooted in the belief that a harmonious and equitable society is the foundation of lasting peace. Through democratic values and the rule of law, we aim to create an environment where every citizen has equal opportunities to contribute to the nation's progress, thereby fostering their stake in its peace and stability. By nurturing social cohesion, we strive to build a resilient and thriving society that can seize opportunities and cultivate a sense of ownership for the future.

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Malaysia remains steadfast in its commitment to regional peace and stability through our active engagements, both within the regional body and with its dialogue partners. That long-standing commitment is rooted in our recognition that shared prosperity is deeply intertwined with collective security and, in fact, will strengthen it. In that regard, the ASEAN Regional Forum has successfully facilitated constructive discussions and practical cooperation between ASEAN and ASEAN Regional Forum participants on political and security issues of mutual concern. This platform enables us to tackle emerging challenges and seize new opportunities, emphasizing that our regional architecture must be supported by strong institutions and a steadfast commitment to mitigating threats to regional stability and security.

Malaysia also firmly believes that a strong partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential for global peace and security. We greatly value the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and key regional partners, such as ASEAN and the OIC. This not only enhances our collective impact, but also promotes a more integrated and effective approach to tackling the complex security, economic and social challenges of today.

In this era of unprecedented change, we must all heed the call to strengthen international frameworks and cooperation through unwavering commitment and collective resolve. Malaysia will do so and continue to contribute constructively to international efforts to foster dialogue and cooperation, which are the bedrock of peace and security.

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

Mr. Paulauskas (Lithuania): I would like to extend our congratulations to Sierra Leone for its successful presidency of Security Council this month.

We appreciate this opportunity to discuss today the challenges to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

As highlighted in our concept note (see S/2024/581), we are now witnessing an alarming global uptick in violent crimes. In fact, we are also confronted with a multifaceted crisis that threatens to undermine the very foundations of international peace and security. The ability of United Nations to effectively respond is being tested like never before.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine represents a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and Russia's own commitments. Such actions are incompatible with its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council, and Russia continues to block any meaningful action to stop and reverse the illegal and unjustifiable war against Ukraine. The repercussions of Russia's war of aggression extend far beyond the European continent. The ripple effects are felt across the globe, particularly in areas of food, energy, security and the environment. Moreover, Russia's involvement in destabilizing actions through mercenary groups in Africa and Syria further complicates efforts to maintain international peace and security. Those actions often display a blatant disregard for international humanitarian law, thus further exacerbating the suffering of innocent civilians.

Lithuania supports the vision laid out by the Secretary-General in the New Agenda for Peace. It contains the key elements necessary to advance global peace and security, including the reaffirmation of our commitment to the United Nations Charter and international law. Investing in prevention is critical and the Pact for the Future offers a timely opportunity to advance in that direction. The peace that we envisage can be pursued only alongside sustainable development and human rights, as set out in the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, together with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, provides a robust framework for addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting a culture of peace. Ensuring gender equality and the full realization of the human rights of woman and girls, facilitating their empowerment and leadership and enhancing their meaningful participation in all aspects of society are essential prerequisites for sustaining peace. The agendas on women and peace and security, youth, peace

and security and children and armed conflict must be fully implemented if we are to achieve those objectives.

We cannot speak of peace without addressing the need for justice. Impunity for crimes, especially in conflict situations, as well as ineffective rule of law institutions, erode trust and hinder the path to lasting peace. During its presidency of the Security Council, years ago, Lithuania organized an open debate (see S/PV.7113) that emphasized the importance of police activities within United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions in that regard. We call for a renewed focus on those efforts, including training for police forces and reinforcing United Nations missions with specialized police expertise.

As we look ahead, it is imperative that we further strengthen the links between peacebuilding and peacekeeping. That is particularly important in transition contexts, where early strategic planning and preparation are key to ensuring smooth and coordinated handovers that pave the way for sustainable peace. The United Nations is indeed well placed to assist in the preparation of nationally led prevention strategies, and we are grateful to Sierra Leone for highlighting that aspect in the concept note.

