



# General Assembly

Seventy-third session

**106**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Thursday, 12 September 2019, 10.30 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Ms. Espinosa Garcés. . . . . (Ecuador)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.*

## Agenda item 13 (continued)

### 2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

#### Draft resolution (A/73/L.109)

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Eswatini to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.109.

**Mr. Masuku** (Eswatini): On behalf of the Group of African States, I would like to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.109, entitled “Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030”.

Malaria remains a huge health challenge to the global community. According to the recent World Malaria Report 2018 of the World Health Organization, in 2017 malaria accounted for approximately 200 million cases worldwide, more than 90 per cent of which occurred in Africa. Eleven of the countries that account for most of the global malaria burden are found on our continent. The report also shows that the levels of access to life-saving malaria tools and interventions and their uptake are insufficient. It paints a gloomy picture for Africa and calls for escalating the fight against the disease. It is for that reason that we look to our partners to support our efforts to achieve the total elimination of malaria. In that regard, we look forward with great anticipation to the Global Fund

Replenishment Conference to be held in October in Lyon, France. Africa remains committed to eliminating malaria. Our Heads of State and Government meet annually on the margins of the African Union Summit to discuss action and accountability in the region’s efforts to combat malaria and to reaffirm their commitment to eliminating malaria by 2030.

This year’s draft resolution retains last year’s language with the exception of a few technical updates and new paragraphs highlighting current developments. The draft resolution acknowledges the high burden to high impact targeted malaria response as a country-led approach to reignite the pace of progress and get back on track to achieve the targets of the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016–2030 in high-burden countries. In addition, the draft resolution calls on the international community to assist malaria-endemic countries to strengthen their health systems in order to achieve universal health coverage.

In conclusion, allow me to express our sincere gratitude to all Member States. We value their constructive engagement and the spirit of compromise shown throughout the negotiation process. We urge all delegations to join us in our quest to keep the draft resolution an annual initiative.

I also invite delegations that have not done so to join in sponsoring the draft resolution. The African Group looks forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, as in previous years.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.109,

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entitled “Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. De Miranda** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/73/L.109: Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Canada, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey and Turkmenistan.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.109?

*Draft resolution A/73/L.109 was adopted (resolution 73/337).*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the United States of America, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Mack** (United States of America): The United States joins consensus on resolution 73/337 in recognizing the need to strengthen malaria surveillance and data quality and urges the global anti-malaria community to use data to make evidence-based decisions. Given the influx of data and advancements in the development of new malaria control products, the United States Government stands ready to work with the World Health Organization and other institutions to ensure that global technical recommendations evolve in pace with incoming data and advancements in research and development.

With reference to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the United States refers to our global explanation of position of 8 November 2018.

In reference to the Sustainable Development Goals malaria targets, the document incorrectly refers to those targets as agreed to throughout the document. We underscore that the 2030 Agenda is non-binding and does not create or affect rights or obligations under international law nor does it any create any financial commitments.

In reference to calls for United Nations Member States to take action in accordance with the requirements of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, we note that the Convention’s provisions apply only to Member States that are party to the Convention. As we have stated for several consecutive years, it is not appropriate for a United Nations document to speak to ongoing or future work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) or to undermine the independent mandate and processes of the WTO. Discussion of the WTO rule issues, including the amendment to article 31 of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in paragraph 33, is imbalanced and biased, and it is inappropriate for the United Nations to call on WTO members to take action on such issues. As was the case last year, the United States must therefore disassociate from paragraph 33, and we insist that the inclusion of such language in the resolution does not serve as a basis for future negotiations.

Finally, we find it unfortunate that so many negotiations are stalled by the same issues around intellectual property, which unnecessarily inflames the discussion of serious health challenges. This year’s resolution on malaria highlights the way in which some countries have chosen to pursue those other agendas even when they have little or no relevance to the topic at hand. In the case of malaria, we note that for the anti-malarial medicines on the current WHO Model List of Essential Medicines there is not a single patent in a single country that is still in force. Intellectual property is therefore not a barrier to access to those anti-malarial medicines. Importantly, however, intellectual property is essential to the development of new medicine, including those that we need to treat malaria when resistance develops to current regimens. The United States is therefore concerned that the threat or use of compulsory licences for such medicines in the future will disincentivize the research and development that will be needed to save lives in the future.

We request that this statement be made part of the official record of the proceedings of this meeting.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 13?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 15 (continued)****Culture of peace****Draft resolution (A/73/L.110)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkmenistan to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.110.

**Mrs. Ataeva** (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of Turkmenistan, allow me to thank all delegations for their constructive and fruitful negotiations, which resulted in the substantive text of the draft resolution entitled the International Year of Peace and Trust, 2021, contained in document A/73/L.110.

At present, our world suffers from an acute form of trust deficit syndrome. The world as a whole is experiencing a crisis of trust in national institutions and in other States that have established a world order. Cooperation among countries is less defined and more complex. Trust in global governance is also fragile, as the problems of the second century outpace the institutions and thinking of the twentieth century. We therefore believe that it is necessary and timely to submit the draft resolution.

The draft resolution before us today contains 12 preambular paragraphs and six operative paragraphs, the first of which declares 2021 the International Year of Peace and Trust. The purpose of the draft resolution is to mobilize the efforts of the international community to promote peace and trust among States, in particular through political dialogue, understanding and cooperation, with a view to achieving sustainable peace, solidarity and harmony. The draft resolution also calls on the international community to continue to help strengthen peace and trust in relations between States as values that promote sustainable development, peace and security and respect for human rights. Peace and trust represent acceptance and respect and embody mutual understanding and the recognition of diversity in all its myriad forms. Diversity enriches and strengthens the foundations of life itself, and the recognition of diversity ensures peaceful coexistence to a greater degree even than tolerance. History has repeatedly shown that decisions to shun peace and embrace extremes in any form can trigger conflict and discontent and ultimately lead to war and untold suffering. Peace and trust, on the contrary, can mitigate or prevent such consequences. That is why it is crucial

to view peace and trust as fundamental to international relations around the world, in some parts of which the task of establishing peace continues to be very difficult to accomplish.

We welcome the fact that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been a powerful impulse in this area, containing as it does many references to peace, specifically in Sustainable Development Goal 16, and thereby helping to promote the efforts of the United Nations system to create a culture of peace. We believe that major meaningful results in building peaceful and inclusive societies to attain the Sustainable Development Goals are fully attainable in the light of what our work has already achieved. In acknowledging that an approach founded on trust can help to achieve peaceful coexistence, we see that peace and trust in all of their forms can also help to facilitate the future development of friendly relations among States on the basis of the principle of mutual trust and complement the work of the United Nations at various levels in advancing a culture of peace.

In conclusion, we should point out that while there are many obstacles to establishing a culture of peace and trust, they can all be overcome. We believe that in our changing world the task of building and maintaining good relations among States and strengthening a spirit of partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation is especially urgent. We believe that this initiative will make a significant contribution to the development of mutually respectful, trusting dialogue among States and peoples on an equal footing. We are grateful to the delegations that have sponsored the draft resolution and hope it will be adopted by consensus.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.110, entitled "International Year of Peace and Trust, 2021".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. De Miranda** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/73/L.110, the following countries have also become sponsors: Algeria, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Chad, China, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Georgia,

Greece, Guyana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Samoa, Serbia, Somalia, the Sudan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.110?

*Draft resolution A/73/L.110 was adopted (resolution 73/338).*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

#### **Agenda item 128 (continued)**

#### **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations**

##### **(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries**

##### **Draft resolution (A/73/L.111)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cabo Verde to introduce draft resolution A/73/L.111.

**Mr. Fialho Rocha** (Cabo Verde): I have the honour to introduce, under agenda item 128, draft resolution A/73/L.111, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries", on behalf of the member States of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP): Angola, Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste and my own country, Cabo Verde.

This year the CPLP is celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its relationship with the United Nations. In 1999, through resolution 54/10 of 18 November, the General Assembly granted it observer status. The CPLP is a space united by its common use of the Portuguese language and by the primacy of peace, democracy and the rule of law, human rights, social justice and cultural bonds. Today it is a community composed of about 300 million people across four

continents. Portuguese is the fifth most widely spoken language in the world and a major contributor to the strengthening of multilingualism on a global scale, a theme cherished by the United Nations. On the one hand, the Community's goals are strengthening diplomatic and political dialogue among its member States, enhancing cooperation between them in all areas and promoting the Portuguese language. More broadly, it is committed to reinforcing cooperation with other States, the United Nations and other regional and multilateral organizations.

On 17 and 18 July 2018, in Santa Maria, Cabo Verde, the CPLP held its twelfth summit, at which our Heads of State and Government, among other things, reaffirmed the full validity of the commitments in the CPLP's Constitutive Declaration; welcomed the choice of "People, culture and oceans" as the theme of the conference and committed to promoting political dialogue, sharing experiences, and cooperating with a view to enhancing CPLP achievements in those areas; and discussed the advancement of the process of mobility and circulation within the CPLP space, a privileged instrument for enhancing mutual understanding between the countries of the Community and continuing to build CPLP citizenship. They also granted associate observer status to eight new countries, increasing the number of observers to 18.

Draft resolution A/73/L.111, which we bring to the Assembly's attention today for adoption, aims at deepening the CPLP's partnership with the United Nations through regional cooperation and in the pursuit of our shared objectives, particularly in the areas of human rights, poverty eradication, sustainable development and sustaining peace. The draft resolution recalls the importance of the civil society's engagement and the private sector's participation in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals within the Community. It notes with appreciation the CPLP's commitment to the promotion of human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It acknowledges the impact of extreme weather events and the importance of the humanitarian assistance that has been provided recently to CPLP countries such as Mozambique, which was affected by Cyclone Idai, and Cabo Verde, which has seen extreme drought.

The draft resolution stresses the importance of partnerships between the United Nations and other relevant organizations, including the CPLP, to improve coordination and cooperation in peacebuilding and

sustaining peace. In that context it reiterates the need to ensure that Guinea-Bissau continues to take concrete steps towards peace, security and stability and welcomes the international community's continued support in monitoring the political situation in Guinea-Bissau. That includes the role played by the P5 group of five international partners — the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union and the CPLP — as well as the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, on behalf of the CPLP member States, I want to express our deep appreciation to the countries that helped to enrich the text of the draft resolution and to those that sponsored it. We would like to request that it be adopted without a vote.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.111, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. De Miranda** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/73/L.111, the following countries have also become sponsors: Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, the Central African Republic, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nauru, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.111?

*Draft resolution A/73/L.111 was adopted (resolution 73/339).*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (r) of agenda item 128?

