



Security Council

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Letter dated 5 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Her Excellency the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohammed; Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency; Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies; His Excellency Mr. Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, in his capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council; as well as the statements delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister, Minister for the Public Service, National Security, Legal Affairs and Grenadines Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Mr. Othman Jerandi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia; Ms. Meryame Kitir, Minister of Development Cooperation of Belgium; Mr. Andres Rundu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia; Mr. Niels Annen, Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany; Mr. Sergey Vershinin, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Mr. Alvin Botes, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa; Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Mr. Lê Hoài Trung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam; and by the representatives of China, the Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, the Niger and the United States of America, in connection with the video-teleconference on “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity”, convened on Tuesday, 3 November 2020.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for this video-teleconference, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are also enclosed: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, the European Union, Georgia, Guatemala, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

Pursuant to the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to permanent representatives of the members of the Security Council dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances



caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the enclosed briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Inga Ronda **King**
President of the Security Council

Annex 1

Statement by the Deputy Secretary-General

I thank President Gonsalves and the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for convening this open debate. I congratulate his country on being the smallest nation ever to assume the presidency of the Security Council. His Government also holds the chairmanship of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), showcasing the important role that small countries can play in the multilateral system.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has driven home that, in today's world, there is no such thing as a distant crisis. The pandemic continues to exacerbate the risks and drivers of conflict — from cross-border insecurity and climate-related threats to social unrest and democratic deficits, grievances and inequalities are deepening, eroding trust in authorities and institutions of all kinds and increasing vulnerabilities.

The crisis is reversing development and peacebuilding gains, aggravating conflicts and undermining efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It is also having a devastating impact on human rights and gender inequalities. COVID-19 is exposing vulnerable people to new threats in pre-existing humanitarian crises. Parties to conflict are taking advantage of the pandemic to create or aggravate insecurity and impede medical care and other life-saving assistance and services.

Women are disproportionately employed in the sectors most affected by lockdowns and are more likely than men to lack savings, social security and health coverage. Lockdowns have also led to an alarming spike in gender-based and domestic violence. How can we talk about peace and security when millions of women are at greatest risk in their own homes? And we know that there is a straight line linking violence against women and girls, civic oppression and conflict.

The climate emergency is a major driver of inequality, insecurity and conflict. I have personally witnessed the links between climate and security challenges in the Sahel, the Lake Chad region, the Middle East and elsewhere. Those links include the large-scale displacement of people, competition over resources and extreme weather events like droughts and floods, which destroy homes, livelihoods and communities. In some cases, the climate crisis threatens the very existence of nations.

The climate crisis is also eroding the resilience of communities and limiting the opportunities available to young people. In some parts of the world, it is draining away hope and risks creating a generation of disaffected young people, vulnerable to exploitation by extremists of all kinds. The drivers of conflict are not static — they change and evolve. Building and sustaining peace requires addressing the root causes as they develop and interact with one another, including the emerging threats posed by the pandemic.

Conflict, climate change and stalled progress on development reinforce one another but, too often, our efforts to address them are fragmented. The challenges that we face are manifold, but so are the opportunities. The pandemic has already shown that rapid change is possible, as millions of people adopt new ways of working, learning and socializing. As we recover, we cannot go back to the failed frameworks and systems that created the fragilities and inequalities that are being amplified by the pandemic. We must build forward better.

I share the vision of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which underpins this debate, which is that, “[a] better post-COVID-19 world remains within our reach” (*S/2020/1064, annex, para.2*).

The pandemic has highlighted the necessity of investing in inclusive, equitable governance and institutions, as well as tackling root causes, in order to address the drivers not only of conflict but of crises and shocks of all kinds. It has reinforced the need for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — our ultimate prevention tool.

The recovery from the pandemic must prioritize resilient, inclusive and accountable institutions that foster the rule of law, good governance, gender equality, environmental sustainability and human rights. Partnerships, including with international financial institutions, will be more important than ever.

The recovery must also put in place solutions to prevent and protect communities from climate-related causes of conflict. Member States and development banks should invest in early-warning systems and resilience measures, particularly in States affected by conflict. Countries at greatest risk should be able to use new technologies and remote sensing to help them with forecasting and prevention.

We can address these multifaceted challenges only through an integrated and coherent whole-of-United Nations approach. The 2016 twin resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council — resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262, on the review of the peacebuilding architecture — and the Secretary-General's reforms have strengthened the Organization's focus on prevention.

