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Chair: Mr. Goldea (Vice-Chair) (Hungary)
later: Mr. Kemayah, Sr. (Chair) (Liberia)

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In the absence of Mr. Kemayah, Sr. (Liberia), Mr. Goldea (Hungary), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 57: Comprehensive review of special political missions (A/73/337)

1. **Ms. DiCarlo** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions (A/73/337), said that inclusive, integrated and innovative approaches were needed to address the changing nature of conflict. The Secretary-General prioritized prevention in all United Nations efforts, and special political missions remained one of the most important instruments for preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and sustainable peace. For example, following recent tensions, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) had assisted in normalizing relations between the national Government and the Kurdistan regional government. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Somalia (UNSOM) supported the Government in implementing its road map on inclusive politics in order to facilitate elections in 2020–2021. In addition, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar had been working closely with authorities to help resolve the Rohingya crisis, and the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Syria and Yemen continued their efforts to resume political processes to end those protracted conflicts. Furthermore, regional offices continued to serve as forward platforms for preventive diplomacy, working closely with Member States, regional organizations and civil society. The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) supported regional efforts to address the impact of violence carried out by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) continued to engage regional stakeholders on shared water and energy resources and supported the reinforcement of national and regional capacities for dialogue and conflict prevention.

2. The Secretary-General remained committed to promoting and improving the representation of women in special political missions; 44 per cent of serving and designated heads and deputy heads of field-based missions were women, a 16 per cent increase over the previous year. Her Department would continue to bolster its efforts to implement the system-wide strategy on gender parity and improve geographical diversity.

3. The Secretary-General was also committed to building meaningful partnerships for prevention with

regional and subregional organizations. In June 2018, he had convened a high-level interactive dialogue on international peace and security, during which participants had renewed commitments to promote multilateralism and had agreed to take concrete actions to further advance cooperation, particularly at the field level. Special political missions also engaged in regular consultation and coordination with regional and subregional organizations. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan had worked closely with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union to support the peace process between those two countries. UNOWAS had collaborated with the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel to mobilize regional organizations in order to create synergies and coordinate efforts to better address the region's multifaceted challenges.

4. Special political missions continued to integrate gender perspectives, champion the effective participation of women in peace processes and support national and regional efforts to implement the women, peace and security agenda. In Colombia, an inclusive gender working group was playing a critical role in mainstreaming gender considerations in the verification of aspects of the peace agreement between the Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP). The Syrian Women's Advisory Board was helping to ensure that gender perspectives and women's participation were taken into consideration throughout that complex political process. In the Great Lakes region, high-level solidarity missions by women leaders representing the United Nations and other organizations had been deployed to a number of countries to promote the participation of women in decision-making and peace processes. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) had continued to support the Government in promoting gender equality and women's participation. During the legislative elections held in October 2018, one third of voters had been women. Special political missions had also been actively engaging youth in their work, particularly in political dialogue and peace and reconciliation processes. UNSOM had developed a youth strategy with the United Nations country team and national authorities. UNOCA had been working with African youth groups to foster a culture of peace and fight radicalization.

5. Many special political missions supported complex peace processes in highly volatile and challenging security environments, often characterized by ongoing violent conflicts and terrorist and criminal activity carried out by non-State armed groups. In places

such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, staff faced a considerable risk of becoming collateral victims or being directly targeted by extremist groups. Her Department was working closely with the Department of Safety and Security on risk management strategies and security mitigation measures, including the deployment of United Nations armed civilian personnel, military personnel and guard units provided by Member States. The phased return of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in 2019, security conditions permitting, would allow for more direct support in implementing the United Nations Action Plan for Libya and completing the political transition. She called on Member States to provide continued support to fully guarantee the safety and security of personnel.

6. The reforms endorsed by the General Assembly, particularly to restructure the peace and security pillar, would further strengthen the ability of special political missions to deliver on their mandates. The individual and collective cooperation and support of Member States and regional partners remained essential to their success. Lastly, her Department greatly appreciated the commitment and dedication of the United Nations personnel serving in special political missions who were working under challenging conditions to advance the promises of the Charter of the United Nations.

7. *Mr. Kemayah, Sr. (Liberia), Chair, took the Chair.*

8. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) said that special political missions required agile, efficient and rapid solutions but often lacked scale. They must provide customized support, which was frequently required on short notice. Such demands presented additional challenges in delivering solutions in the field. Although missions had developed an environment of continual improvement and collaboration as a result, they required significant support from both United Nations Headquarters and regional service centres to provide adequate support.

9. His Department had continued to work with the Department of Political Affairs and other partners to establish the United Nations Investigative Team for Accountability of Da'esh/ISIL, which had been deployed in October 2018. In collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Development Programme, his Department had helped to establish the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar. It was also working to deepen support partnerships and strategically position the special political missions to capitalize on new opportunities as they occurred.