*It was so decided.*

#### **Agenda item 29 (continued)**

##### **Advancement of women**

##### **Draft resolution (A/73/L.115)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/73/L.115. Before giving the floor for explanations of vote or position before the vote, I would like to remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Mack** (United States of America): The United States welcomes resolution A/73/L.115, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25), and will join the consensus on its adoption. Civil-society organizations and human rights defenders play a critical role in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Civil society and human rights defenders are our eyes and ears on the ground and are critical to implementing international efforts to promote and protect human rights, including those of women and girls. To that end, we welcome the text's references to civil-society participation in the process and urge their inclusion throughout the process as vital to its success. The United States is pleased that at least three representatives of civil society will address the high-level event to be held next September. Civil society's voice must be heard throughout the process, including at events such as the interactive multi-stakeholder hearing and the generation equality forum.

We remain concerned about the increasing trend among some Member States of restricting civil society and human rights defenders at the United Nations, a trend we have seen across various bodies and in resolutions on modalities, particularly during this session of the General Assembly. Furthermore, the United States would like to express its disappointment

with the way the negotiation process for this draft resolution was handled regarding the inclusion of human rights defenders in the text. We negotiated constructively yet firmly throughout the process, particularly regarding the retention of the reference to human rights defenders. While the reference remained in the text through two rounds of silence procedure, it was removed from the final text in a non-transparent process. Its removal was the preference of a small number of delegations, and we are deeply disappointed that their opinions were considered over the majority view on retaining the reference.

If we cannot include human rights defenders in a modalities resolution in which we should ensure their participation in discussing their work, we should re-evaluate our work here at the United Nations. Leaving out critical partners from key events such as the Beijing+25 commemoration goes against the spirit and purpose of the Organization. The United States continues to be puzzled at some Member States' lack of clarity about the term, especially given that the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders is more than 10 years old. We urge all Member States to push back against this alarming trend in all future negotiations and to fight harder for the voices of our civil-society and human rights defender partners.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote or position before the voting on the draft resolution before us.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/73/L.115, entitled "Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women". May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/73/L.115 without a vote?

*Draft resolution A/73/L.115 was adopted (resolution 73/340).*

**The President:** I would like to share a few thoughts on resolution 73/340, which the General Assembly has just adopted, and which is the result of arduous and extensive negotiations and proof of the importance that Member States attach to the effective fulfilment of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women.

I would like to thank Ambassadors Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani and Craig John Hawke, the Permanent

Representatives of Qatar and New Zealand, for their excellent work and leadership of a highly complex process. I also thank Member States for their constructive spirit and cooperative engagement throughout the negotiations. The modalities we have agreed to provide us with a solid base to jointly assess in an open and transparent manner the progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the gaps and challenges that remain. I am aware that Member States grappled extensively with the issue of the participation of civil society and the non-governmental organizations, institutions and individuals whose efforts have supported the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and the human rights involved. I am pleased that by agreeing to the resolution's operative paragraph 6, Member States have affirmed the relevance to Beijing+25 of all actors, including on the human rights agenda that is integral to it. I thank all Member States for that spirit of consensus.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were historical milestones in the empowerment and equality of all women and girls. Beijing+25 is a unique opportunity for us to make further progress in fulfilling our commitments on equality, development and peace contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This occasion should serve to strengthen urgently needed policies and actions to ensure that all women and girls can develop their full potential and build lives that meet their aspirations.

In marking Beijing's twenty-fifth anniversary, we can also reaffirm our commitments to multilateralism and international cooperation and solidarity to enable us to resolve the global challenges we face. This is crucial, given that 2020 will coincide with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. As the fourth woman to preside over the General Assembly, I would like to express my pleasure at the adoption of this resolution. I firmly believe that gender equality, the rights of women and the empowerment of women are prerequisites for building fair and sustainable societies and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, which promise a better future for all people, women and men alike.

Before giving the floor for explanations of position on the resolution just adopted, I would like to remind

delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Mr. Gonzato** (European Union): I am reading this statement on behalf of Albania, Australia, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Peru, Serbia, Switzerland, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Uruguay, and on behalf of the European Union and its 28 member States.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 73/340, on the “Scope, modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women”. That important event will close out a year of renewed initiatives and actions for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action provides momentum for all of us — States, civil society and private actors — to join forces and renew our commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment for all. We are ready to play our part and call on all partners to do the same.

Civil-society organizations and human rights defenders play a major role in implementing Beijing. They are our eyes and ears on the ground and are critical to implementing international efforts to promote and protect human rights, including those of women and girls. To that end, we welcome the text’s references to civil-society participation in this process. No fewer than three civil-society representatives will address the high-level event next September. They will play an important role in all other events, including the multi-stakeholder interactive hearing and the generation equality forum. This is a clear recognition of the major contributions made by civil society, including women’s and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders, girl- and youth-led organizations and trade unions, to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

We remain concerned about the increasing trend whereby some Member States restrict civil society and human rights defenders at the United Nations, which we have seen across bodies and in modalities resolutions, particularly during the current session of

the General Assembly. This group will never accept such intimidating practices and will stand by all organizations and individuals that are being attacked simply for what they stand for or who they are. We also urge others to do the same in future resolutions so that we are not faced with this issue again.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position after adoption. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 29?

*It was so decided.*

### **Agenda item 123** (*continued*)

#### **Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**

##### **Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/73/956)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly has before it the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/73/956) and a draft resolution, contained in paragraph 91 of the report.

I would like to make some opening remarks before we proceed to consider the draft resolution.

(*spoke in English*)

At the start of the General Assembly’s seventy-third session, after extensive consultations with Member States, I included the revitalization of the United Nations, and specifically the General Assembly, as one of my main priorities. Throughout the session, deliberations on this topic have been held in formal, informal and innovative forums, from meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group and the General Committee to Morning Mingas to the discussions with former Presidents of the General Assembly that my Office organized in February and July to capture lessons learned and support the transition to my successor.

I addressed the Ad Hoc Working Group during its general debate on 28 February, the thematic debate on 27 March on the working methods of the Assembly and the thematic debate on 30 April dedicated to strengthening transparency, accountability and the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

I am pleased that this year we have made further progress and achieved tangible results on a number of issues, including on streamlining the text of the Working Group's draft resolution itself. We have reduced the number of operative paragraphs to 62 as opposed to 101 last year; this deserves applause. We now have a decision that the Secretary-General-designate will take an oath of office before the Assembly during a swearing-in ceremony using the text including in the annex to the draft resolution.

We have also made progress on the alignment process through the updated mapping assessment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) coverage, as well as the initial efforts made during the session to develop possible criteria for identifying overlap and duplication where they are found to exist. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Her Excellency Mrs. Marie Chatardová, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, and Her Excellency Mrs. Maria Helena Lopes De Jesus Pires, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for their hard work and leadership in executing this mandate, and to thank all delegations for their constructive engagement.

Progress is also reflected in other elements of the draft resolution. This includes language on the needs to limit the number of high-level events as well as side events in the margins of the general debate. It is crucial that we preserve the primacy of the general debate and leverage to the fullest the unique annual gathering of world leaders. It includes the decision to ensure that all meetings of the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs have accessible seating for representatives with disabilities — one of the recommendations of the steering committee I established on accessibility, so ably chaired by His Excellency Mr. Walton Alfonso Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda, and His Excellency Mr. Park Chull-Joo, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea — and a request for the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report during the seventy-fourth session on further ways to improve the accessibility of United Nations Headquarters. It includes a reference to the resolution on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 73/299), adopted earlier this year under the guidance of His Excellency Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore and the former Ambassador of Iceland, Bergdís Ellertsdóttir.

This anniversary is a golden opportunity to strengthen our resolve to achieve the future we want and

the United Nations we need. I was grateful that efforts to phase out single-use plastic from United Nations Headquarters and to bring the work of the General Assembly to a wider audience were recognized in the text. The process we have elaborated was the result of highly collaborative efforts involving Member States, the United Nations system, external partners and my tireless and creative team.

Finally, I am delighted that the Working Group was able to conclude its work earlier than last year after a series of formal and informal meetings as well as several rounds of consultations. This is a step in the right direction. I express my sincere gratitude to Her Excellency Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, Permanent Representative of Jordan, and His Excellency Michal Mlynár, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. I congratulate and thank them for their able leadership and their tireless work.

I believe that there is more that we can and should do to enhance the effectiveness of the General Assembly, the first body mentioned in the Charter of the United Nations, our parliament for humanity, and to ensure that its work is supported actively by we the peoples. I hope that everyone entering the General Assembly Hall will be reminded of our duty to them through the poster we created to commemorate the signing of the Charter, on 26 June 1945. The poster and the symbolic signatures of recommitment will be displayed outside the Hall this week and remain in situ throughout the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Let us remember this commitment when leaders come to speak in this Hall in a few days' time and work together for a stronger United Nations that better serves we the peoples.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

The Assembly will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", contained in paragraph 91 of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/73/956).

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 73/341).*



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

I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

**Mrs. Abushawesh** (Palestine): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in relation to the alignment process, as reflected in operative paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 27 and 28.

At the outset, the Group would like to express its deep appreciation to the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of the Czech Republic and Timor-Leste, and their teams for their tireless efforts in facilitating the consultation process aimed at enhancing synergies and coherence between the work of the General Assembly and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an open and transparent manner.

In that connection, the Group would like to stress the importance of maintaining and ensuring the transparency, openness and intergovernmental character of this process in future work. The Group fully recognizes the relevance of the alignment process to the revitalization of the General Assembly as well as to making our work more effective and more relevant for all, particularly as it regards the full and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in its entirety, with the developing countries at the centre.

We also recognize that overcoming gaps, reducing duplication and creating necessary and productive synergies, which are core objectives of the alignment process, would contribute to both revitalization and the full and effective implementation that we all seek. The Group has engaged constructively and actively throughout all stages of the alignment process. We have conveyed our inputs in this regard to the co-facilitators for the proposed mapping assessment. We have thus agreed to take note of this year's updated mapping assessment as an evolving reference for discussion by the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.

However, we continue to stress the need for further elaboration and analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in relation to the agenda items and sub-items to ensure their alignment with the 2030 Agenda. Such analysis must go deeper than verification of the fact that the title of an item or

resolutions corresponds to certain SDGs; it must be a substantive and content-based analysis.

The Group would also like to stress that the alignment process cannot be understood in relation only to the Sustainable Development Goals, but, first and foremost, to the 2030 Agenda as a whole, of which the SDGs are a part. Otherwise, the relevant issues covered by the Agenda that are not necessarily reflected in any of the SDGs or targets would be left out of the alignment process.

As to the co-facilitators' proposed possible criteria for identifying overlaps and duplication where they are found to exist, the Group continues to believe that it is premature to discuss such criteria at this stage. Before doing so, we need to have a detailed, thorough and comprehensive analysis of the SDGs and the agenda item.