Given the critical role of the Council in preventing and resolving conflict, I welcome the increased attention that it is devoting to addressing contemporary drivers of conflict and instability. The Secretary-General welcomed resolution 2532 (2020), adopted by the Security Council in July, in support of his appeal for an immediate global ceasefire.

I conclude by recalling the Secretary-General's appeal for a new push by the international community, led by the Security Council, to make a global ceasefire a reality by the end of this year. I count on everyone's commitment to this appeal. We must put all our energies into fighting our common enemy — the virus. I also count on everyone's renewed political and financial investments in prevention and solutions to stave off security and conflict risks at a time when the world needs peace and calm more than ever before.

Annex 2**Statement by the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, Ibrahim Mayaki**

[Original: French]

I entreat everyone to focus on the critical situation in West Africa in general, and in the Sahel in particular. The region is the locus of challenges that must be clearly defined so that they can be properly resolved. I should like to recall several facts.

Over the past 20 years, West Africa's population has increased by 72 per cent. It is expected to double again by 2050. Cities will take on approximately two thirds of the increase in population. Small and medium-size cities will grow faster than capitals and other large cities. Some villages are even already transforming into urban clusters, owing to population growth. In the Niger, for example, the number of towns with populations ranging from 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants increased from 40 in 2010 to 84 today.

In West Africa, the number of people in a state of food crisis or worse status — in keeping with the terminology of the early-warning tool *Cadre Harmonisé* — increases every year during the lean season, owing to deep structural causes, such as poverty and the lack of basic social services. One third of West Africans who require continued food and nutritional assistance are located in the three countries of the Central Sahel.

Given high natural population growth, those States and their Governments' capacity to provide public services and administer their territory will remain glaringly inadequate. With six State employees per 1,000 inhabitants, a country like Mali struggles to provide the minimum of public services. There is one doctor per 10,000 inhabitants and one hospital per 500,000.

In recent years, security issues have been added to those structural causes. Peace, security and development are inextricably interlinked. We are seeing this today in stark terms in the Sahel with a spike in insecurity.

The complex security crisis prevailing throughout the region is markedly affecting civilian populations. In conflict-affected areas, armed violence has made the food and nutritional situation a cause of great concern. The number of people displaced by armed violence has crossed the 1 million threshold in Burkina Faso, which represents 5 per cent of the country's population.

Cross-border areas, such as Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad basin, are home to a large segment of the population of West Africa. While they are already highly integrated economically and united by long-standing social solidarity, the areas are also particularly affected by insecurity. Forty per cent of violent acts take place within 50 kilometres of any one of the borders.

As the recent ministerial round table held on 20 October brought to the fore, more than 13 million people are now in need of humanitarian aid, more than half of whom are children. The most vulnerable among them live in ill-adapted camps, creating a strain on the host populations.

The structural obstacles to development and the challenging security situation are compounded by new risk factors exacerbating an already fragile situation. Since the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, the Sahel has experienced warming, as well as an increase in the frequency of extreme weather events. The recent torrential rains

and their destruction are a striking example. In the Niger, the floods have affected half a million people.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is plunging millions more people into food and nutrition insecurity, owing to the severe disruption of the supply chains in the region. The disruptions are leading to a decline in purchasing power and difficulties in accessing food, now pushing an additional 6 million people into extreme poverty in the Central Sahel.

In West Africa, the food sector accounted for 40 per cent of gross domestic product in 2015. The Sahel and West Africa Club estimates that more than 82 million jobs could be directly affected by restrictions on movement related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such preventive health measures have in fact affected the livelihoods of informal workers.

Two thirds of West African women work in the food sector, where they represent 51 per cent of the workforce. They often work the most precarious jobs and have little or no social protection. In addition, women are front and centre in the fight against the pandemic within the hospital systems. At the community level, they often provide unpaid health-care services and tend to illnesses within families. They are therefore especially exposed to the possibility of infection.

All those factors are interdependent. They are the catalysts of an ever-changing and multiscale crisis. Fortunately, solutions exist to mitigate the socioeconomic fragility and financial poverty of States. Similarly, we can have an influence on environmental uncertainties and the situation created by the global pandemic.