United Nations peacekeeping missions continue to play a critical role in creating the conditions necessary for peace, including through monitoring and reporting on human rights violations and breaches of international law. Those missions must be equipped to respond to emerging challenges such as climate change, the presence of non-State actors, the rise in transnational crime, the instrumentalization of migration, the use of artificial intelligence in warfare and the erosion of support within host nations. The implementation of the recommendations for action in peacekeeping initiatives, in line with the New Agenda for Peace, is essential to addressing those challenges effectively.

Finally, particular attention must be given to threats caused by misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. As the Secretary-General notes, those threats are rampant on social media platforms and are deadly in volatile societal and political contexts. The Summit of the Future should address those threats and, as a follow-up, we should develop concrete guidelines and steps to combat them.

In conclusion, Mr. President, allow me to reiterate my appreciation for your leadership in convening this timely debate. I look forward to the next steps in implementing

the Secretary-General's recommendations contained in the New Agenda for Peace.

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

Mr. Tun (Myanmar): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, and the presidency of Sierra Leone for convening this high-level open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace. I am also thankful to the briefers for their comprehensive statements.

As aggression, conflicts, wars and a series of interlocking threats continue to swell in numerous parts of the globe, our world today has been unprecedentedly and increasingly endangered in multiple forms. Myanmar views the upcoming Summit of the Future as an important opportunity and venue for the international community to agree on multilateral solutions and fill in gaps on various agendas, ranging from peace to sustainable development.

My country, Myanmar, is currently undergoing a revolution to end the military dictatorship and to build a federal democratic union in Myanmar. I wish to stress that astonishing experiences have taught us to completely understand the intensity of violent conflicts, ignited by the illegal military coup and the junta's continued atrocities and its severe consequences. We are therefore cognizant of the price of sustainable peace and development more than ever. I wish to highlight the following points.

First, there is a critical rollback in the hard-earned progress achieved during the tenure of the elected civilian Government.

Secondly, peace, security and development can hardly be afforded in Myanmar due to the military junta's continued disregard of the rule of law, violations of international law and the perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Thirdly, as a result of the military junta's atrocities, the number of displaced people and refugees has reached 3.2 million, and 18.6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Large numbers of children and youth have lost their right to education and health. Vulnerable groups, including women and girls as well as Rohingya, have been facing numerous forms of violence by the junta forces. Humanitarian operations remain challenging.

Fourthly, incidents of trafficking and transnational organized crimes, including online scams, are alarmingly growing, and have impacts on neighbouring countries and beyond.

Fifthly and finally, the economic and social outlook of the country is becoming extremely dire.

However, we regret that the desperate calls of Myanmar's people for effective action and support have been repeatedly ignored. We witnessed how the absence of concrete actions by the international community have extended the unlawful military coup and the junta's licence to commit international crimes. Throughout a lengthy period, sadly our people, especially women and girls and youth, have borne the brunt of the atrocities and international crimes perpetrated by the junta.

Nevertheless, Myanmar's people have been doing their best at the national level to establish sustainable peace in the country through their efforts to end the military dictatorship, which is the root cause of the conflict. The National Unity Government, ethnic resistance organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and all relevant actors on the ground have been working together to achieve our ultimate goal of building a federal democratic union. We are therefore committed to enduring until peace and justice prevail in Myanmar.

Clearly, no one knows the real situation of Myanmar better than the people of Myanmar do. No one wants Myanmar to be a peaceful, stable and prosperous State more than we do. While welcoming any support from all interested Member States to find a sustainable solution to our crisis, we urge them to listen attentively and seriously to the people of Myanmar and respect our aspiration sincerely. It is critically important that all initiatives to resolve the crisis be in line with the people's wishes and a sustainable solution.