At the appropriate time, the set of criteria must be further developed until consensus on the basis on which to take any decision in that regard is reached among Member States. Moreover, we believe that the process has been developed in an unbalanced manner, since so far all efforts have been made to develop criteria for identifying possible duplication and/or overlap but no criteria have been pursued to identify possible gaps in relation to the 2030 Agenda. Nevertheless, in the spirit of flexibility and cooperation, the Group has agreed to take note of the initial efforts this session to develop possible criteria to identify all overlaps and duplication where they are found to exist.

The Group would like to underscore the ownership and leadership of Member States in that exercise. The Group stresses that the process cannot prejudice the sovereign right of countries and groups to present issues and/or draft resolutions on the agenda of the General Assembly, its Commissions and other relevant organs of the United Nations, especially if they are in line with the purposes and principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and in connection with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

While we recognize and support the need to advance United Nations mandates regarding alignment with the 2030 Agenda, we understand that the process must advance on solid foundations, based on evidence, after a broad, in-depth and comprehensive analysis.

Finally, the Group reiterates its support and commitment to engaging constructively in the

consultation process during the upcoming session with a view to building on the discussions that took place during this session and to continuing to work together in order to reach consensus among all States.

**Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT), a cross-regional group comprised of the following 25 small and medium-sized countries, which seeks to improve the working methods of the Security Council: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay.

We welcome today's adoption of resolution 73/341 and would like to thank the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Slovakia, for their excellent work, creativity and dedication. The ACT Group would like to offer two main comments on the cluster dealing with the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General and other executive heads addressed in the resolution.

The Group believes that it is crucial to consolidate the achievements of the most recent process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General towards the next selection hence and to define a clear timeline, which would include the submission of candidatures, the holding of interactive dialogues with Member States, the recommendation of the Security Council and the General Assembly's appointment resolution.

We also believe that improved interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly is needed to ensure that the relationship between those two principal organs of the United Nations is mutually reinforcing and complementary. We believe that the relationship needs to be further improved in order to live up to the expectations of the membership and the new standards of openness and transparency. We therefore encourage the Security Council to review its working methods, building on the discussions held among Council members during the most recent selection process. For example, the collective discussions within the Council on the merit, skills and experience of individual candidates would enhance Security Council decision-making. The ACT Group would like to reiterate its call for regular public briefings by the

Security Council on developments in the nomination process and open communication of straw-poll results.

**Mr. Mlynár** (Slovakia): First of all, I would like to express on our collective behalf — on behalf of my co-Chair, Ambassador Bahous, and myself — our appreciation for your personal leadership, Madam President, for your dedication to the process of the revitalization of the General Assembly and for its prioritization in your work and throughout the session. I also wish to thank all delegations for their engagement, support, cooperation and flexibility throughout the process, which has enabled us to present to the General Assembly the streamlined and more concise resolution 73/341 just adopted by consensus.

My co-Chair, Ambassador Bahous, will address some important elements that we would like to highlight today. I myself would like to mention that we have been truly honoured to guide the negotiations and the whole process together. I would like to use this opportunity to once again thank you, Madam, for your trust in appointing us as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. Having an excellent co-Chair in Ambassador Bahous, it was more comforting to assume that responsibility, which goes to the very core of the United Nations, empowering the General Assembly in order for it to fulfil its central role, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, and to be better able to face and address current global challenges.

I will not provide a detailed analysis of the resolution just adopted at this meeting. We should all collectively continue to reflect on what has already been achieved and where we need to further step up our efforts. Member States engaged on many critical issues on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Working Group. Important discussions were held on the alignment of the work of the General Assembly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, possible alternative dates for the beginning of the regular session of the Assembly and some issues relating to the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, as has also just been mentioned by the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group. Member States have acknowledged the existing challenges posed by the so-called proliferation of side events and high-level meetings on the margins of the General Assembly session. It is extremely important to stress that now, less than two weeks before the general debate. Last but

not least, substantive exchanges were held on various aspects pertaining to the status and work of the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

Even if the discussions do not always immediately lead to revolutionary changes, I believe they have prepared the ground for their productive continuation in future sessions. I usually refer to them as hooks that are there for us to use, build on and move forward. In the end, that is what multilateralism is about — calm discussions in good faith and in a friendly atmosphere of mutual respect, so that a mutually acceptable compromise is found in the end, even when views seem almost irreconcilable.

We believe that the current resolution, which has been streamlined and is now much more concise, provides a solid foundation for continued discussion and the identification of action-oriented solutions during the coming sessions. We strongly believe that this truly overarching process does and should lead by example. By that I do not mean only by making the resolution more concise and streamlined. In fact, we owe it to ourselves as members of the General Assembly, and even more so as we now approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization. In many ways, revitalization provides a golden opportunity in that regard, not least by helping us to take a good look in the mirror in order to reflect on where we are and what remains to be done.

In conclusion, I want to once again thank all delegations, as well as the capable Secretariat team, led by Under-Secretary-General Catherine Pollard, for all their support and engagement.

**Ms. Bahous** (Jordan): On behalf both of my co-Chair, Ambassador Michal Mlynár, and myself, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, and all Member States, on our adoption by consensus of resolution 73/341, on the revitalization of the General Assembly. I want to express our appreciation for your personal leadership and dedication to the revitalization process. Ambassador Mlynár and I were very honoured to be chosen to lead that process and we thank you and all Member States for the trust and support that helped bring this process to fruition in a true spirit of multilateralism.

We believe that the revitalization process is important in that it helps to make global governance more responsive and the General Assembly — the chief deliberative policymaking and representative

organ of the United Nations — a more effective and efficient instrument for pursuing and aligning our shared priorities and aspirations. The revitalization of the way we work in the Assembly and its subsidiary organs directly affects the Assembly's ability to ensure that it can deliver on its mandate. Revitalizing its work is also critical and an essential component of the reform of the United Nations generally. I would like to acknowledge our appreciation for the very pragmatic and constructive approach that Member States and their representatives took this year in ensuring that the negotiations, tough as they were, moved along well and that we worked steadily to achieve what we set out to do. Keeping in mind the importance of revitalizing the work of the General Assembly in order to strengthen the wider United Nations system, it will be necessary, indeed crucial, that we continue to negotiate in the same spirit in the future.

The resolution we have adopted today is evidence of the commitment of Member States to a stronger, more efficient and effective General Assembly. We have managed to take forward a number of important issues, which were highlighted by my co-Chair, in support of a revitalized world body. We were also able to adopt some practical measures that should improve the way we work and interact in the Assembly in the four major thematic areas — the role and authority of the General Assembly, its working methods, the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads, and the strengthening of the accountability, transparency and institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. In particular, we have managed to adopt a streamlined resolution that was duly updated and is more action-oriented and coherent and less repetitive. Allow me to say, Madam President, that we were able to match your and the Secretary-General's boldness and determination to reform the United Nations by making the General Assembly more efficient and effective and thereby contributing together to a stronger Organization and a stronger multilateral system.

Last but not least, we would like to sincerely thank the Secretariat, particularly the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, for its continued and highly professional support throughout the session.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

On a personal note, I would like to reiterate my deep gratitude to the Ambassadors of the Czech Republic and Timor-Leste for their exceptional leadership and coordination in ensuring that the adopted resolution contained an alignment component. After three years of hard work, we finally reached a consensus agreement on the process of aligning the work of the Assembly with the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Of course, there is still much to be done.

I also want to especially thank the Ambassadors of Slovakia and Jordan for their tireless work as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. Their work has not only been arduous, it has demanded tremendous tenacity and commitment above and beyond their duties. The process has not been simple, but it is vital and central to improving the way we respond to and honour our commitments, and it will continue to be central and vital as we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the creation of our Organization. I would like to once again thank and recognize the four facilitators, particularly those from Slovakia and Jordan, for their exceptional work. I also want to express our gratitude and recognition to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Secretariat team, whose work supported this arduous process.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 123?

*It was so decided.*

### **Agenda item 31 (continued)**

#### **Report of the Security Council**

##### **Report of the Security Council (A/73/2)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): We will continue with the list of speakers from our meeting the day before yesterday (see A/73/PV.105).

**Ms. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation appreciates the convening of this meeting to consider the 2018 annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, contained in document A/73/2. We also thank the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, in his capacity as President of the Council for September, for his presentation of the report.

It is regrettable that for a third consecutive time the Security Council was late in discussing and approving the annual report for consideration by the General Assembly within the established time frame. The delays in the report's publication, and the failure to issue or make it public in an appropriate and timely manner, have significantly affected the Assembly's ability to address the work of the Council and consider it in depth, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and Member States' desire to participate fully in the process. Moreover, the content of the report has not resulted in a genuine exercise in accountability on the part of the Security Council to the General Assembly. It is once again merely a descriptive account of the Council's meetings, activities and decisions, despite the fact that a majority of Member States have questioned the exercise as pro forma and lacking in critical analysis.

Cuba demands a Security Council report that is exhaustive, explanatory and analytical and that makes it possible to assess the causes and implications of the Council's actions. For example, it is unacceptable that the 2018 report omits any discussion of violations of the Council's own resolutions, particularly resolution 2231 (2015), on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and resolution 478 (1980), on the status of East Jerusalem, violations that are implicit in the United States' withdrawal from the JCPOA and transfer of its Israeli embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. It is extremely regrettable that the report does not reflect the stagnation of the question of Palestine and its people's protracted suffering. Nor does it condemn the escalation of violence and the tragic events in the Gaza Strip since 30 March 2018 caused by obstruction on the part of the United States. It is also unacceptable that it does not mention the violation of resolution 2334 (2016) or demand accountability for Israel's ongoing illegal occupation of Palestinian territory and its illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory.

We want to remind the Assembly that in performing the functions inherent in its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, as conferred on it by the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States and must therefore comply with the obligation, established in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, to submit special reports on its actions for consideration by the General Assembly. Although the figures for meetings held by the Council in 2018 indicated once again that the

number of public meetings increased, the Council has maintained its anti-democratic nature and inaccessible and exclusionary practices by working primarily in closed formats. In that regard, Cuba requests that such meetings should be the exception rather than the rule. We want a Security Council that responds to the concerns of all Member States, including before taking decisions, and that gives them real access to its work and that of its subsidiary bodies. We will need effective measures, including the elimination of the veto, to ensure the democratization of the Council and genuine participation in its work and decision-making.

Beyond presidential note 507 (S/2017/507), which was an important step, what is needed is comprehensive reform of the Security Council, including its working methods, without delay, in order to make it a transparent, democratic and representative body, in keeping with the evolution of the United Nations and international relations. Reform would include formalizing the Council's rules of procedure, which have remained provisional for more than 70 years, and expanding its membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories to not less than 26 members, all with the aim of rectifying the underrepresentation of developing countries. Cuba will continue to support the intergovernmental negotiations in the General Assembly on reforming the Council.