10. UNSMIL had been able to maintain a presence in Libya despite the precarious security situation owing to the deployment of a United Nations guard unit and improvements to the security infrastructure in Tripoli. UNSMIL had also been able to offer its premises to the United Nations country team, thereby allowing agencies, funds and programmes to deliver critical services. Following a recalibration of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, existing United Nations aviation capacities in the region had been leveraged through an aircraft sharing arrangement between the Office and UNAMI in order to meet the increased demands for the Special Envoy to be present in the country. Independent assessments of existing missions, including those in Iraq and Afghanistan, had been conducted. Following a comprehensive review of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) in August 2018, concrete recommendations had been made with a view to strengthening the collective efforts of UNSOS, UNSOM and the African Union Military Observer Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). His Department was also working with the Department of Political Affairs to conduct a strategic assessment of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

11. The Kuwait Joint Support Office and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, provided 81 per cent of back-office support and 100 per cent of payroll support to special political mission personnel. In 2019, initiatives to improve operational efficiencies would be implemented to allow the Office to serve more clients with fewer positions.

12. His Department remained steadfast in its commitment to improve services while ensuring that all efforts fell within the framework of the global service delivery model. Once the General Assembly had reached a decision in that regard, his Department would make every effort to seamlessly transition all affected clients in the field.

13. The environmental impact of missions was a critical component of the work of his Department. The six-year environmental strategy, now in its second year, had been developed in conjunction with the United Nations Environment Programme. His Department was working with special political missions to implement mission-wide environmental action plans, including an environmental performance and risk management framework.

14. With the implementation of the Secretary-General's management reforms, field operations would be decentralized, simplified and empowered. The integration of procurement and logistics support would

allow for a unified supply chain that offered a timelier acquisition of better-quality goods and services. A harmonized operational support framework would direct clients to clear entry points for inquiries on human resource management, medical issues or uniformed capabilities. A more robust planning and support capability for surge and special situations would be conducive to a smoother establishment, transition or liquidation of special political missions. With the redistribution of authority, heads of missions would be truly accountable for the performance of their missions. Where missions did not have the capacity to exercise their delegated authority, the Department of Operational Support would provide capacity development support.

15. **Mr. Husni** (Sudan) said that his delegation wished to know more about how the Secretary-General's reforms would affect the work of special political missions on the ground. He also asked what criteria the Departments of Field Support and Political Affairs used to ensure that due consideration was given to geographical representation when appointing the leaders of special political missions.

16. In the light of the important recent developments in the areas of peace and reconciliation experienced in the Horn of Africa, he asked what the Secretariat's vision for that region was. He thanked the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan for his work to support the mediation efforts undertaken by the Sudan with a view to building peace in South Sudan.

17. **Mr. Belkheir** (Libya) said that his Government was grateful for the work done by UNSMIL, especially in response to the conflict in Tripoli in September 2018, and thanked the Head of UNSMIL for his efforts to broker a ceasefire, which had saved lives and property. His delegation also noted that the Department of Political Affairs had made a great deal of progress over the preceding year.

18. Although the Department of Political Affairs had described the situation in Libya as a political crisis, and although the United Nations had indeed succeeded in achieving political rapprochement between the parties involved, Libya had become a safe haven for terrorists and armed groups, as confirmed recently by the Head of UNSMIL. He asked whether the Department and UNSMIL had developed a joint strategy to analyse the causes of events in Libya and determine the priorities for their resolution, in particular given that militia and armed groups were undermining the implementation of all political efforts undertaken by UNSMIL.

19. Welcoming the expected return to full capacity of UNSMIL, he noted that terrorists and armed groups

exercised considerable control over the country. He therefore asked what reliable security measures had been adopted and with whom UNSMIL and the Department of Field Support were coordinating regarding the return of UNSMIL.

20. On a technical note, he observed that the reference in paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's report to two reports submitted to the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) should be not be included in the same paragraph as the preceding information, as those two reports were not related to Libya.

21. **Ms. DiCarlo** (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) said that the new Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs would combine the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office, which would allow for greater coordination on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In countries where both her Department and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had missions on the ground, it would allow for greater cohesion and synergy of efforts.

22. While more women had been included at the senior levels of special political missions, they represented only 33 per cent of personnel overall. With regard to geographical diversity, greater efforts were needed in both special political missions and at United Nations Headquarters.

23. In the Horn of Africa, there was a possibility for genuine reconciliation. The Secretary-General had already written to the Security Council informing it of his intention to appoint a Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa who would focus on the States members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in order to explore how he might use his good offices to assist with political developments and economic matters in the region.

24. The Head of UNSMIL had worked very hard to bring about the ceasefire in Libya, and his strategy was strongly endorsed by the Security Council. His action plan to bring about a political transition in Libya would require all concerned parties to come together on the need for a referendum so that elections could take place. Through his work with civil society organizations, it was clear that the Libyan people were looking forward to a transition.

25. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) said that greater efforts were needed to improve geographical diversity, which was an obligation under the Charter of the United Nations. In 2017, his Department had circulated a global call for

candidates to be placed on a roster for special representatives and deputy special representatives. Approximately 1,200 nominations had been received from less than 50 Member States. While his Department was committed to increasing geographical diversity, it would not be possible to achieve that goal unless Member States proposed candidates. He also encouraged nationals to apply for individual vacancies.

26. His Department was able to maintain a rotational presence in Libya by using regular United Nations flights between Tunis and Tripoli. It had also taken possession of a compound and had organized a guard unit, provided by Nepal, which had already been deployed. In addition, arrangements had been made for members of the country team to work in the compound, space permitting and on a cost-recovery basis. His Department had every confidence that United Nations officers would not be targeted in Libya, as that constituted a war crime. He hoped that all States would continue to provide safety and security for personnel.