Here are some of the measures within our reach: providing structural responses to eradicate chronic food vulnerability; considering the informal sector of the agri-food economy as a priority driver of development; fostering regional cooperation dynamics and using border strategies as policy levers; strengthening the links connecting the humanitarian sphere, development and peace in an integrated triple-pronged approach; supporting climate change adaptation initiatives and the development of warning systems; taking into account the realities on the ground, that is, to contextualize all measures aimed at preserving employment and livelihoods during and after the COVID-19 crisis; and ramping up support for women, while including gender-sensitive responses in all recovery policies to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

To do that end, we must first and foremost work together to address the underlying causes of the crisis. The pace and magnitude of relentless crises, on the one hand, and the rapidity and intensity of new aspects compounding them, on the other, make it incumbent upon us to develop a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics under way. We must ensure that obtaining data and their analysis become the bedrock of formulating the appropriate public policies and international strategies.

Let me emphasize this last point. Data, their analysis and the consensus built around them provide us with the essential tools for the formulation of holistic, coherent and sustainable policies and methods of intervention. They enable improved cooperation on and effective adaptation to the realities on the ground.

It is therefore imperative that such data be at the heart of our work if we are serious about reversing the downward spiral, meeting the immense needs of the populations we all serve and bringing peace to the Sahel and West Africa.

Annex 3**Statement by the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Sir Hilary Beckles**

This day is clearly a defining moment in human history, for many reasons of the highest possible order. The future we all desire is one in which we see humankind operating at its finest. We are ready to pursue this actualization. The modern world we own came into being packaged with many progressive ideas, but simultaneously plagued with many inhumane actions on a global scale. The legacies of those inhumanities continue to gallop, globally destabilizing the most reasonable corrective actions we have placed before the Security Council.

I speak with a Caribbean voice honed but free of the history of 500 years of modernity's crimes against humanity. The Caribbean, we all know, was the primary global theatre for Western imperial warfare and competitive militarism. But this very Caribbean has been converted into a zone of peace, stability and the achievement of democracy that stands aloft as a global best practice.

Crafted from the rubble of a crumbled, rejected colonialism, the Caribbean has risen with dignity. Indeed, our President, The Honourable Prime Minister of the multi-island State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, stands proudly before us and before the world as the Caribbean's quintessential symbol of democratic politics and governance.

In this way, he is constituted as the world's longest-elected democratic leader of a free State. The Caribbean is determined to be the freest zone of humankind in the postmodern world by turning its history of conflict upon its head. It celebrates and promotes the global industry of tourism, which is effectively the premier invitation industry that promotes humankind at its most generous.

From this space of respect and tolerance comes the greatest movement of the twenty-first century. I refer to the reparatory justice movement against the legacies of slavery, violent colonization and institutional racism. The world is calling for the completion of this long and divisive journey to justice.

We know that it took all of the nineteenth century to eradicate the institution of chattel slavery from the world. We also know that it took all of the twentieth century to achieve in its wake democratic civil rights and human rights and to erase most of the institutional legacies of colonialism.

Finally, we understand that the twenty-first century will be the era of social and economic justice and the attainment of atonement, reconciliation and reparations. This is the inevitable logic of modernity's history.

The twenty-first century will witness the preparations for reparations. As the world insists upon greater peace and stability, it is also calling for repairing wounds inflicted upon the people of Africa and their descendants. We stand today upon the battlefield of the violent inhumanities unleashed upon the world in the form of chattel black enslavement and African colonization.

The legacies of those experiences have poisoned our societies throughout the world with the toxin of racism. We are faced, therefore, with the will of the world to uproot and dismiss these destabilizing legacies.

The Western world has sought in many places to brush aside the debris of these legacies to the dustbin of history. This project has not succeeded. There is no carpet in the world that is large enough to hide this past and its current manifestations. Injustice anywhere is the seed of instability and violence everywhere. The Caribbean,

Africa and its diasporas are calling for reconciliation and peace within the context of reparatory justice.

The Governments of the Caribbean recently called for a summit with the Governments of Europe in order to discuss and resolve these harmful matters that continue to inhibit our peaceful development as a tribute to the democratic method and mentality.

Reparations are about development. It is about the call for peace and justice to enable our humanity to fulfil its finest destiny. I call upon The United Nations to reconvene the 1960s Special Committee on Decolonization, which needs to complete its work. This mandate will not be completed until the matter of reparations has been settled, allowing those who suffer harm today to move forward with justice and equality. This is a necessary part of the Decade of Action adopted by the United Nations to alleviate the continuing suffering of people of African descent who have been the targeted victims of violent colonization.