Cuba would like to reiterate its concern about the unjustified expansion of the Security Council's agenda in the past few years. The annual report once again reveals the Council's tendency to continue considering issues that do not necessarily pose an immediate threat to international peace and security and to its continued usurpation of roles assigned to other bodies, particularly the General Assembly. The Council must ensure that its functions conform to the mandate conferred on it by the Charter. It must stop interfering in matters outside its competence, particularly when they concern the mandate of the General Assembly, and it must respect all resolutions of the General Assembly as the main deliberative, policymaking and representative body of the United Nations. We reject the Council's selective manipulation of its methods and practices to suit various political agendas and efforts to dominate, particularly attempts to introduce issues that are not part of its agenda and the politicization of the consideration of other issues submitted to it. The use of the Security Council as a tool to put political pressure on sovereign States must stop.

**Mr. Trejo Blanco** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We take note of the annual report (A/73/2) of the Security Council to the General Assembly and thank the Russian presidency for its presentation. We would particularly like to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for its leadership in preparing the draft introduction to the report.

For El Salvador, the annual presentation of the Security Council's report to the General Assembly is especially relevant, and it represents part of the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security conferred on the Council by the States Members of the United Nations. We believe that the report is an exercise in transparency and accountability, which are essential to the proper functioning of our Organization. We appreciate the report as a valuable compilation of documents and statistics that will undoubtedly assist my delegation in its work and serve as a future reference. However, we believe it could have been enhanced by including more in-depth analysis of the challenges facing the Council as well as proposals for tackling those challenges, given the extensive mandate and scope of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies. We have no doubt that more in-depth analysis would facilitate discussion of the report and, even more importantly, would give members of the General Assembly an opportunity to formulate recommendations on how the Security Council should respond to the demands that global situations present today.

In our view, holding consultations on the drafting of the Council's annual report would be a demonstration of its willingness to democratize its procedures. We also believe that the report could include references to the major proceedings held under each monthly presidency, which would significantly enrich the report's content. We also believe it would be relevant for the report to include analyses of the decision-making processes within the Council as well as insights that would provide greater clarity on the reasons motivating permanent members of the Council to exercise their right to veto, when such cases occur.

Apart from that, we deplore the length of time that it takes to draft, approve and submit the report to the General Assembly. In that regard, we believe it is important to insist that the Security Council do everything possible to ensure that the report is made available in a time frame that allows delegations the time they need to study and analyse it. We therefore

propose that next year this process should take place no later than the spring, thereby duly implementing the provisions of presidential note 507 (S/2017/507). We also request that consideration be given to circulating the report to the entire membership so that we have sufficient time to review it, which should probably be no less than two weeks prior to its presentation to the General Assembly. Finally, we believe that improving the working methods of the Security Council to ensure they reflect changing global realities is crucial if it is to fulfil its mandate, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and make decisions quickly and effectively in order to maintain international peace and security.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Security Council for the presentation of its annual report for 2018 (A/73/2) and commend you, Madam, for your leadership as President of the General Assembly.

At the outset, I want to point out that it is not good practice for the Council's report to be presented so close to the closure of this session of the Assembly, particularly when so little time is provided for its review. Like other delegations, we would like to reiterate our request that the report be presented during the spring, in accordance with the provisions of presidential note 507 (S/2017/507). Today the General Assembly is considering developments with implications for international peace and security that took place almost 20 months ago. This delay is clearly far from ideal for generating a relevant dialogue between two main bodies of the United Nations. Every year the General Assembly authorizes billions of dollars for funding mandates approved or renewed by the Security Council. The international community expects and deserves much greater accountability in both form and content.

We acknowledge the efforts of those Council presidencies that held meetings in the Toledo format at the end of their terms, and we believe that this practice should be systematized. We also deplore the fact that six of the monthly evaluations for the 2018 presidencies are missing. That is not good practice.

As a Latin American country, we welcome the Security Council's attention to issues related to Latin America and the Caribbean, in which, without downplaying the problems intrinsic to each situation, we see an encouraging trend. Two situations, in April and June, stood out, when a single negative vote by

one permanent member prevented the Council from acting. And yet the report makes no mention of the reasons that led to such votes. The report's omission of the reasons why the veto was exercised and the circumstances in which it occurred represents a crucial failure of transparency and accountability and a lack of consideration for the international community, which has conferred on the Security Council the delicate task of maintaining international peace and security. We believe that mechanisms should be formally adopted to ensure that the General Assembly is informed expeditiously when such situations arise, and that when the Council is deadlocked, it is incumbent on the Assembly to consider intervening to avoid a situation in which the United Nations stands by as a passive witness to conflicts leading to mass atrocities. We reiterate our call to the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from using the veto, particularly in the case of mass atrocities, and we call on the international community to join the initiative of France and Mexico aimed at enhancing the Council's working methods, which would improve our Organization's effectiveness. In this regard, we welcome the fact that Argentina recently joined our initiative, bringing the number of supporting States to 102, and we urge all States that have not yet done so to do the same.

Sustainable peace was adopted as a new paradigm of our Organization in Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262. Its major contribution lies in ensuring that the peace and security pillar is linked to that of sustainable development, thereby emphasizing the importance of the issue of prevention. This link should be geared towards building inclusive communities with a healthy social fabric. Sustainable peace represents a major aim of the work of the United Nations. It requires a redesigned institutional architecture that is stronger and at the same time more flexible and efficient, a goal that we can promote in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable peace does not guarantee development, but no development is possible without it. Improving the articulation of our efforts around sustainable peace will ensure that the prevention of conflicts will become the priority of the United Nations in practice. Achieving lasting peace is the responsibility of us all, but to accomplish that we must ensure that peace and security are fully in harmony with sustainable development and with human rights. All of that will require a more functional and

harmonious relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): Norway has consistently promoted a more transparent, inclusive and accountable Security Council, a Council that acts on behalf of the larger United Nations membership to end conflicts and tackle threats to peace and security.

The United Nations Charter provides a clear obligation for the Security Council to submit to the General Assembly an annual report for its consideration. As a result, we welcome this opportunity to consider the Council's report (A/73/2). We maintain that the report should be submitted to the Assembly in a timely manner, as this will ensure that there is an opportunity for its adequate review by the membership.

The Council has committed itself to the full implementation of note 507 (S/2017/507), which states that the Security Council will take the necessary action to ensure the timely submission of the report to the General Assembly in the spring of the calendar year. Given that we are well into September, and with the report circulated to the general membership only weeks ago, it is clear that the commitments of the Council have, unfortunately, not been honoured at this session.

Turning to the report itself, the annual report paints a clear picture of a Security Council that is more important than ever, meeting to face global challenges both new and recurring. It also shows that a large proportion of these meetings are open sessions, which we welcome.

We welcome the efforts to add more analytical introductions to the report in recent years. However, a truly analytical look at the Council's work would ideally include an assessment of the Council's work during the previous calendar year, the impact of its work and possible areas for further action. The report we have before us today is still largely a listing of meeting dates and letters received. While these tell an important story about the Council's work and considerations, this information is also accessible on the Council's website.

Where we do see a lot of value is in the section "Monthly assessments by former Presidents of the work of the Security Council in 2018". These form a useful complement to the information presented in the introduction to the report. The assessments often give a more in-depth look at the monthly work of the Council. They include useful information and statistics, for

example, on the number of civil-society briefers or details of the missions undertaken by the Council during that month. We would welcome a better integration of these monthly reports into the annual report.

We must also note that, unfortunately, only five of the twelve presidencies in 2018 completed such a report.

The transparency and accessibility of the work of the Council is of the utmost priority to Norway. That is why, together with Security Council Report, we will launch today "The United Nations Security Council Handbook: a user's guide to Practice and Procedure". The handbook aims to provide clear, straightforward guidance to the written rules and practice of the Council, how it conducts its business, its subsidiary bodies and its relationship with other organs of the United Nations. We hope that this will be a useful tool for Member States, incoming Council members, new representatives, civil society and academics, and even everyday people looking to get better insight into the work of the Council. Moreover, this will further boost the accessibility and understanding of the vital work that the Security Council undertakes on our behalf.

*Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Looking ahead to next year's consideration of the annual report of the Council, as a Charter obligation of the Council vis-à-vis the General Assembly, we consider this process of review as a key element for dialogue. We call on the Security Council, together with the President of the General Assembly, to explore ways of strengthening this important process, allowing for a substantive interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council, and to allow the wider membership to comment on the content of the report, as well as on the Council's implementation of its mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Mrs. Zappia** (Italy): We welcome this opportunity to comment on the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly for 2018 (A/73/2) and to reflect on the sensitive issue of the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

We believe that this interaction should be strengthened, considering that the General Assembly is the only United Nations body with universal representation. As stated in Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council acts on behalf

of Member States. It is essential, therefore, to have a Council that is accountable to the wider membership.

The report is detailed and comprehensive. It lists all the resolutions, presidential statements and meetings of the Security Council and its subsidiary organs. It does not say much, however, about the inaction of the Security Council. It states in paragraph 2 that “Divisions in the Council prevented it from taking effective action on some key conflicts”, but it does not elaborate further on the inability of the Council to deliver. The report simply lists those cases — Syria and the Middle East — in which veto power was applied but does not say anything about other issues where the mere threat of the veto prevented the Council from taking action.

During this year’s intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council, the nature of the report was the subject of intensive discussions; it was, in fact, one of the areas where a substantial understanding was reached. In the co-Chair’s final document of the negotiations, under the section “Commonalities”, it is stated that it is important to

“Strengthen the cooperation and communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly, in particular through the submission by the Security Council of annual reports of a more analytical nature and of special reports to the General Assembly”.

In this regard, we would like to stress that having more analytical content in the Security Council’s annual report would indeed allow for a more structured discussion of the action, and especially on reasons for the inaction, of the Security Council. Such inaction is closely linked to the veto, regardless of whether it is actually applied or simply threatened.

Therefore, we view with interest initiatives aimed at restricting the use of the veto, such as the French-Mexican initiative, the Code of Conduct put forward by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and the proposal by Liechtenstein to hold a debate in the General Assembly every time a veto is cast in the Security Council. All of these suggestions lead in the direction of a more accountable Security Council.

The principle of accountability through elections in the General Assembly and the rotation of members of the Security Council should also be the guiding principle for the long-awaited reform of the Security Council in the direction of making it more democratic,

transparent and efficient. That is what Italy and the Uniting for Consensus group are advocating within the intergovernmental negotiations, in the conviction that only an enlargement of the category of elected members of the Security Council would make the Council more accountable and prevent the inaction that too often results from veto power.

**Ms. Agladze (Georgia):** We highly value this opportunity to discuss the report of the Security Council and we welcome the 2018 report (A/73/2). It is a critical exercise to ensure transparency and accountability in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is an important and necessary practice that provides an opportunity for the general membership to reflect upon the most pressing peace and security issues addressed by the Council.