27. Special political missions would benefit from the Secretary-General's reforms in a number of ways, especially with regard to support and logistics. For example, if there was a sudden need for Arabic-speaking officers in Libya, the Department of Operational Support would be able to search the entire United Nations system rather than be restricted to peacekeeping operations and existing political missions, thereby allowing for faster deployment. Furthermore, the new Special Activities Division would allow missions to be created more quickly. The reforms would also allow special political missions and peacekeeping operations to share administrative support.

28. He would look into the issue concerning paragraph 30 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/73/337) and would take corrective action if required.

29. **Mr. Halfaoui** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement acknowledged the need for coherence, synergy and complementarity in implementing the peace and security reforms and supported all efforts aimed at improving the effectiveness of special political missions.

30. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States must be respected, with the United Nations as primary guarantor of the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The principles of impartiality, consent of parties, national ownership and national responsibility should also be respected. Field-based missions must have clear and achievable mandates formulated on the basis of objective

assessments with sufficient political basis and resources. Integrated planning and coordinated approaches linking policy formulation and implementation on the ground were critical for success. In order to enhance budgetary efficiency and transparency, the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms used to fund peacekeeping operations should be applied to financing special political missions, for which a new separate account should be established. Hence, the Movement supported the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel concerning the arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions.

31. The Secretary-General should give further consideration to transparency, balanced geographical representation and the representation of women in senior leadership positions, particularly as special representatives and envoys and in the membership of expert groups on sanctions. Consensus on issues related to special political missions was vital, and only matters that had been agreed by Member States collectively should be implemented. The General Assembly remained the most representative body to discuss overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions. In that regard, the Secretary-General should hold an interactive dialogue to address such areas of major concern as the impact of proposed reforms on conflict prevention, sexual exploitation and abuse, the work of regional offices, guard units and procedures for mandating special political missions. The main points covered in the dialogue should also be included in the Secretary-General's next report on the current agenda item.

32. **Mr. Djani** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, said that peacekeeping did not operate in a vacuum and required a more coordinated and integrated approach to achieve real results, particularly in preventing conflict and addressing its root causes. Special political missions played a critical role in that regard. The Association therefore welcomed the progress made in reforming the United Nations peace and security architecture. Reforms in the three priority areas should be coordinated in order to break down the persistent silo mindset within the Organization. The Action for Peacekeeping initiative could serve as an innovative model in which all stakeholders across the United Nations pillars could work together to achieve results. Discussions relating to special political missions should focus on thematic areas and overarching objectives so as to improve the effectiveness of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

33. The international community must support the host country in realizing nationally identified priorities

and peacebuilding initiatives. In order to achieve sustainable peace, there must be close coordination with the host country in shaping the role of special political missions. In addition, partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations remained vital. The international community must also continue to pursue the meaningful participation of women in all stages of the peace process, as those in which women were involved were 35 per cent more likely to be sustainable. The Association commended the Secretary-General for his efforts to achieve gender parity and encouraged him to make progress in equitable geographical representation as well.

34. Member States should consider how the support structures at United Nations Headquarters could facilitate and reinforce the work of special political missions. During the start-up and transition phases, capacity and finances could be optimized to enable special political missions to work with all stakeholders to achieve common goals. Strong coordination and coherence between the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretariat was particularly important during the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

35. The funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions must be addressed. Their budgetary cycle should be aligned with that of peacekeeping operations, and a separate account should be created. Furthermore, the Secretariat should continue to hold regular, inclusive and interactive dialogues on policy matters pertaining to special political missions and should continue to reach out to Member States in advance to ensure wide and meaningful participation.

36. Speaking in his national capacity, he said that the international community must provide continuous support to host States, even after mission drawdown. Integrated analysis and planning were therefore crucial, particularly during transitions. There must also be coherence within the United Nations system. His Government supported the inclusion and engagement of women and youth in the implementation of special political missions. Inclusive and participatory approaches taken in collaboration with host Governments were key to finding sustainable solutions.

37. While South-South cooperation played an important role in development, it had been less visible in international peace and security, and it was high time for the United Nations to pay greater attention to South-South cooperation, alongside triangular cooperation, to reinforce activities on the peace continuum. His delegation encouraged the Department of Political

Affairs and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to explore new approaches for special political missions.

38. **Mr. Dabouis** (Observer for the European Union) speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the international community must redouble its commitment to mediation, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable peace. Mediation and mediation support should be implemented as soon as possible, even before conflicts broke out. According to the recent United Nations-World Bank study entitled *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, scaling up preventive action could save up to \$70 billion a year. It also freed up human and material resources to promote social cohesion and economic prosperity.

39. The European Union was encouraged by the Secretary-General's reforms, which created an opportunity to strengthen conflict prevention and efforts to sustain peace. The reforms must be implemented through a holistic approach, and the Secretary-General should be supported in that endeavour. In that connection, political solutions were of paramount importance. Cost-effective prevention and mediation must become the primary tool, and efforts to sustain peace must be included on the agenda of all related United Nations bodies. Furthermore, peacebuilding efforts must be integrated with peacekeeping efforts from an early stage in order to manage transitions more effectively.