The twenty-first-century movement for reparations is further fuelled by the prior social and economic crises caused by climate change, the chronic-disease epidemic and other forces within the global economic space that have ravaged vulnerable nations and communities seeking to emerge from the constraints of colonization. We speak of reparatory justice for peace. It is a development paradigm for the Caribbean nations and other communities experiencing its debilitating legacies.

So far, the twenty-first century has been described as an age of apology — but an apology without a commitment to reparations. There is no integrity or sincerity in an apology without a reparation plan. The Caribbean world presents itself as a core constituency of this very deserving cause — reparations as justice. The global Black Lives Matter Movement is addressing the history and continuity of institutional racism and has demonstrated further that the movement for reparatory justice is politically and philosophically sound. It is legally correct. And it is a commitment to global fairness.

Reparations is a movement that will heal postmodernity as we go into the long twenty-first century. It will secure our age as one of peace and stability simply because it is an inevitable call for justice for those who continue to suffer harm.

I am the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, which is now approaching seventy-five years of service to the region and the world. It has offered itself as a broker and a negotiator of this conversation for reparatory justice. Indeed, our President today, The Right Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, in his many speeches before the world has provided the philosophical framework for this conversation and negotiation.

The world will speed ahead to meet its global destiny, and we welcome this. But the road must be paved by the reparatory justice movement, without which it will be an unpleasant and uncomfortable journey. This is not what we desire. We call, therefore, upon the Security Council to acknowledge the reparations for the slavery movement and to assist the world in moving on and beyond the historical site of these crimes.

We call, furthermore, for the Council to assist humankind in this, in its finest hour. We are experiencing the convergence of the call for reparatory justice with the demand for an ending of the diversities of inequalities.

Annex 4**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan and President of the Economic and Social Council, Munir Akram**

It is a great privilege to be asked to brief the Security Council on the timely topic of the contemporary drivers of conflict.

May I first congratulate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and convening this important debate.

The concept of collective security enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, from which the Security Council draws the authority conferred on it by the States Members of the United Nations, is accompanied by the parallel objectives, set out in Article 55, to create conditions of peace and stability, “which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples”. These objectives include higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development; solutions to economic, social, health and related problems and universal respect for human rights.

Although little noted and never utilized, Article 65 of the Charter provides that the Economic and Social Council “may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist the Security Council upon its request”. The Charter’s framers clearly conceived that the United Nations would both collectively maintain and enforce peace as well as create the “conditions for peace and stability”.

Speaking at the Bretton Woods Conference, United States President Roosevelt emphasized the essence of collective economic security. He said that

“[e]conomic diseases are highly communicable. It follows therefore that the economic health of every country is a proper matter of concern to all its neighbours, near and distant. Only through a dynamic and a soundly expanding world economy can the living standards of individual nations be advanced to levels which will permit a full realization of our hopes for the future”.

In the 75 years since the Charter’s adoption, the States Members of the United Nations have failed to live up to the ideals of collective and cooperative security proclaimed by those who conceived the United Nations. Several reasons can be offered to explain this failure.

First, the Cold War intruded into the vision of universal and cooperative security. The world was effectively divided into rival camps. The Marshall Plan rehabilitated United States-allied Europe only and later Japan.

Secondly, the rapid process of decolonization did not entirely eliminate the legacy and mentality of colonialism. The decolonization process left behind unequal post-colonial societies and their continued economic, trade, and, often, political and military dependence on former colonial powers. The post-1945 military, political and economic structures and institutions reflected this embedded inequality.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, State power, especially in the most powerful countries, was captured by mercantilist interests, prioritizing profits over the common good and the Charter’s vision of collective economic security.

The cumulative outcome is a world quite unlike that visualized by the founders of the United Nations. In his Nelson Mandela address earlier this year, our Secretary-General observed that “inequality is the hallmark of our times” — so it is when the 26 richest people own half the world’s wealth.

The origins of many, if not most of the plethora of conflicts and disputes on the agenda of the Security Council, can be traced to this unequal world order. The root causes of these conflicts range from the internal struggles for scarce resources; external contests for precious natural resources and interventions designed to suppress the struggle of peoples to reclaim their own political and economic destinies. It is a world where power prevails over principle; where the voices of the weak are suppressed and splintered; where the strong enjoy impunity for even gross violations of the Charter's fundamental principles, Security Council resolutions and human rights and where the international cooperation enjoined by the Charter is increasingly absent.