Given the gravity of the issues, when we speak of humanitarian crises, active armed conflicts and even mass atrocities timely reporting is of the essence. That is why we regret that again this year, the report was submitted with considerable delay and that practice has already become a trend. We join others in calling for respect of the timetable provided by presidential note S/2017/507 and further encourage the Council to report by 1 April of every subsequent year to ensure substantial and timely consideration of the report no later than in the month of June of the year.

Let me also express our appreciation to the United Kingdom for compiling the introduction to the report. Having the key facts provided on the work of the Security Council presented in a coherent narrative is critical. At the same time, we call on the Council to explore ways to enrich the report with more analytical content so that the report provides more depth and substance on the key challenges facing the Council with regard to each of the situations with which it is seized.

From my national perspective, let me acknowledge that the Council was briefed on the situation in Georgia following Russia’s full-scale military aggression against Georgia in August 2008. Given the grave human rights situation in the occupied area, which is an ongoing militarization and occupation of the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia, we deem it important that the Council continue its practice, and also provide other opportunities, with a dedicated agenda item first and foremost on the situation in Georgia and under the format of open debates to discuss the situation of protracted conflicts in more depth.



In conclusion, allow me to recall the detrimental impact of the abuse of the veto right that Georgia itself experienced a decade ago. Let me reiterate that the veto right should be restricted when a permanent member is involved in the conflict or situation under consideration, in line with Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, which clearly stipulates that a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.

**Mr. Castañeda Solares** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of this meeting on the consideration of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, contained in document A/73/2. We thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for preparing the report and the delegation of the Russian Federation for presenting it.

The consideration of the report contained in document A/73/2 is of great importance, particularly since it sets out the work carried out by the Security Council in 2018, as well as providing an account of the adoption of the various resolutions and the issuance of press statements and presidential statements on items on the global agenda concerning international peace and security. In addition, we note the concise information on thematic issues.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In accordance with the Charter of the Organization, all Members of the United Nations have the obligation to comply with Security Council resolutions. Accordingly, the presentation of the activities of the Security Council, through the relevant report, represents a step towards the transparency that we welcome, since it serves as a mechanism for accountability to the membership of the General Assembly.

Guatemala believes that it is important to continue the trend for the Security Council to hold public meetings more regularly. The inclusion of the entire membership in matters that affect international peace and security clearly contributes to an understanding of the gravity of conflict situations. We therefore acknowledge the need for closer cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations on crisis management in armed conflicts by increasing, *inter alia*, the number of consultations meetings among such organizations, which play an active role in the resolution of crises and the settlement of armed conflicts. It will undoubtedly lead to greater effectiveness in the short, medium and long term with regard to lasting solutions to crises.

Without a timely and comprehensive approach, conflicts can worsen and, as a State that is currently a member of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its specific configurations, we believe that it is vital to leverage the role of the PBC in supporting the work of the Security Council. We also believe that it is important to continue the very useful wrap-up sessions and informal meetings at the end of each presidency in order to broaden the perspective of the Council's work and, clearly, to contribute to the understanding of its work.

Our delegation takes note of the efforts to improve the content and presentation of the Security Council annual report to the General Assembly. As a result, we believe that the Security Council should continue to explore in its Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions possible ways to improve its scope and analysis. We therefore wish to emphasize the importance of the Council fulfilling its obligation, as set out in Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, with regard to submitting an annual report to the General Assembly.

We of course recognize the value of the information posted on the Security Council's website but, at the same time, we stress that it can in no way be a substitute for the Council's report. The timely submission of reports is an obligation that meets the requirements for the transparency and accountability of the Security Council before the universal organ of the Organization.

In conclusion, as a troop-contributor to the Organization, Guatemala acknowledges the importance of the Security Council mandates. We therefore believe that it is essential to foster even greater interaction between the Security Council and troop- and police-contributing countries. We believe that the stronger information flows allow for a broader country base participating in the important and very noble task of maintaining international peace and security.

**Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Convening this meeting makes it possible to fulfil two mandates of the Charter of the United Nations: that the Security Council shall submit to the General Assembly its work report, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations; and that the Assembly shall consider the report, as stipulated in Article 15. The Ambassador of the Russian Federation presented the report (A/73/2), just adopted by the Council and submitted by the United Kingdom, which drafted the introduction to the report.

We thank the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council and the author of the first part of the report.

Costa Rica associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland on behalf of the members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group. We would like to make some additional remarks in our national capacity.

The Security Council is accountable to the General Assembly. It has the responsibility to provide a comprehensive report to the General Assembly that includes substantive information and an in-depth analysis of the work of the Council. In that regard, I refer to paragraph 138 of presidential note S/2017/507 on the Council's working methods. It is only such substantive and analytical information that can enable the Assembly to make sound decisions about it, and especially about the foundations that support world peace and security on the basis of the Council's work. That substantive content is what the Member States would like to consider in depth on the basis of the Council's report next year.

We are pleased that in his presentation of the report on Tuesday (see A/73/PV.105), the President of the Council offered to convey to his colleagues the content and nature of our remarks in today's debate on the report, since we note that the statements made when the 2017 report (A/72/2) was presented to the Assembly (see A/72/PV.114) do not appear in the report under consideration today. We believe that accountability includes the obligation to consider what is discussed in the Assembly, which is otherwise a meaningless exercise.

An organization's working methods are a fundamental component of the processes that ensure that it is efficient and transparent. We have been pleased to see how the Security Council has made progress in establishing and regulating processes and norms, as reflected in presidential note 507 (S/2017/507). Greater openness and accountability, and the inclusion of views expressed by Member States, will all help consolidate the efficiency and transparency of the Security Council and as a result will imbue its resolutions and decisions with the strength and respect that its noble purposes strive for.

The premise established in Article 24 of the Charter whereby Member States recognize that the Security Council acts on their behalf must be applied

reciprocally. The annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly reflects the principles of transparency and accountability of representatives to those they represent. It is crucial to maintain and respect those principles in order to encourage a better relationship between the two organs. The analysis of the annual report of the Security Council is practically the only opportunity that the General Assembly has to consider and evaluate the Council's work, as well as the challenges and deficiencies the Council faces in fulfilling the mandates it has established.

One of the objectives of this exercise should therefore not only be reporting on what the Security Council has addressed but also providing an opportunity to hold the Council to account for situations in which it has failed to fulfil its primary mandate, the maintenance of international peace and security. Such inaction has worsened the humanitarian situation of millions, displaced entire populations and resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent lives as a result of attacks, most of them in clear violation of international law and our Charter. It bears mentioning that this idea is accepted starting in the second paragraph of the introduction to the report that we are studying today, quoted in its entirety by the President of the Council in his presentation to this Assembly on Tuesday. The text reads, "Divisions in the Council prevented it from taking effective action on some key conflicts." That is a very serious statement, and the report does not elaborate on it in any way. It is an opportunity that the Assembly could use, in the analysis of such statements, to delve deeper into the reasons for the divisions among Council member States, which the report itself acknowledges and which have so many serious and regrettable consequences.

We agree with the thoughts that have been expressed on the time frames for the presentation and consideration of the report, as well as on the need to restrict the indiscriminate and often unexplained use of the veto. That is why we support Liechtenstein's initiative to establish an additional mechanism for ensuring accountability.

We urge the members of the Security Council to preserve and respect the procedures established to improve its transparency and accountability, such as the use of defined consultation processes, including requesting the membership's views on certain aspects of the report to be submitted, as indicated in paragraph 129 of note 507. A closer relationship between the

General Assembly and the Security Council can contribute to a more efficient Council that responds not just to the priorities of the membership at large but above all to the needs of humankind, which is beset by conflicts that the Organization, in general, and the Security Council, in particular, are called on to prevent and attend to. Those conflicts, as accepted without further explanation in the report, are due to what it calls divisions in the Council.

**Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan): Let me start by saying that Pakistan supports efforts aimed at improving the analytical and qualitative value of the Council's annual report (A/73/2). The information in the report is a useful quick-reference compendium and overview of the Council's work during the reporting period. However, as we have consistently underscored, more must be done for the report to become not merely a repository of dry facts, but instead an illuminating entry point for undertaking a critical review of the work of the Security Council. After all, since the Council acts on the behalf of the entire membership as the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the General Assembly must assess whether the Council has been effective in that task. Has it reflected the views and interests of the entire membership? Has it acted in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations?

We also join others in reaffirming that the reports of the Council should be submitted to the General Assembly in a timely manner in order to facilitate real, substantive discussion. After all, this is not only an imperative of necessity, in the spirit of paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter. The Council has also pledged, through several presidential notes, to present annual reports to the General Assembly during the spring session following each reporting year. We hope those issues will be duly addressed when subsequent reports of the Council to the General Assembly are compiled.

In recent years the Council has been most effective in dealing with internal crises and conflicts, particularly in Africa. Peacekeeping has emerged as a flagship United Nations enterprise in halting and addressing several conflicts across the globe. As one of the world's leading troop-contributing countries, Pakistan takes great pride in its role and its contribution to those efforts. Even today, more than 5,000 Pakistani soldiers continue to serve as flag bearers of hope and a progressive future for millions afflicted by conflict around the world.

But we must also acknowledge in all candour that the Council has been considerably less effective in resolving threats to and breaches of international peace and security, which is its primary mandate, after all. Unfortunately, we have witnessed double standards in the work of the Council all too often, with prolonged inaction and silence in some cases and a quick resort to threats or authorizations of sanctions and enforcement action in others. The provisions for the peaceful settlement of disputes remain grossly underutilized, while there is a dangerous tendency to have recourse much too often and too hastily to measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. The implementation of some resolutions is actively pursued while others are ignored.

In our region, the festering Jammu and Kashmir dispute represents not only a reprehensible facet of brutal and repressive occupation, but also a constant reminder of the Security Council's solemn commitment, through its several resolutions — at least 11 — made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, promising them the right to self-determination. Faced with India's illegal annexation on 5 August of occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the grim reality of occupation has become ever more stark for the Kashmiri people. Now in its second month, the darkness that has been imposed on the occupied territory shows no sign of abating.

As elsewhere, when the Council fails to implement its own resolutions, the price for that failure is paid in blood by generations of innocent people. In the case of Kashmir, the bloodletting has lasted more than 70 years and has taken the lives of more than 95,000 Kashmiris, including countless women and children. This travesty must end. The Security Council must act by demanding that India lift the curfew, end the communication blackout and allow the people to freely exercise all their rights, including their right to peaceful assembly. Those detained, all political prisoners, must be released. Human rights violations must be halted, and so must the use of force against unarmed demonstrators, including the use of pellet guns and live ammunition. All of that must end. After all, unilateral actions and gross violations of Council resolutions not only threaten the very foundations of the rule-based international order, they also erode the credibility and legitimacy of the Council itself.