What the people of Myanmar desperately need now is immediate and decisive action from the international community. Only through a concerted and coordinated effort from the international community to isolate the military junta and cut it off from all support, including the flow of arms and weapons, jet fuel and money, will Myanmar return to its path towards democracy and create a peaceful and stable environment. In that regard, the role of the United Nations, especially the Security Council, remains vital. I urge them to act now.

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

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of Sierra Leone for having convened this important and timely open debate.

Effectively addressing the threats to peace and security considered in the Secretary-General's policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace necessitates strengthened multilateralism, through which all States, in particular developing countries, can participate equally in global decision-making. Respect for basic principles, such as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in domestic affairs, is crucial for preventing conflicts, restoring and maintaining peace and promoting sustainable economic and social development. That imperative acquires particular importance in our part of the world.

The liberation by Azerbaijan of its territories from the 30-year Armenian occupation, the end of the conflict and the restoration of my country's sovereignty and territorial integrity created conditions conducive to building a peaceful, stable and prosperous region. Ongoing diplomatic efforts inspire hope for sustainable and lasting peace based on the fundamental norms of inter-State relations.

At the same time, adherence to those norms must be ensured not by mere words and declarations, but by practical steps taken in good faith, including, in the first place, legally grounded action at the national level in Armenia to root out the territorial claims enshrined in its Constitution and laws that have underpinned the aggression against Azerbaijan in the past and that are the main obstacle to normalizing relations today.

Progress on advancing the peace agenda also requires preventing attempts to draw new dividing lines in the South Caucasus, militarize the region and turn it into a hotbed of geopolitical rivalry and confrontation. It is also important to address the harm caused by hate and lies and to end impunity for the most serious crimes.

It is essential to show stronger solidarity with countries that are overcoming the severe consequences of conflict, rebuilding devastated cities, rehabilitating the destroyed environment and biodiversity and helping displaced people return to their homes in safety and dignity. Of particular note in that regard, the scale and gravity of the landmine threat in Azerbaijan necessitate urgent, continued and adequate international support

for our demining efforts. This month alone, five more people have become mine victims in my country, bringing the number of casualties caused by landmines and other explosive remnants of war in the post-conflict period to 377 in less than four years. Of that number, 69 were killed and 308 suffered horrific injuries. More than half of them are civilians. In total, since the early 1990s, the number of mine victims in Azerbaijan has reached 3,456, including 358 children and 38 women.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Azerbaijan's strong commitment and determination to continue its consistent and results-oriented efforts to promote conflict prevention, justice and accountability.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Mayar.

Mr. Mayar: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to share recommendations on behalf of the Group of Seven Plus (g7+), the only intergovernmental organization dedicated to representing and supporting countries and people from across regions that are affected by conflict and facing vulnerabilities. We are united by a vision of pursuing peace, resilience and stability founded on the principle of national ownership through collective advocacy and peer learning. The g7+ is currently chaired by Sierra Leone and has its headquarters in Dili.

Allow us to share three reflections based on the collective experiences of the g7+ and the aspirations of our citizens in terms of sustaining peace and preventing conflict.

First, consistent with the joint United Nations and World Bank study *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, we recognize the profound impact societal grievances play in sowing the seeds of conflict and instability, especially in countries confronted with years of socioeconomic challenges, such as inequalities and injustice. Often unhealed, those grievances are usually inherited from previous conflicts, entrenching intergenerational divisions that have become the bedrock of successive outbreaks of violence. Therefore, we see a decisive role for reconciliation, national truth-seeking and inclusive dialogue for peace. The member countries of the g7+, such as Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone, and other countries, such as Rwanda and South Africa, to name a few, have successfully followed such a trajectory. We are fully aware that such an approach could be undermined by two factors.