40. Local initiatives were an essential and powerful tool in conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding and sustainable peace. Women and youth must also be included in peace processes. Additionally, partnerships must be at the centre of ongoing efforts to achieve global peace and security in order to better serve the needs of those suffering from instability, insurgencies and conflict. The European Union and the United Nations had recently agreed to reinforce their strategic partnership on peacekeeping and crisis management in eight priority areas.

41. The international community had the technical means to better support mediation and conflict prevention; it now required political support. He hoped that the General Assembly would demonstrate its support for special political missions with the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution on the

comprehensive review of special political missions (A/C.4/73/L.8).

42. **Mr. Sauer** (Finland), speaking also on behalf of Mexico, said that the versatility and flexibility of special political missions allowed them to be used in different phases of conflict. As a result, they were at the heart of conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. The international community must therefore ensure that those missions had the necessary capacities and resources to fulfil their important tasks.

43. Prevention was a cornerstone of all aspects of the work of the United Nations. Special political missions could relieve tensions and support national and regional efforts to build and sustain peace through mediation, facilitation and the use of good offices. The reforms to the Organization provided an excellent opportunity to improve peace operations, and the joint regional pillar improved efficiency and provided a more coherent approach. Partnerships with regional organizations should be further strengthened. Cooperation and coherence among United Nations country teams and peacekeeping operations were crucial, especially in the context of transitions. An inclusive approach to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable peace was also important. The international community must ensure the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and mainstream gender in preventive work. Young people also played an important role and must be engaged. Lastly, States were encouraged to sponsor the draft resolution on the comprehensive review of special political missions (A/C.4/73/L.8).

44. **Mr. Fernández de Soto Valderrama** (Colombia) said that the international community must find effective responses to the increasingly complex situations threatening international peace and security. Traditional armed conflict had given way to threats that required bold, comprehensive approaches, which must protect civilians and address unprecedented humanitarian crises, forced migration and the growing impact of climate change on conflict. Based on its own experience, Colombia believed that special political missions provided a concrete example of what could be achieved when due consideration was given to the realities on the ground, national ownership and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

45. In September 2018, the Security Council had adopted resolution [2435 \(2018\)](#) to renew the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC), which marked a milestone for his country and for the United Nations. President Duque Márquez was committed to building peace and democracy over the next four years and had quickly appointed officials

to implement the peace agreement with the FARC-EP. His commitment went beyond the final peace agreement to end the conflict and was based on the values and principles enshrined in the Constitution. Despite the progress made in reintegration, protection and security, much remained to be done. The necessary adjustments were being made through democratic channels.

46. The structural reforms to the United Nations, especially the peace and security pillar, were a step in the right direction and must be applied on the ground. In conflict situations, the responsiveness of actors was essential for solutions to be successful. In addition, those solutions must be flexible and adjust to the realities on the ground. In that connection, his Government was adopting a new focus that would meet the expectations of former combatants to become upstanding citizens and contribute to development in their communities. The international community and Member States should also maintain a permanent dialogue with national authorities in order to receive first-hand knowledge of the measures taken to address setbacks. His Government was strengthening security guarantees for both former members of the FARC-EP and social leaders. Once it had implemented the peace agreement and built institutions, Colombia could share lessons learned and help other countries achieve and maintain peace.

47. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that special political missions played an important role in United Nations efforts to prevent conflict, maintain international peace and security and build sustainable peace. They supported peace processes, promoted preventive diplomacy and assisted in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. They also helped to establish transitional justice mechanisms, observe Security Council sanctions and build peace on the ground.

48. Argentina had contributed to increasing the transparency and accountability of special political missions and hoped that the annual reports on those missions would continue to be more comprehensive. His delegation had sponsored the draft resolution and stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach to sustainable peace which recognized that special political missions were flexible tools to maintain international peace and security, particularly through preventing conflict and addressing its root causes.

49. His delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's efforts to reform the peace and security pillar and welcomed the new emphasis on prevention and sustainable peace in order to prevent fragmentation and apply a comprehensive strategic approach to preventive

diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, development and respect for human rights. It encouraged the Secretary-General to continue consulting Member States on the reform. The continued progress in evaluating the political and operational aspects of special political missions should pave the way for consideration of the relevant financial aspects, and his delegation supported the creation of a separate account, the establishment of an annual budgetary cycle and access to a support account for special political missions. Discussions on those matters in the Fifth Committee had been at a deadlock for seven years, but his delegation hoped that goodwill would allow progress to be made. Lastly, his Government fully supported the peace process in Colombia and would continue to participate in that process through UNVMC.

50. **Mr. Matjila** (South Africa) said that special political missions were a crucial component of the Secretary-General's preventive diplomacy agenda and required an inclusive approach to be successful. As a result, there must be strong partnerships between special political missions and regional and subregional organizations. South Africa welcomed initiatives to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, such as conducting joint field missions and allowing special envoys from each organization to brief both Councils. Regionally mandated envoys could also be used by the United Nations to enhance the role of special political missions.

51. Women brought a unique perspective to mediation and negotiation efforts and could stimulate discussions that led to breakthroughs; therefore, they should be included in peace negotiations and be appointed to serve as special envoys. His delegation welcomed the decision taken at the July 2017 Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union to establish the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation and hoped that the United Nations could tap into that expertise to augment its mediation and conflict resolution efforts.