However much the virtues of impartiality and consistency can shore up the Security Council's standing from within, it goes without saying that the imperative of creating legitimacy and credibility cannot

be achieved without comprehensive reform of the Council. Pakistan seeks a Council that is democratic in composition, effective in decision-making and accountable to the general membership; a Council where power and privilege are not the preserve of a few but rather represent the interests of all Member States, small, medium and large; a Council that is in sync with the contemporary world and not wedded to outdated political notions and realities. Our experience of the intergovernmental negotiations has shown that divisive tactics and piecemeal approaches only prolong impasses and vitiate the atmosphere for negotiations. We must avoid those pitfalls in order to make meaningful progress. The reform process cannot be held hostage to individual national pursuits of permanent seats. We look forward to engaging with the wider membership in the coming months, with a clear sense of purpose and in a spirit of flexibility based on the agreed parameters outlined in decision 62/557.

**Ms. Prince** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Our delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Security Council and the Secretariat for the preparation of the annual report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2018, contained in document A/73/2.

The submission of the annual report speaks to the Security Council's important duty to the General Assembly enshrined in paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council is the primary organ charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, and its work is of critical importance to all Member States. The annual report chronicling its activities must therefore be comprehensive, accessible and transparent. The General Assembly's consideration and debate of the annual report is equally important. This debate is not a mere formality. It fosters enhanced interaction between the Council and the Assembly, and we must support that mutually reinforcing relationship. It is also essential to ensure that the Council remains accountable to Member States and that they have an opportunity to constructively express their views and expectations of the work of the Council. After all, the Council carries out its mandate on behalf of all Member States.

That said, it is unfortunate that this year's report was not submitted in a timely fashion, having been made available to Member States only on 22 August. The late submission is worrying, and Member States have not ceased to express their dissatisfaction with it. When Member States are not given an appropriate period in

which to prepare and to consider what is a very extensive report, we are left at a disadvantage, as we cannot then effectively debate its contents. That runs counter to the purpose for which we are gathered here. Our delegation therefore encourages the Security Council to observe the guidelines in presidential note 507 (S/2017/507), and specifically with regard to paragraph 132, which provides that the annual report should be adopted by the Council in time for consideration by the General Assembly in the spring of that calendar year.

Turning to the substance of the report, our delegation commends the Security Council for the excellent overview of its activities for the reporting period. However, we echo the call that has been made time and again for the report to have a stronger focus on analysis. The General Assembly would be greatly aided in its assessment of the Council's work if additional insights were provided. Our delegation eagerly looks forward to our forthcoming tenure on the Council, starting on 1 January 2020. We remain mindful that the General Assembly has placed its trust in us by electing us. We are committed to the continued improvement of the Security Council's annual report to ensure that it is an instrument that is not only transparent but one that can lead to a more accountable and effective Council.

**Mr. Seifi Pargou** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank the President for convening this meeting. I also thank the Russian presidency of the Security Council for presenting the Council's annual report (A/73/2).

Despite improvements to the Council's recent reports, which have become more informative and useful, we are still a long way from fulfilling the *raison d'être* of the Security Council's annual report and its consideration by the General Assembly. Paragraph 1 of Article 15 and paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations clearly state not only that the Council shall submit an annual report but also that the Assembly shall receive and consider it. What is the rationale and the logic behind such a strong obligation? One of the main reasons for such strong language is definitely the principle of accountability. The Council's power and authority are not intrinsic. They come from the Organization's Members, who, as stated in paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter,

“confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that ... it acts on their behalf.”

It is therefore fully expected that the Council must be accountable to the Assembly, in which all States Members are represented and from which the Council derives its power. The Assembly must therefore assess the Council's performance, evaluate the effectiveness of its actions, identify situations where it has failed to act and ultimately make recommendations to it with respect to any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, as provided for in paragraph 2 of Article 11 of the Charter.

In reviewing the Council's 2018 report, I would like to touch on its performance with respect to our region, the Middle East. The occupation of Palestine, the longest-standing crisis in the history of the United Nations and the main source of conflict in the region, remains unresolved. The brutalities of the Israeli regime continue, and the Council continues to fail to fulfil its responsibilities in that regard. A living example of such failure can be seen in the Council's silence regarding the transfer of the United States embassy to Al-Quds Al-Sharif, as well as the recognition by the United States of the annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan to Israel, both of which are flagrant violations of peremptory norms of international law, not to mention the Council's own resolutions.

In Yemen in 2018, the Council did not take the measures necessary to prevent the aggressors from killing more civilians, committing more crimes, including using starvation as a tactic of war, and bringing the country to the verge of disintegration. In another case, the United States, a permanent member of the Council, withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which had been endorsed by the Council in its unanimous adoption of resolution 2231 (2015). That was a gross violation of both the Charter and the resolution. Moreover, the United States continues to force other countries either to violate that resolution or face punishment. A permanent member of the Council intimidating Member States and compelling them to violate the Council's resolutions is unprecedented and seriously alarming. At a time when the Security Council is dealing with a growing trust deficit and the rule of law at the international level badly needs shoring up, such irresponsible policies are disastrous for the rule-based international order.

Another issue that the Assembly should consider is finding ways and means of putting an end to abuse of the Council by some of its permanent members, who, by misusing their power and in order to further their

own narrow national interests, force the Council to consider issues that do not fall under its purview. That includes the consideration of issues related to States' internal affairs, interference in which is explicitly prohibited by the Charter. One clear example of the Council's exploitation by the United States in 2018 was its consideration of a matter that was internal to my country. And it is the case with regard to the consideration of issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security. Likewise, the Council is resorting increasingly, excessively and hastily to its Chapter VII functions. Chapter VII should be invoked as intended, as a measure of last resort and only if necessary. Some of the longest-standing demands of the majority of the Organization's Members are that the Council should cease its consideration of such issues and exhibit maximum restraint in resorting to Chapter VII functions. The Council should listen to those demands.

While there is therefore a need to further improve the Council's report, particularly by including more substantive and analytical information on the issues under its consideration, the Assembly must also improve its consideration of the Council's annual reports, particularly by appraising its performance and making recommendations to the Council where needed. These are essential to avoid further erosion of the Council's already tarnished credibility. That is our common responsibility, and we should take it seriously.

**Ms. Ioannou** (Cyprus): I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of September for his presentation of the Council's annual report for 2018 (A/73/2).

We consider the General Assembly's meaningful discussion of this report to be essential, given that the Council discharges its responsibilities on behalf of all of us, and that the success of the international political and legal order established by the United Nations depends on the principal organs fulfilling their distinct but complementary roles. The objective of such a discussion is not to stoke antagonism between the General Assembly and the Council or to suggest a hierarchy between them. A substantive exchange serves as a mechanism for self-preservation through introspection and self-assessment. It is simply not in our collective best interests if any part of our system is not subject to rigorous scrutiny. Every mandated structure must be accountable, particularly if its mission is one that the entire international community has a stake in.

We need to be able to assess whether the Council is fulfilling its responsibilities, and we should do the same for all other principal organs, including the General Assembly. It is clear to us that if there is malaise in one part of the system, that can only imply a broader condition that reflects poorly on the entire system. The large number of conflicts in the world today shows that the Council's performance is suboptimal, despite the unquestionable fact that the situation would be much worse if the Council did not exist. At the same time, the Charter does not prevent the Assembly from discussing matters of international peace and security, while organizational practice has even included the Assembly's adoption of recommendations on such matters. Where the Council is too divided to take action, the General Assembly has more power to act than it is currently using, and we need to consider our own role and responsibility in enabling the United Nations as a whole to deliver on its core, overarching mandate, and in compelling the Council to act based on principles rather than power.

The key to delivering as an organization may lie in achieving the right synergies between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Without affecting the clear delimitation between the two bodies' respective competencies, their complementarity, combined with the individual effectiveness of each, can keep the United Nations credible and relevant. But their interaction is insufficient. An annual report cannot serve as a platform for proper institutional dialogue. The Charter of the United Nations, for example, provides for special reports to be submitted, something that has never happened. Beyond the Charter, there are a number of informal ways to connect the wider membership to the work of the Council on a regular basis. The presidency of the Council could provide a weekly briefing on its work for delegations. End-of-presidency meetings could also be conducted in more depth. While we appreciate that a significant part of Council negotiations must take place in a closed setting, that need not be at the expense of transparency.

Like others, we believe that a more meaningful exchange on the report before us would be possible if it were to be submitted and discussed earlier in the year. Moreover, while the report's overview of the Council's work is very useful, we believe the membership would benefit from more substantive and analytical content. We would like to see, among other elements, an overview of the actual work done by the Council and of

the situation on the ground for each item on the agenda, including in each case an assessment of the levels of the threat and of the implementation of Council mandates and general compliance with Council resolutions, as well as what the wider membership can do regarding every unresolved conflict.

Small States that are not members of the Council and that have a long-standing ongoing conflict that is on the Council's agenda, like Cyprus, absolutely rely on its effectiveness. We cannot overstate the importance of having a Council that is not distracted from focusing purely on threats to peace and on the use of force and conflict resolution. The Council should be resolute in recognizing, condemning and addressing the unauthorized use of force. While a comprehensive notion of security involves a multitude of root causes and complicating factors, there are other bodies in the United Nations system whose job is to mitigate those factors, and we must ensure that they can effectively discharge their own responsibilities. We also cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that the Council upholds the primacy of international law when making decisions. It must consistently apply the same set of rules that we have collectively formulated and mainstreamed in international relations. When resolving conflict, justice cannot be sacrificed for the sake of peace, or peace will not be sustainable. On an individual level, the only form of redemption for victims of conflict is the prospect of justice. We must use the judicial institutions that we have created to fight impunity, including through referrals by the Security Council.

In the light of the ever-increasing violence against civilians in armed conflict, and of the changing nature of conflict with the significant rise in non-State actors as belligerents, we require more targeted action on the part of the Council to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law and accountability for perpetrators. In that regard I would like to make special mention of the Council's adoption of resolution 2474 (2019), on missing persons, initiated by Kuwait, which we wholeheartedly welcome and support.

If the Assembly will allow me a couple of last remarks, I want to devote one to peacekeeping, which has proved to be the most potent tool at the Council's disposal. In deploying, managing, and withdrawing peacekeeping operations, the Council must make decisions solely on the basis of criteria pertaining to peace and security, based on expertise and true knowledge of the situation on the ground. While

the \$6.7 billion annual budget for United Nations peacekeeping operations is admittedly high, it is much less costly than the alternative would be.

My penultimate point concerns synergies in the maintenance of international peace and security between the United Nations and regional organizations with corresponding capabilities and local knowledge of the situation on the ground. While there can be no doubt that such cooperation helps the Council deal with conflicts more effectively, it must be done within the rules-based framework of the United Nations and on the condition that the Council does not relinquish its primary competence in such cases.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not stress the need for greater access to the Council's work for Member States that are on or directly affected by its agenda.