One factor is that external support for the pursuit of peacemaking and peacebuilding is often not context-specific. In order to ensure that that support is tailored to diverse contexts and avoids one-size-fits-all approaches, we have been in partnership talks with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office to identify a list of good practices that draw on decades of experience among our member countries. We invite Council members to partner with us to those same ends. Moreover, we encourage all Member States to unequivocally support nationally inclusive peacemaking, peacebuilding and reconciliation, and at the same time, to know when to show mutual restraint in order to allow those activities to take place without external interference. The experience of my own country, Afghanistan, is a vivid example of how efforts to foster national consensus for peace have often been thwarted by regional and global Powers, creating an environment of distrust. In the current climate of intensified geopolitical tensions, the Security Council must remember that its Charter-based mandate demands a team-minded orientation and rejects geopolitical self-interest. It must therefore find a way to foster a norm of collective restraint in order to prevent proxy wars and frozen conflicts.

Our second reflection is that every society and country has institutions, capacities and potential for conflict prevention to ensure its social and national cohesion and its sovereignty. International efforts too often bypass those institutions and local capacities and, instead of strengthening the existing national and local systems, deliver aid through external processes and piecemeal projects. That approach undercuts the ability of countries to build cohesion, invest in State-building activities and deliver inclusive social and economic services to their populations. However well-intentioned those efforts might be, they do not always help to overcome the conditions of grievance and instability that fuel future conflict.

Lastly, we cannot overstate the importance of international laws and regulations that are meant to protect the basic rights of the peoples of the United Nations to obtain peace, dignity, freedom and prosperity. We see no clear pathway to sustainable peace or conflict prevention without respect and consideration for those shared rules and norms. Multilateral cooperation is indispensable in ensuring respect for those tenets and treaties. Since increasing geopolitical and geoeconomic fragmentation hinders compliance

with those norms, we see an urgent need for inclusive multilateralism. That includes making reforms within the United Nations, especially in the Security Council and the General Assembly, to ensure a greater voice and inclusivity for the non-Western world and Africa in particular. Reflections on, and inspiration for, the reforms and future of the United Nations can be sought in new research and publications such as *Liberating the United Nations: Realism with Hope*, a book recently authored by esteemed colleagues Hans von Sponeck and Professor Richard Falk.

Looking forward, we extend our hand to Council members and invite them to co-host a working retreat with the g7+ in order to gain a better appreciation of the situation of countries on the front lines of vulnerability and conflict and to explore how the Council can constructively engage with those countries to sustain peace and prevent future conflicts.

The challenges we face are immense, but so too is our collective potential. Let us commit to a future where peace is not just a possibility but a shared reality achieved through cooperation, respect for international norms and the genuine inclusion of all voices.

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

Mr. Abesadze (Georgia): At the outset, let me express our gratitude to the Sierra Leonean presidency for today's debate.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union (EU), and I would like to make some additional comments in my national capacity.

Peace and security, along with human rights and development, are the main pillars of the work of the United Nations. While Governments have the primary responsibility for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the United Nations system can do more to build more peaceful and resilient societies. However, nearly eight decades after the founding of the United Nations, we are still working to achieve peace in many parts of the world, including in my own region, where Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine and Russia's continued illegal occupation of two integral regions of Georgia are causing enormous human suffering, with wider implications for global security and sustainable development.

Russia's destructive behaviour in the region has been further reflected in its hampering of the conflict prevention and resolution processes, including by terminating international missions and blocking international security and monitoring mechanisms on the ground. Moreover, Russia has also refused to allow international security mechanisms established pursuant to the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement on the ground, namely, the European Union Monitoring Mission. Notwithstanding that harsh reality, Georgia remains committed to doing its utmost to show care and ensure humanitarian relief for those conflict-affected people who have been carrying the heavy burden of the grave consequences of Russia's illegal occupation. As the Secretary-General has emphasized in A New Agenda for Peace, conflict prevention should be implemented at three levels.