52. Special political missions must be streamlined to complement peacekeeping missions, particularly police and civilian components. Such cooperation could foster a culture of prevention and increase consultative engagements with all stakeholders, thereby laying the foundation for smoother transitions from traditional peacekeeping operations to special political missions or interventions by United Nations country teams. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the reforms of the Secretary-General to restructure the peace and security pillar. In order to take a more holistic, inclusive

approach, special political missions must be seen as part of the greater peace support process.

53. Consistent and predictable funding for special political missions was vital. The recent budget cuts to peacekeeping missions threatened their efficiency and implementation, forcing them to downsize. His delegation hoped that the work of special political missions would not be undermined, as that would negatively affect the progress achieved. The proposal to unify the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Political Affairs should allow progress on financing. Alternative financing options for special political missions should also be explored, including the establishment of an independent account, which would increase sustainability and transparency.

54. Lastly, his delegation paid homage to the special representatives and special envoys of the Secretary-General, as well as the United Nations staff serving in special political missions, often at great personal sacrifice.

55. **Mr. Suzil** (Maldives) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's ongoing efforts to strengthen the United Nations system, including making necessary adjustments to the peace and security architecture. When designed properly, special political missions could be an effective tool for preventive diplomacy. His delegation welcomed efforts to increase cooperation with and support for regional and subregional organizations.

56. Special political missions played an important role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, which began with a better understanding of the underlying causes of conflict. Swift and concerted action by all stakeholders was essential, and investments must be made to ensure that operations were effective, adaptable and tailored to the specific situation. A clear, coherent and achievable mandate was crucial to ensuring the relevance of operations. However, emphasis must be placed on the principles of national ownership and territorial integrity, as well as the unique political, economic and social circumstances of the host country.

57. Women must occupy decision-making roles in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. The inclusion of women in peace processes resulted in a more durable and sustainable peace and notable progress in social and economic sectors. Special political missions must therefore prioritize the meaningful participation and empowerment of women, and a gender perspective should be incorporated in mandate renewals. An inclusive approach should be promoted, as it prioritized

the engagement of all actors, particularly women, in all forms of mediation and post-conflict recovery.

58. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that conflict prevention and sustainable peace should be at the heart of all United Nations activities. Special political missions played a central role in that regard, and their flexible mandates allowed them to adapt to specific contexts and collaborate with a number of actors. During the period under review, missions had continued to mainstream an inclusive, holistic approach.

59. Peace and security could be effective only when human rights and development were given equal consideration. The seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights presented an excellent opportunity to reaffirm the intrinsic link between conflict prevention and respect for human rights.

60. Switzerland fully supported the three reform tracks proposed by the Secretary-General, which would improve the effectiveness of special political missions and increase coherence within the United Nations system and its impact on the ground. His delegation welcomed the priority given to conflict prevention and the establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations. An increase in financing and support for special political missions, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in 2011, would improve their management.

61. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that, in responding to threats to international peace and security, the United Nations did not always have to resort to establishing peacekeeping operations; special political missions had played essential roles in diverse political, socioeconomic and security contexts. As a result, they had to be flexible and tailored to each case. They should also be governed by policies developed democratically by the General Assembly, which should play a decisive role in all matters related to their establishment, implementation and monitoring. Missions must have clear, realistic and achievable mandates, with specific objectives, as well as appropriate material and financial resources. They must also be in strict compliance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

62. In order to adapt special political missions to the situation on the ground, the United Nations should conduct a thorough analysis with the participation of all Member States. The adoption of new special political missions should not affect the Organization's regular

budget. Instead, the General Assembly should have a comprehensive debate to arrive at a differentiated mechanism for financing those missions. The Non Aligned Movement had suggested using the same criteria, methodology and mechanisms as for the financing of peacekeeping operations, including the establishment of a separate account. Furthermore, the Secretary-General should continue to produce an annual report on special political missions.

63. **Ms. Gambhir** (India) said that the high number of peacekeeping missions and special political missions reflected the fragile situation of global peace and security. Almost all of those missions were deployed in countries that had experienced internal armed conflict, often involving non-State actors, which demonstrated the vastly transformed nature of peacekeeping within the United Nations. The primacy of politics in conflict prevention and resolution was of paramount importance, and a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace was required to integrate peacekeeping and political solutions and enhance governance.

64. Given that challenges to peace and security from terrorist threats were mounting on a daily basis, the work of the special political missions under cluster II could not be understated. In order to have a more comprehensive assessment of special political missions, Member States should receive a briefing on that work, and missions under cluster II should also be covered by the report of the Secretary-General ([A/73/337](#)).

65. To achieve lasting solutions, the peace process must be inclusive and respect the principles of impartiality and consent of parties and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States. United Nations peacekeeping operations could only succeed with the responsibility and engagement of all Member States. It was regrettable that policy formulation for special political missions remained opaque. Member States must be involved in formulating and renewing mandates through genuine consultations with the Security Council, and the Department of Political Affairs should organize more interactive briefings. The recent review of UNAMA had been undertaken without substantive input from the broader membership.

66. Unfortunately, the ad hoc manner in which the budgets of special political missions were handled had not been addressed in the report of the Secretary-General on restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar ([A/72/525](#)). Special political missions should benefit from a separate account aligned with the budget cycle and scale of peacekeeping operations in order to enhance budget transparency, as had been recommended by the Advisory Committee on

Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture.