**Ms. De Schot** (New Zealand): In the past few years, the list of speakers for this annual debate has been almost unbelievably short. New Zealand is pleased to join other delegations that have decided that the work of the Security Council is too important for the General Assembly to remain silent. In that regard, New Zealand aligns itself with the statement made by Switzerland on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group (see A/73/PV.105).

The Security Council's annual report (A/73/2) is a lengthy document, and New Zealand acknowledges the work of those who produced it. Having held that responsibility only a few years ago, we know it is not an easy task. We are grateful to the President of the General Assembly for delaying this debate in order to allow Member States to fully consider the report. It is regrettable, however, that delays in the finalization of the report meant that it was once again submitted only at the end of the current session of the General Assembly.

New Zealand joins other speakers in requesting that the President of the General Assembly continue to ensure that delegations are given adequate time to consider reports in future. We also encourage members of the Security Council, both permanent and non-permanent, to fulfil the commitment outlined in presidential note 507 (S/2017/507) to submitting the annual report to the General Assembly in a timely manner. The report should not be a box-ticking exercise. It should offer the opportunity to reflect on global challenges and threats to international peace and security and should give a sense of the progress and performance of the Security Council.

On the substance of the report, we are pleased to observe that the Council's work in 2018 produced several examples of positive contributions to international peace and security. In Liberia, Colombia and Iraq, among other countries, the Council supported growing stability. They are important examples of the critical role the Council can and does play when it is able to act with a clear voice and purpose. The report also lays bare that in 2018, the Council was defined by its divisions and by what it did not do. Differences of opinion are to be expected and even welcomed as a means to identify the most appropriate response to any situation. But the threat and use of the veto mean that differences of opinion between permanent members of the Council rapidly calcify into inaction.

The Security Council has an unenviable task. Its deliberations and decisions matter profoundly. Whether it acts or not, and how it acts, affects the lives of millions. While the preservation of international peace and security falls primarily to the Council, the Council does not and should not act entirely in isolation. The report of the Security Council is an important step in ensuring the Council's transparency and accountability.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): My country, Ireland, welcomes the holding of today's debate. It is an important one for us for a number of reasons. First, the debate is clearly part of the Security Council's obligation, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to submit an annual report to the General Assembly (A/73/2). Secondly, as we see it, members of the Security Council, elected or permanent, act on behalf of the general membership. Debates such as these are critical for us in the general membership in assessing the work of the Council and the work that the Council does on our behalf. It is also a means of holding the Council accountable for its actions and indeed, frankly, for the occasions where it fails to act. Finally, we see this debate as allowing the membership to give its views on a lengthy and important report that is intended to cover the entire work of the Council and its important subsidiary bodies over a 12-month period.

So while we welcome the additional time provided for today's debate, we nevertheless regret the Council's failure to submit its report in the spring, as required. Abiding by the agreed schedule would both allow for a more timely assessment of the Council's work and also for the general membership's more substantive engagement on the issues that arise from it. This is an example of why Ireland strongly supports efforts to

improve the working methods of the Council. While not an end in themselves, improved working methods increase the Council's accountability, transparency and coherence. I would add that being seen to act in accordance with procedures and on behalf of the broad membership actually enhances the Council's own legitimacy and authority.

Again, while the report is welcome, it does not offer the kind of self-critical analysis that would provide a basis for improving the way the Council operates. We feel that the introductory narrative section should be expanded and should endeavour to assess the Council's effectiveness in carrying out its tasks, both in terms of how it functions and, more importantly, how it addresses the core task of maintaining international peace and security. We recognize that the requirement for unanimity among the Council members may make a frank assessment difficult. But, truthfully, innovation is possible. For example, we think that the report could specifically cite the views of departing elected Council members without the need for unanimity on their contributions.

We note that the number of vetoed and non-consensus draft resolutions has been rising in the Council for years. In 2018, three draft resolutions were vetoed, while four submitted drafts were not adopted due to insufficient votes. Overall, fewer resolutions were adopted than in 2017. There were also more procedural votes than in the past. In some of these cases, one permanent member used its veto to block action by the Council. In our view that is unacceptable. Ireland wants to see an end to the use of the veto, particularly in cases of actual or potential mass atrocity crimes.

While there are serious divisions in the Council, progress can nevertheless occur even on the most difficult issues. For example, we commend the efforts of Kuwait and Sweden, both of them elected members, which were instrumental in ensuring that the Council adopted resolution 2449 (2018), renewing the cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid in Syria, and resolution 2401 (2018), demanding a month-long humanitarian pause for the delivery of aid following an escalation of the conflict in February of that year. We also welcome the Council's increased focus on key thematic issues. In that regard, we emphasize women and peace and security, the protection of civilians, conflict prevention and sustaining peace, and drivers of conflicts such as hunger, climatic issues and scarce natural resources. However, as we see it, despite good

work, particularly on the part of elected members, mainstreaming and giving attention to these important thematic priorities across individual country situations in the Council remains at best a work in progress.

As a country seeking election to the Security Council, Ireland will vow to make these issues a priority during its tenure if we are lucky enough to be elected. We will also make efforts to ensure that the Council is held accountable to the wider membership and, of course, as an elected member, to work as effectively as possible to ensure that maintaining international peace and security is actually at the heart of the Council's business.

**Mrs. Kaeval** (Estonia): The principles of accountability, coherence and transparency are key in governing the Estonian State. That is also why Estonia joined the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, in order to work to improve the working methods of the Security Council so as to reflect those principles. As a body representing all the members of the United Nations, the Security Council should adhere to them.

Today we are discussing the annual report of the Security Council (A/73/2), which the Council is obliged to present to the General Assembly pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. Its annual report is a key accountability mechanism established by the Charter in order to govern the relationship between these two main organs of the United Nations. We fully subscribe to the call of the ACT group regarding improving the interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly and ensuring that the Council brings greater transparency and accountability to the wider United Nations membership where its work is concerned.

It is unfortunate that the report before us today has been given to the General Assembly so late in the session, and we want to remind the Assembly that through several presidential notes, including the most recent note 507 (S/2017/507), adopted two years ago today, the Security Council has committed to presenting the annual report during the spring of the session following the reporting year. Discussions such as today's and those earlier this week (see A/73/PV.105) clearly indicate the wish of the wider United Nations membership to engage in serious discussion of the report. As an incoming member of the Security



Council, we will be able to engage in that process and to contribute to the principles I have mentioned.

**Ms. Eneström** (Sweden): I thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing today's meeting, which constitutes one of the few and therefore highly important opportunities that the wider membership has to discuss the work of the Security Council.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, Sweden aligns itself with the statement delivered by Switzerland on behalf of the ACT group on Tuesday (see A/73/PV.105), but I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Sweden served on the Security Council in 2017 and 2018. When we started our term by assuming the presidency of the Council in January 2017, we encouraged our fellow Council members to rise above national interests and shoulder their responsibilities under the Charter. We insisted that despite differences between its members the Council should always seek meaningful outcomes. The fruits of the Council's labour are described in the annual report before us today (A/73/2). In a difficult international climate with an ever-growing number of complex challenges, there were ups and downs during the two years in which we served. For our part, we were pleased to be able to contribute to an increased Council engagement in Yemen. We co-led Council efforts to respond to the humanitarian situation in Syria. We worked diligently to enhance the participation of women and children and consideration of their perspectives. We sought to advance the Council's engagement on broader concepts of security such as climate change and security. We also attempted to open the Council's work to those affected — women, young people and civil society. We talked not just about countries on the agenda but with them, and we attempted to involve larger parts of the wider membership in the work of the Council.

But while I am proud to report on Sweden's contributions to some of the Council's relative successes during our term, we must also recognize the shortcomings and sometimes even abject failures of the Council in upholding its mandate. Its inability to respond adequately to the use of chemical weapons in Syria may have been one of its most serious failures in 2017 and 2018. The failure to retain the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism or to establish another mechanism in its place not only denied justice

to the victims of those heinous crimes, it undermined the global non-proliferation regime and the Security Council's role in its defence. Another example was the Council's failure to prevent the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar and to demand accountability after the fact.

While there are different reasons for the Council's shortcomings, the main source of its inability to act is the veto, whether through its use or threat of use. During Sweden's term, the veto prevented Council action on nine occasions. It was used a number of times on Syria, twice on the situation in the Middle East and once to prevent Council action on Yemen. In addition, action on Myanmar was prevented due to the risk of the veto being used. What is striking is that on virtually all of those occasions, there was a clear majority of Council members in favour of action, but with one or two permanent members standing in the way. The misuse of the veto undermines the Council's legitimacy. We must ensure that the political cost of misusing the veto increases. The General Assembly is not tasked with bearing the responsibility for international peace and security, but what it can do is to raise the threshold for the use of the veto by exercising some sort of veto accountability. Efforts to that end are being discussed, as we heard during the debate today, and Sweden stands firmly behind them.

Fundamentally, if we are to achieve a more responsive, effective, and transparent Council, in step with our times, we must make progress on Security Council reform. But efforts to achieve comprehensive reform must be combined with continued improvements of the Council in its current incarnation. Our experience tells us that elected members have an important role to play. A number of steps have been taken to improve the 10 non-permanent members' ability to fulfil the mandate they have been given by the Assembly. Continuity is key. Earlier elections, extended observation periods and a more organized transition between former, current and potential members have paved the way for better-prepared members who can collaborate more effectively with one another and with the permanent members. While permanent members must be held to their Charter obligations and should refrain from abusing their veto power for the sake of narrow national interests, elected members should make the most of the opportunities available to them by being constructive, innovative and courageous. By raising the cost of the use of the veto by the permanent five, we can level

the playing field and ensure that the Council becomes better at fulfilling its mandate.

Let me end by responding to the comments made by colleagues regarding the submission of monthly assessments. I want to assure them and the Assembly that this is a responsibility that Sweden took seriously during its term. The assessment of our January 2017 presidency has been duly submitted, and the report on our presidency in 2018 will be available imminently.

**Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan):** At the outset, I would like to thank the President for convening today's plenary meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council, as contained in document A/73/2.

General Assembly deliberations on the annual reports of the Security Council, as required by Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, are important avenues for Member States to share their views on the work of the Council and to emphasize the areas of concern that require special attention and dedication. Taking into account the fact that the Security Council, in discharging its functions, acts on behalf of all Member States, the broader United Nations membership should be given more opportunities to be heard. We take positive note of some developments in that respect and look forward to additional efforts to enhance the transparency and accountability of the Council and its interaction with the wider membership.