First, at the international level, to protect ourselves from the initiation and escalation of violent conflict between countries, the Security Council has a special role to play in addressing important issues, such as preventing new conflicts and ensuring the resolution of existing ones, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, taking into account respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States within their internationally recognized borders. Without going into details, let me stress the importance of reforming the Council, and in particular to reiterate our position on limiting the use of the veto.

Secondly, the importance of stronger regional organizations must be taken into account. As noted in A New Agenda for Peace, regional organizations are crucial to prevention. They have a special role in conflict prevention, post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and development, as they are better equipped for dealing with the peculiar challenges characterized by regional and subregional contexts. Enhanced coordination between regional organizations and the United Nations can serve as a cornerstone for developing a peaceful and secure world.

Thirdly, the Secretary-General recommends that all States invest in national prevention capacities that include the whole community and develop national prevention strategies. A New Agenda for Peace places inclusion at the centre of prevention. It focuses on how women's full, meaningful and effective participation is closely connected to our preventive efforts. At the national level, the Government of Georgia is carrying out several activities to promote the meaningful

participation of women, such as regular dialogue with conflict-affected women and youth and the representatives of civil society organizations working on women's rights. We make every effort to ensure that the needs and priorities of women internally displaced persons and conflict-affected women are integrated and raised at the negotiation formats, particularly at the Geneva International Discussions and the incident prevention and response mechanisms.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that a holistic approach to peace and development will help us connect the dots and better implement efforts, which will bring us closer to peaceful and inclusive societies.

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

Mr. Gort (Canada): Canada applauds you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the New Agenda for Peace and addressing global, regional and national aspects of conflict prevention, and we thank the briefers for their informative presentations.

The topic of prevention falls squarely in the laps of the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and Sierra Leone is a pioneering example of the peacebuilding progress a country can make when working with United Nations partners. In 2006, Sierra Leone was one of the very first Member States to bring its peacebuilding vision to the newly created PBC, and from 2009 to 2020, Canada had the distinct privilege of chairing the PBC country configuration for Sierra Leone. The end of the country configuration in December 2020 did not end Sierra Leone's engagement with the PBC, but transformed it, and it continues to this day. Canada and Sierra Leone have been long-time co-Chairs of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building. Launched in 2008, the Dialogue brings together countries affected by conflict and fragility, development partners and civil society to promote nationally led peacebuilding efforts.

Canada applauds the PBC for its groundbreaking meeting in March, when Kenya, Norway and Timor-Leste voluntarily presented their national prevention strategies to PBC members. Canada is proud to have recently contributed \$2.5 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) joint programme for strengthening national capacities for conflict prevention. That flagship prevention

programme has deployed more than 100 peace and development advisers to over 60 Member States in developing and implementing national prevention strategies and other capacities for preventive action. Indeed, this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the launch of that successful programme by UNDP and DPPA, with Canada's support at inception — a two-decade record of the positive impacts of investing in structural prevention.

(spoke in French)

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, which underscores the critical importance of investment in prevention and calls for the implementation of prevention and peacebuilding strategies at the national level. We expect next month's Pact for the Future to make a clear call from our leaders to strengthen the role of the PBC in coordinating international support for national prevention and peacebuilding strategies and investment for those strategies. The review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in 2025 gives all Member States a chance to have their say on that enhanced role, which we believe should make the PBC a leading forum

to allow Member States to present their prevention strategies and mobilize the necessary support for their implementation. Mobilizing and sustaining political and financial support for prevention and peacebuilding has been one of the fundamental roles of the PBC, and over the past two decades we have seen the challenge — as rightly noted in the New Agenda for Peace — represented by that support, which is given too little importance by donors and national authorities. The Peacebuilding Fund is a key instrument to help to fill funding gaps and mobilize support, and we call for its use to be more closely linked to the coordination role of the PBC. We take this opportunity to add our voice to the call for increased international support for the Fund, which is an indispensable part of the United Nations peacebuilding and prevention architecture.

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

The meeting was suspended at 6.10 p.m.