It is in this milieu of inequality that the world has been hit by the worst pandemic since 1916 and the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The world economy is projected to contract by between 5 and 10 per cent, depending on when the virus can be brought under control. As usual, the poorest countries and the poorest peoples will suffer the most. More than 100 million people will be pushed back into poverty. While the rich have pumped in more than \$13 trillion to stimulate their economies, the poor are searching for ways to mobilize the \$2 trillion to \$3 trillion they need to keep their economies afloat. Unless they are helped to find this money, many developing economies — with lost revenues and laden with unpayable debt — are likely to face economic collapse. This would spread chaos and further inflame regional conflicts and global tensions.

As early as April, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Imran Khan, called for global debt relief for developing countries. In May, the Secretary-General, together with the Prime Ministers of Canada and Jamaica, launched the timely financing for the development process. The process has identified 260 options for action. But so far, the response of those in a position to act on these options has been extremely modest and disappointing.

The international community must mobilize the political will to implement some of the most important of these options: debt suspension for low income and those small island developing States under stress until the end of the pandemic; the cancellation of debt held by the least developed countries; debt restructuring for other developing countries, including through efficient debt buybacks and swaps; sizable net inflows from multilateral development banks; vastly expanded concessional financing through the International Development Association and other sources; the fulfilment of the 0.7 per cent official development assistance commitment by richer countries; private sector participation in debt suspension and relief, including through mechanisms to lower interest rates on loans to developing countries; and, most important, the issue of new special drawing rights (SDRs) and the repurposing of unutilized SDR quotas for investment in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our Secretary-General has declared that this crisis offers an opportunity to “build back better” and realize the SDGs and the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Others have picked up the Secretary-General's slogan. However, we will be unable to achieve these ambitious and vital objectives unless we address and redress the structural inequalities that have led us into the current and previous financial and economic crises.

Structural reforms will need to encompass a reform of the financial architecture to enhance the access of developing countries to adequate SDG-linked financing; an inclusive, equitable and transparent debt-management mechanism; preferential banking regulations for developing countries; a fair international tax regime; an end to illicit financial flows from developing countries; a new and democratic trade regime that reverses the restrictive measures imposed by the

major economies, restores the adjudication system of the World Trade Organization and places the SDGs at the core of trade objectives; the mobilization of at least a \$2 trillion investment annually in sustainable infrastructure in developing countries and preferential access for developing countries to the latest technologies, especially to bridge the digital divide.

Unless we can mobilize the political will to implement these goals of equitable and inclusive development, it is unlikely that we will be able to agree to take the ambitious collective actions required to avoid the existential threat posed by climate change. Destitute developing countries struggling for economic survival will be in no position to make a new green deal.

The Economic and Social Council will attempt to advance these essential actions in its Financing for Development Forum next April and the High-level Political Forum next July.

It is imperative that today, 75 years after the adoption of the United Nations Charter, we do not again fail to reflect its vision of collective economic security. Never before in human history has the well-being and survival of humans depended so much on the actions and decisions of each other.

It is distressing to witness that, even in these times when humankind faces existential challenges, there is a rise in the phenomena of intolerance, hate speech, xenophobia, and Islamophobia. The cycle of hate and violence can destabilize and divide societies and States. It can subvert the international cooperation that is essential to collectively address these multiple challenges. We must heed the call for mutual respect issued by the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Mr. Moratinos, on 29 October. As he has stated, freedom of expression should be exercised in a way that fully respects the religious beliefs and tenets of all religions.

Finally, we must also act to reverse the growing rivalries among the most powerful States and the new and deadly arms race that is under way. Unless we do so, regional tensions will rise and conflicts will become more intractable. And, no one can rule out the danger of a global military conflict — precisely what the United Nations was created to prevent. Instead of subscribing to new political blocs and alliances, the Members of the United Nations, and especially the members of the Security Council, must deploy all possible efforts to avoid a great power collision and evolve mutually acceptable ways for revived cooperation on security, development, climate and other common challenges confronting humankind.

In these turbulent times, the United Nations is the only universally acceptable instrument available to enable Member States to address the contemporary drivers of conflict. We must rely on the vision and courage of our Secretary-General to chart a clear and bold course to respond to the multiple challenges we face simultaneously. The United Nations system has the capacity, if mobilized, to support this epic endeavour for global peace and security, for equitable and inclusive development and for a smooth and early transition to a sustainable global economic, social and political order.