The current challenges to peace and security that the world is facing call for strengthening the international legal order and redoubled efforts at all levels. Strict compliance with the generally accepted norms and principles of international law guiding relations among States is crucial to that end. The Security Council's effectiveness and accountable functioning require the implementation of its decisions first and foremost. Article 25 of the Charter is clear about Member States' obligations in that regard. The fact that the unlawful use of force against sovereign States and the resulting territorial acquisitions continue, despite Security Council resolutions to the contrary, does not mean that such a state of affairs can constitute an accepted practice for the Council.

As is well known, through its unanimous adoption of resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), the Security Council condemned the use of force against my country, Azerbaijan, along with the occupation of its territories, attacks on its civilians and the bombardment of its inhabited areas.

It reaffirmed respect for Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. In those resolutions, in response to territorial claims and forcible actions, the Security Council confirmed that the Nagorno Karabakh region is an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories.

It was attacks by Armenia's armed forces on Azerbaijan and their occupation of its territories that elicited four Council resolutions and seven presidential statements. The resolutions provided authoritative clarification as to the acts committed, the obligations violated and the obligations to put an end to the illegal situation thereby created. They characterized Armenia's actions as the unlawful use of force and invalidated its claims to the territories of Azerbaijan once and for all. The numerous decisions and documents adopted by other international organizations are framed along the same lines.

As a result, in its declaration made in connection with the capture and occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan, the Minsk group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which was mandated to promote a resolution of the conflict and facilitate negotiations to that end, stated in particular that

“[n]o acquisition of territory by force can be recognized, and the occupation of territory cannot be used to obtain international recognition or to impose a change of legal status” (S/26718, enclosure I).

However, the key Security Council demands have still not been implemented, and the immediate corollary is that this unresolved conflict and its military and humanitarian consequences continue to endanger peace, security and development. Against that background, we have seen Armenia attempt to downplay the relevance of the Security Council's resolutions and misinterpret their purpose and content. Armenia has also persistently obstructed the conflict settlement process and regularly resorts to various provocations aimed at escalating the situation on the ground and consolidating the status quo, as some recent notorious examples make abundantly clear.

Last month, at the highest political level, Armenia declared the Nagorno Karabakh region, which is my country's sovereign territory, to be part of Armenia, thereby disclosing its plans to annex the occupied areas of Azerbaijan, in blatant violation of international law and the Security Council's resolutions on the subject. That statement was preceded by other provocative pronouncements by various senior members of the Armenian Government, asserting, for instance, that not an inch of land would be returned to Azerbaijan, and threatening a new war for new territories. Furthermore, despite earlier warnings and condemnation on the part of the international community, and against a background of ongoing efforts to achieve a political settlement of the conflict, deliberate actions are being carried out in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan with a view to securing their colonization and annexation. Among other things, those actions include the implantation of settlers, the destruction or appropriation of historical and cultural heritage, and the exploitation, pillage and illicit trafficking of assets, natural resources and other wealth in the occupied territories.

Armenia's attempts to introduce internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan — the Nagorno Karabakh region and other occupied areas — under various fake names, as well as to promote and advertise the unlawful puppet regime that it has established in those territories, are equally null and void. The illegality of that regime has been repeatedly stated at the international level. It is under Yerevan's direction and control and is ultimately nothing but a product of aggression, racial discrimination and ethnic cleansing.

All of this confirms the urgent need for action by the United Nations and the wider international community. We have consistently brought the challenges resulting from the continued aggression against my country to the Security Council's attention. The communications submitted by Azerbaijan and circulated as documents of the Security Council and General Assembly during the reporting period are referred to in Chapter 4 of Part V of the report of the Security Council under consideration. It is pertinent to recall in that regard that serious breaches of obligations under peremptory norms of general international law give rise to additional consequences. They include the duty of States to cooperate in order to end such breaches by lawful means and to refrain from recognizing as lawful a situation created by a serious breach and from rendering aid or assistance in maintaining that

situation. It is therefore critical that the international community insist on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) and Armenia's strict compliance with its international obligations.

The primary objective of the ongoing peace process, whose mandate is based on those Security Council resolutions, is to ensure the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the restoration of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and the return of forcibly displaced persons to their homes and properties. The achievement of that objective is a must, not a compromise, and it is also inevitable and urgent, because the unlawful use of force and the resulting military occupation and ethnic cleansing of the territories of Azerbaijan do not represent a solution and will never bring about peace, reconciliation and stability.

**Mr. Bayyapu** (India): We welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on the annual report of the Security Council (A/73/2), and we thank the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat for producing the report.

India congratulates Estonia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam for their election to the Security Council for the period from 2020 to 2021. We look forward to working with them constructively and positively.

We note that the report under consideration continues to be a statistical compilation of events and a bland summary and listing of meetings and outcome documents. The membership of the General Assembly has repeatedly asked the Security Council to ensure that the annual report is more analytical and incisive rather than a mere narration of Council meetings. The debate on the annual report has become a ritual and a formality in a long list of formalities. We need to reinvigorate this interaction between the most representative organ of the United Nations and its most empowered brethren. The Charter of the United Nations itself bestows a profound seriousness on the report, as is evident from the existence of a separate provision mandating such a report rather than its inclusion in the provision for reports from other United Nations bodies. That means that the annual report of the Security Council should inform, highlight and analyse the measures that it has

decided on or taken to maintain international peace and security during the reporting period.

Many believed that streamlining the reporting period to the calendar year would result in its early submission, but the situation has remained the same. A report that is lacking in substance and submitted very late — almost in the last quarter of the following year — does not generate the attention needed for a proper discussion. That must be rectified. There should be definite timelines for completing the report, circulating it to the wider General Assembly membership and holding the debate earlier, not near the close of the session.

The 2018 report reflects the fact that only half of the monthly assessments of the work of the Security Council were published, and the statistics for this year are not looking good. Not one monthly assessment has been published so far. We know from the available information that monthly assessments were issued for all the months from 2000 to 2013. The number has started to decline since 2014.

The annual report is also short of analysis of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the flagship tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. There is little information on how peacekeeping operations are run and the problems they face, why certain mandates are set or changed and when and why they are strengthened, scaled down or ended. Since most peacekeepers are contributed by States that are not Council members, putting the lives of their troops at risk to serve the cause of international peace, we need a better partnership between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries.

Most of us who have voiced our opinions here today will be dissatisfied with the Council's work and its report, but under the terms of Article 12 of the Charter, the General Assembly can neither replicate its discussions nor compensate for its shortcomings. Many of the flaws in the functioning of the Council are structural. Its composition is demonstrably out of touch with realities on the ground. It neither reflects nor represents the aspirations and views of the larger membership. Like most others, we remain convinced that the only remedy is comprehensive reform of the Security Council, involving the expansion of its permanent and non-permanent categories. Since performance assessment has become one of the focus areas at the United Nations, the Security Council also has

to prove its credibility and improve its performance. We hope that the Council will give the views and comments expressed by Member States serious consideration.

One delegation has made yet another attempt to misuse this forum to spread baseless and deceitful narratives about my country. Such attempts have not succeeded in the past and will not succeed now. The truth is that the delegation in question represents a geographical space that is now widely known as a hub for terrorism that has jeopardized innocent lives in our region and beyond. We do not wish to dignify such diatribes with a response.

**The Acting President:** May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/73/2?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** Two delegations have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I would like to remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Knyazyan (Armenia):** I would like to speak in exercise of our right of reply with regard to the statement made by the representative of Azerbaijan.

We resolutely reject Azerbaijan's unfounded allegations, which have nothing to do with reality. On a number of occasions Armenia has presented its position with regard to the Security Council resolutions that Azerbaijan referred to. We regret that Azerbaijan has continued its practice of distortion and one-sided interpretation of the resolutions' provisions. The primary requirement of the resolutions, which is a full cessation of hostilities, was not implemented by Azerbaijan, which opted to continue its armed aggression against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. Azerbaijan's hostile rhetoric and uncontrolled military build-up, in violation of obligations under the conventional arms-control regime, along with its promotion of a policy of anti-Armenian hatred, constitute a major impediment and threat to peace and security in our region and hamper the efforts of the agreed format of the co-chairmanship of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, aimed at achieving a peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. We call on Azerbaijan to fully adhere to its commitments under the 1994 trilateral ceasefire agreement between Nagorno

Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia, and to engage in good-faith negotiations under the auspices of the Minsk Group co-Chairs.

The gross violations of the human rights of the people of Nagorno Karabakh, including their inalienable right to self-determination, are the underlying cause of the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh. In April 2016, a large-scale military offensive by Azerbaijani armed forces against the people of Nagorno Karabakh led to mass atrocities, involving gross violations of international humanitarian law by the Azerbaijani armed forces against civilians. Those practices show that Azerbaijan is interested solely in the territory, not in restoring people's human rights. We once again call on Azerbaijan not to abuse the General Assembly but to engage in negotiations in good faith in their respective formats.

**Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan): My response to the remarks just made by the representative of Armenia will be brief. The international obligations of Member States derive from the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including the decisions of the Security Council and the treaties to which they are party. The obvious question here is whether Armenia complies with those obligations. It definitely and categorically does not. The comments by the representative of Armenia are illustrative in that regard. Our position and comprehensive information on the issue are reflected in the communications submitted by Azerbaijan and circulated as documents of the Security Council and the General Assembly, as referred to in Chapter 4 of Part V of the report of the Security Council under consideration (A/73/2).

**Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia): I apologize for taking the floor for a second time.

The lack of a response by the representative of Azerbaijan with regard to the points raised by my delegation is indicative of the fact that the statements he made are unfounded and have nothing to do with reality. We have stated time and again that we have presented exhaustive remarks and written communications with

regard to our position on the relevant Security Council resolutions. The points made by the representative of Azerbaijan distort the provisions of the resolutions. They are one-sided and refer only to certain elements in a baseless and very distorted manner. I would like to stress that the Security Council resolutions under discussion recognize Nagorno Karabakh as a party to the conflict. If Azerbaijan is genuinely interested in implementing those resolutions, it should first and foremost approach the elected authorities of Nagorno Karabakh and implement its commitments under those resolutions to ensure a full cessation of hostilities.

**Mr. Musayev** (Azerbaijan): The remarks just made by the representative of Armenia, with their standard distortions and misinterpretations, leave no doubt that Armenia's policy of aggression, racism and deep-rooted hatred remains intact, notwithstanding the recent change of Government in that Member State.

There can be no doubt that the claims of Armenia run counter to the norms of international law and are without foundation. It is well known that the Nagorno Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts of Azerbaijan are under Armenian military occupation. The fact is that Armenia used military force to occupy the territory of Azerbaijan and establish a subordinate, racist puppet regime on it. The fact that those actions are incompatible with international law and therefore unlawful is evident in the resolutions of the Security Council and in numerous documents of other international organizations.

We consider Armenia's position an open challenge to the conflict settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security. The sooner its Government realizes that its dangerous and unconstructive political agenda has no prospects, the sooner our peoples will be able to benefit from peace, stability and cooperation.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 31.

*The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.*