67. **Mr. Amayo** (Kenya) said that the special political missions played a pivotal role in sustaining peace and demonstrated that primacy of politics was one of the most cost-effective and efficient ways to respond to threats to international peace and security. His delegation welcomed the measures taken by the Secretary-General to ensure that special political missions remained flexible and adaptable to rapidly changing circumstances. Restructuring the peace and security pillar would ensure better coordination, synergy and coherence across United Nations peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, the ongoing repositioning of the development pillar to strengthen United Nations presence on the ground would enhance coordination with special political missions. Those reforms would help to prevent violent conflicts and facilitate prompt resolution when they occurred. However, more could be achieved if special political missions increased coordination and collaboration with national authorities and regional and subregional organizations.

68. Special political missions required continued support from Member States to efficiently fulfil their mandates. His delegation appreciated the important work being carried out by UNSOM to assist the Somali people in rebuilding their country and commended its complementary relationship with AMISOM. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan had played an important role in ensuring the success of the revitalization process, which underscored the immense potential that special political missions could have in supporting nationally led and regionally supported peace initiatives.

69. The United Nations must continue to deepen its strategic partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, as well as Governments, to build capacity for conflict prevention. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs was to be commended for her efforts to enhance the standby team of senior mediation advisers and improve its gender and geographical representation. By enhancing local capacities, including through standby mediators, it would be possible to achieve comprehensive conflict prevention. Lastly, the international community could attain its common objectives more effectively if it continued to provide sustained political and financial commitments to special political missions.

70. **Mr. Al-Shalfan** (Saudi Arabia) said that special political missions were one of the most important tools available to the United Nations to ensure international peace and security and exercise preventive diplomacy with the aim of building sustainable peace. It was therefore vital to strengthen their ability to carry out their mandates and to increase cooperation between Member States and the United Nations. In addition, an expert report should be produced to identify any weaknesses in the mechanisms used by special political missions with a view to developing a focused strategy to overcome the challenges that such missions faced.

71. According to a report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Saudi Arabia was the leading donor to humanitarian relief efforts in Yemen, having contributed \$530.4 million to the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan. It had also donated a further \$196 million outside the plan. Those donations were evidence of the Government's support for re-establishing stability and legitimacy in Yemen and ending the suffering of the Yemeni people, both in areas controlled by the legitimate Government and in areas controlled by the revolutionary militia.

72. According to the Charter of the United Nations, regional organizations should play a central role in the peaceful resolution of conflicts between their members. That role was all the more important given the rising number of crises and conflicts in many parts of the world. To that end, it was essential that coordination between the special political missions and the relevant regional organizations was increased in order to strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, in accordance with the principle of collective international security and the provisions of the Charter.

73. **Mr. Belkheir** (Libya) said that his country had learned a great deal about the strengths and shortcomings of special political missions from its long experience with them. Since its establishment in 2011, UNSMIL had helped the Libyan authorities conduct successful legislative elections in 2012 and 2014 and had provided Libyan officials with training in the rule of law, human rights and women's empowerment. Despite those successes, however, the Mission had been unable to address certain challenge in the manner required of it. Nevertheless, his delegation commended the Department of Political Affairs for having already addressed some of the concerns expressed by the Libyan delegation at the 72nd session of the General Assembly, such as those relating to the Mission's use of Twitter and Facebook to relay its official views to the public instead of conveying its opinions on complex matters in measured official statements.

74. The crisis in Libya was primarily a security crisis, as evidenced by the conflict that had broken out in Tripoli in September 2018, during which numerous civilians had been killed. It was therefore essential that UNSMIL accorded the same priority to security issues as it gave to political issues. UNSMIL and the Department of Political Affairs should develop a clear strategy, in coordination with Libyan counterparts, to prevent the proliferation of weapons and armed groups in the country by strengthening the military and setting clear terms for its leadership and jurisdiction, in accordance with international standards necessitating full compliance with Libyan military law and with internationally accepted military practices, thereby establishing the military as an executive arm of the civilian Government, as mandated by Libyan law. In that connection, his delegation called for increased cooperation with the entities currently making efforts to unify the military in the Arab Republic of Egypt.

75. His delegation remained concerned that UNSMIL continued to issue reports without consulting the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant institutions. In particular, the extensive report issued by UNSMIL in December 2016, sensationally titled “Detained and dehumanised: Report on human rights abuses against migrants in Libya”, had been drafted without consulting the Government of National Accord, with which the Mission normally cooperated directly. The State institutions that UNSMIL sought to support should be the first to be consulted on all political, administrative and technical issues, in accordance with the provisions of Libyan law governing the relationship between the State and international organizations. UNSMIL should set an example for other international organizations and foreign missions in that regard, especially in the light of the fact that a number of international organizations and ambassadors in Libya had made contact with departments of the Government of National Accord without coordinating with – or even informing – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, many of them claimed that they had entered the country with the help of UNSMIL. All such failures to consult with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs clearly violated the principle of national ownership, which all special political missions had a duty to uphold.