Annex 5**Statement by the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph E. Gonsalves**

It is an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. At the outset, I thank representatives for their constructive engagement throughout this discussion thus far, and look forward to their continued support for the duration of our presidency.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has exposed vulnerabilities throughout the world. Inequalities, both within and among countries, which remain largely unaddressed by the multilateral system have been further deepened and widened, as our global conditions of life, living and production are profoundly altered and rearranged by this pandemic. At the same time, we also bear witness to the continued rise of hate speech and disinformation, the erosion of trust in public institutions and democratic norms, the escalation of ethnic and intercommunal tensions, disruptions to humanitarian delivery, an increase of sexual- and gender-based violence and other human security concerns.

Apart from the implications of COVID-19, States are also distressed by the ever-intensifying hazards of climate change and a corresponding rise in zoonotic diseases such as dengue fever, increased mass human displacement, the continued spread of cross-border terrorism, an escalation of acute food insecurity and other contemporary challenges that overlap and interlink with each other and are propagated simultaneously across the social, economic, political and security systems of States.

These synchronous and systemic dislocations cannot be effectively solved in isolation of each other, nor can they be sufficiently addressed by military means only. Our delegation welcomes efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of all Security Council-mandated operations through forward-looking reforms such as the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative that brings political solutions to the forefront of our efforts to maintain international peace and security. We underscore that these efforts should always be premised on the needs, interests and priorities of affected countries and their populations, rather than on budgetary compulsions circumscribed by a narrow market calculus.

Minimalist approaches that treat peacekeeping and peacebuilding as incremental activities to be completed in a linear fashion will not suffice. Instead, a holistic and coherent approach that mobilizes the entire multilateral system to address the root causes of insecurity is needed. In this regard, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphasizes that peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding must all be pursued concurrently as part of a peace and security, development, and humanitarian continuum. Adequate resources must therefore be made available to improve lives and livelihoods, while bolstering national ownership over political and peace processes. The importance of social inclusion and national ownership cannot be overstated. These are the vital ingredients on which the collective identities and stable relationships required for lasting peace are built.

The moral purpose of our United Nations is to ensure freedom for all nations and peoples. Amid the vast and continually expanding health, economic, social, humanitarian and security challenges experienced by people globally, we must move quickly in a new direction. We must take bold steps to alleviate human suffering, especially in conflict-affected areas. We cannot cross a chasm with baby steps; otherwise, we will fall into the widening gorge beneath us.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a firm believer in the whole-of-system approach and we encourage the enhanced cooperation between the Security Council

and other main organs such as the Economic and Social Council, as exemplified by the work of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. We must work more closely with the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to ensure sustained attention on Haiti.

We welcome the crucial role played by the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in convening a range of partners from the international community, including international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations, to assist Member States in advancing their peacebuilding priorities.

The PBC's continued efforts to host regular interactive dialogues with the African Union Peace and Security Council, despite the logistical challenges of COVID-19, stands as testament to the value of the PBC. We laud the critical financial support offered by the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, but we lament that this essential tool remains significantly underfunded. We therefore urge donor countries and the international private sector to provide greater financial support to this mechanism. We also encourage developed countries to honour their official development assistance commitments; provide scaled up assistance to conflict-affected areas through concessionary loans and quick impact projects; set and meet ambitious targets for curbing emissions and provide greater support for climate adaptation and mitigation to alleviate climate-driven security risks in fragile contexts. Lastly, we urge all States to withdraw their unilateral coercive measures and prejudicial constraints on weaker nations. These actions are illegal and inhumane and they undermine global cooperation and national ownership — the most basic tenets of sustaining peace.

The urgent challenges of our times will not be solved overnight. We need safe hands and creative minds and we have to apply our hearts to wisdom. But through renewed multilateralism that places people at its centre — multilateralism that considers the needs and perspectives of all Member States equally and respects the timeless principles of international law — a better future is possible. As we embark on this important decade of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, let us work to ensure peace, security and prosperity for all of humankind. Let us work together, in unity and solidarity, to lift humankind higher.

Annex 6**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia,
Othman Jerandi**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Council and wish it every success in this endeavour. On this occasion, I am pleased to thank His Excellency Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for convening the meeting on this important subject.

I welcome the participation of Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed. I wish to reiterate that Tunisia appreciates the efforts of the United Nations system to address current challenges, and I thank the other briefers for their valuable presentations. I also wish to express my utmost appreciation to the Russian Federation for its successful presidency of the Council in October.