76. According to Security Council resolution [2434 \(2018\)](#), UNSMIL had a duty to undertake human rights monitoring and reporting, which his Government understood to mean that UNSMIL would monitor primarily the human rights of the Libyan people and secondly the human rights situation in Libya in general, and would report primarily to the Libyan Government and secondly to the Security Council. UNSMIL

appeared, however, to be focusing primarily on illegal immigrants. Although the Government of National Accord denounced all human rights violations against such immigrants, which were the result of the proliferation of weapons and of armed groups associated with human trafficking organizations in both source and destination countries, it insisted that UNSMIL should prioritize the human rights of Libyan citizens throughout the country and that all humanitarian assistance should be directed to those populations, whom UNSMIL was there to support. The Department of Political Affairs should take steps to ensure that the principle of national ownership was upheld in that regard.

77. His delegation commended the Department of Political Affairs and the Secretary-General for taking into account the importance of language, culture, experience, integrity, transparency and cultural awareness when appointing the Head of UNSMIL, which had helped UNSMIL broker a ceasefire during the conflict in Tripoli in September 2018 and foster an atmosphere conducive to national reconciliation.

78. **Mr. Bahadury** (Afghanistan) said that UNAMA was one of the largest special political missions. It had been working with his Government since 2002 to advance democracy, human rights and development for all citizens; lay the foundation for lasting peace and stability; and achieve its vision of an Afghanistan that was built on the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights. With the support of UNAMA, his Government had strengthened national ownership and had developed a democratic system with accountable institutions. Security Council resolution [2405 \(2018\)](#) supported his Government’s full assumption of leadership and ownership in security, governance and development and welcomed its efforts and those of the High Peace Council to achieve lasting peace.

79. UNAMA was coordinating international support for development and governance priorities through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, in line with the One United Nations initiative. It was also committed to advancing regional cooperation for stability and prosperity in Afghanistan and the “Heart of Asia” region. In addition, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights provided support to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission in monitoring the plight of civilians and coordinating efforts to ensure their protection.

80. Afghanistan had held parliamentary elections in October 2018, demonstrating ownership of the electoral process and further strengthening democratic

institutions. All Afghans had been able to exercise their civic duty to advance the democratic process. Nearly 9 million people had registered to vote, and the high turnout demonstrated that the Afghan people were rejecting violence, terror and instability. There had also been an increase in the number of women who had participated in the process, both as candidates and as voters. His Government was committed to a free, credible and transparent process for the presidential elections, to be held in 2019, and would continue to work with international partners to ensure security in the lead-up.

81. More could be done to improve the performance, transparency and accountability of special political missions. Their agendas must be more responsive to the needs and priorities of host nations, and the role of conflict prevention must be strengthened. His Government supported a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace, especially in preventing conflicts and addressing their root causes. There must also be greater efforts to increase the number of women who participated in the work of the United Nations at Headquarters and in the field, especially in peacekeeping operations. His Government prioritized women's participation in all sectors of society. It was fully committed to encouraging gender parity in decision-making positions, promoting women in civil service and further developing a gender-sensitive curriculum.

82. **Mr. Hoeseb** (Namibia) said that special political missions provided support to host countries in overcoming conflicts and strengthening efforts to achieve sustainable peace, particularly in areas such as national reconciliation and reconstruction, electoral assistance, decision-making and the rule of law. Women must be included in those efforts. Their participation in dialogue and mediation in the political processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be applauded.

83. His delegation strongly supported special political missions and appreciated the use of inclusive political solutions to prevent conflict and sustain peace. The ongoing reform of the United Nations system, particularly the restructuring of the peace and security architecture, would undoubtedly allow missions to better deliver on their mandates, which would greatly benefit collective endeavours to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable peace by 2030. It was therefore essential to continue to focus on preventive diplomacy, including addressing the root causes of conflict, in the pursuit of sustainable development and the preservation of human rights. Working in silos weakened the international

community's ability to respond to increasingly complex and persistent global conflicts. The United Nations and the African Union should continue to work closely to reinforce strong strategic partnerships at all levels so as to ensure the success of special political missions. Such collaboration was the most effective way to support economic development and ensure durable peace.

84. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), special political missions had been promoting the participation of women in conflict resolution and prevention. However, Member States must significantly increase the participation and role of women in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes, and more must be done to increase youth engagement in political dialogues. Missions must have adequate, predictable and sustainable funding in order to transition to more inclusive policies, which could ensure equal and equitable access to natural resources, basic services, security, justice, democracy and good governance.

85. His Government fully endorsed Agenda 2063 of the African Union and had decided to silence the guns by 2020 in order to promote general disarmament and international security and place Africa on a sustainable path to peace. In addition to nuclear and chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, disarmament must include small and light arms weapons, which caused misery and undermined peace and stability in the global South.

86. **Mr. Kazi** (Bangladesh) said that special political missions must be given clear, specific and achievable mandates and must, in turn, ensure effective delivery of those mandates. Additional emphasis should be placed on promoting the engagement of women and youth in their work. Missions must also be provided with enhanced, predictable and sustainable resources. His delegation supported the proposal to create a separate budget account and remained interested in further discussions on the financing and backstopping of special political missions, preferably in joint meetings of the Fourth and Fifth Committees. Regrettably, the issue of adequate resources had once again been given short shrift in the draft resolution.

87. The safety and security of special political mission personnel operating in volatile, insecure and remote environments gave cause for concern. There must be a regular review of the security situation confronting field-based personnel and assets, and the necessary budgetary provisions must be made to allow missions to undertake appropriate and cost-effective mitigation measures in high-risk settings.

88. Missions should continue to coordinate with regional and subregional organizations where relevant.

His delegation appreciated that the current draft resolution had addressed that issue in greater depth. Special political missions should highlight their engagements with regional and subregional organizations when reporting for the benefit of concerned legislative bodies and other relevant forums, including the Peacebuilding Commission.

89. The reforms to the peace and security pillar would hopefully increase system-wide engagement and support for the work of special political missions, including through the proposed “hinge” role of the Peacebuilding Support Office. In addition, initiatives aiming to enhance gender parity and geographical representation in special political missions were integral to those reforms.

90. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar had acted as a messenger for the entire membership in engaging with national authorities. His delegation recognized the decision of the Government of Myanmar to allow the Special Envoy to set up an office in Naypyidaw and urged all Member States to support and sponsor the draft resolution under consideration in the Third Committee to extend that mandate. Bangladesh would continue to cooperate with the Special Envoy to assist in addressing the root causes of the systematic discrimination and persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar and facilitate their return to Rakhine State in safety and dignity.

91. **Ms. Haile** (Eritrea) said that there was an increasing number of complex challenges and threats endangering international peace and security. Transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and human trafficking were increasingly regionalized and not confined to national borders. Prevention was the essential strategy of all work of the United Nations, and special political missions were critical to sustaining peace. The ongoing reforms, particularly to the peace and security pillar, provided an opportunity to further advance and strengthen their work.

92. The General Assembly played a crucial role in developing policies pertaining to special political missions, and the support of the general membership was critical to their success. In that connection, her delegation supported holding regular, inclusive and interactive dialogues on related policy matters. Furthermore, special political missions must operate under clear, credible and achievable mandates that articulated their goals and purposes, and their progress must be reviewed. Lastly, they must be crafted, implemented and monitored through consultations and processes that aligned with the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly

impartiality, objectivity, inclusivity, respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

93. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that preventing and resolving armed conflicts and sustaining peace should be the top priorities of the United Nations. In that connection, the international community should fully support special political missions. As conflicts became increasingly regional, solutions must be flexible and promote preventive diplomacy and regional cooperation. Failure to provide adequate support to such missions would lead to large-scale peace operations and humanitarian responses. As a result, a solid foundation for funding and backstopping those cost-effective missions would decrease overall spending.

94. His delegation welcomed efforts to promote a more holistic approach, under which special political missions were part of the spectrum of peace operations, and was encouraged by the increased coordination and interaction between those missions and the Peacebuilding Commission. The increasing focus on climate change as a driver of conflict and the promotion of preventative measures to meet those challenges were also welcome. His delegation was encouraged by the Secretary-General’s commitment to reform the United Nations and looked forward to working with Member States to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of special political missions.

95. **Mr. Terada** (Japan) said that UNOWAS and UNOCA monitored regional political situations, in addition to promoting good governance, respect for the rule of law, human rights and gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention. Given the large geographical areas and multidimensional issues covered by those mandates, their work required dynamic cooperation with regional and subregional partners. Integrated approaches had been taken to address issues that impacted stability, and their work promoted a nexus between peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian issues. Such regional special political missions could also play a bridging role in the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Following the completion of peacekeeping missions in Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia, for example, UNOWAS had collaborated with United Nations country teams and regional and subregional organizations to assist in the transition.

96. Special political missions operating in the field faced similar challenges to those of peacekeeping missions. The operational areas of field-based special political missions were geographically diverse, and their mandates must be tailored, focused, sequenced, prioritized and achievable in order to be successful. The

Security Council should therefore avoid so-called “Christmas tree mandates”.

97. Peacekeeping missions had already seen the positive effects of greater participation of women, in both military and civilian positions, and increasing their participation in key positions in special political missions would contribute to achieving objectives.

98. **Ms. Bogyay** (Hungary) said that the international community had a responsibility to support efforts to enable everyone to live in peace in their homeland. Special political missions played an important role in conflict prevention, management and resolution; post-conflict peacebuilding; and capacity-building. The United Nations should use all available means at its disposal to enhance early warning, mediation and preventive diplomacy and seek political solutions to prevent the outbreak of conflict and reverse the escalation of hostilities. As a member of the Human Rights Council from 2017 to 2019, Hungary prioritized the prevention of atrocity crimes and promoted the use of existing international tools, including special political missions, to provide effective and timely responses to conflict.

99. Sustainable peace could only be achieved through comprehensive agreements rooted in broad, durable regional and international partnerships. Subnational and local mediation capacities were of critical importance. The international community should therefore recognize and support the mediation role of youth networks and grass-roots initiatives. Furthermore, increased participation of women in political processes was of the utmost importance. While conflicts often disproportionately affected women, they should not be seen merely as victims; they could make useful contributions to mediation and conflict prevention. Inclusivity was essential to achieving sustainable peace. All members of society should therefore play a meaningful role in peace processes. In addition to partnering with women and youth, special political missions should cooperate with moderate religious leaders, who could be strategic allies in local efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

100. As a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation and a regular contributor to the Department of Political Affairs, Hungary supported the peaceful resolution of conflict by all means and maintained that the work of the special political missions was indispensable to achieving that goal.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.