Preventing wars, resolving conflicts, maintaining peace and security and making the world a better place to live were the most important reasons for the creation of the United Nations, whose seventy-fifth anniversary we are celebrating. Over the past seven decades, the United Nations has played a pivotal role in this regard, and it will continue to do so through its various organs, chief among them the Security Council.

While the Organization's efforts have spared humankind a new world war and successfully restored peace and stability in many regions, our world today continues to face numerous challenges and threats to security, peace and stability, ranging from direct, conventional threats to indirect, novel threats whose scope and impact grow ever more dire in various regions and at many levels.

The world has witnessed countless developments that have spawned new challenges, primarily as a result of the multiple and overlapping nature of threats to peace and security and of the drivers of conflict. The main factors at hand are the emergence of organized terrorist groups as a party to conflicts and their association with transnational organized crime networks; the direct effects of climate change on livelihoods and the attendant threat to the food security of millions, thereby aggravating the causes of violence and conflict; and the rise of cybercrime.

The global spread of epidemics poses a threat to humankind as a whole, alongside other causes of fragility, in particular, weak governance, human rights violations, growing inequality and disparities within and between States, and persistent poverty and exclusion in many parts of the world.

Most of these factors are broad in scope, and their repercussions are multidimensional and mutually reinforcing. They directly undermine peace and security, spark conflict, play a major role in exacerbating and prolonging crises, and have a direct impact on post-conflict situations and the processes of restoring stability and peacebuilding.

Against that backdrop, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with its devastating impact on health, the economy, society, security and politics, stands as the best evidence of the danger that these new threats and challenges can potentially pose to security, peace and stability at various levels. The approaches and tools used to address questions of peace and security must therefore be reassessed.

Accordingly, as the epidemic began to spread and became a pandemic, Tunisia called for a new approach based on broad and effective international solidarity and

new United Nations-led mechanisms for taking action in a manner that takes into account the needs and situations of all nations and peoples, without exception.

Tunisia endorsed the Secretary-General's call for an urgent global humanitarian ceasefire in order to focus international efforts on the pandemic. Our country introduced resolution 2532 (2020), which sets out a comprehensive, coordinated global response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The resolution, a Tunisian-French initiative, was adopted unanimously on 1 July 2020 and constitutes a milestone in the international efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. It has succeeded in unifying Council members and consolidating their vision of shared responsibility to push for an immediate end to conflicts around the world.

Our country is working to strengthen international cooperation, boost and integrate the response of United Nations agencies to the pandemic and other challenges, make countries and peoples more resilient, contain the impact of the pandemic, bolster peace and security, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for all, in line with the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The concepts of peace and security no longer apply to conflict alone; in addition to conflict resolution, they now encompass preventing conflicts, addressing their root causes and strengthening human development indicators, economic well-being, food security, social peace, good governance, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and institutional effectiveness. It is also necessary to address the trends of violent extremism and terrorism, reduce the effects of climate and environmental change, and control and contain the spread of medical and biological pandemics.

For that purpose, we call for a new concept of collective security that accounts for the range of dimensions of the new threats and helps develop appropriate strategies to confront and mitigate them, not to mention ensuring that the Organization's efforts are calibrated to the task of consolidating security and stability, leading to more efficient systems for achieving and building peace.

In conclusion, Tunisia renews its commitment to multilateral action and to promoting the concept of collective security and believing in the shared destiny of humankind. It calls for stepping up international efforts and supporting the Organization's role in tackling all existing and emerging challenges that pose a threat to peace and security in the broadest sense. Doing so will render the peacebuilding process more effective and consolidate the foundations of stability, putting an end to conflicts and humanitarian tragedies.

We firmly believe that, now more than ever, global stability hinges on supporting the role of the United Nations; helping the Secretary-General to enhance the performance of the United Nations system in facing up to challenges; and strengthening the system's capacity to keep pace with global changes and come to grips with all aspects of the comprehensive concept of peace and security. This is undeniably the shared responsibility of all Member States, especially in our world's current circumstances.

Annex 7**Statement by the Minister of Development Cooperation and Urban Policy of Belgium, Meryame Kitir**

To say that 2020 has been a challenging year for many of us would be an understatement. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infections are spiking across the world. Recent tragic events remind us that the evils of terrorism and sectarian violence continue to find root.

Wildfires have destroyed large swaths of land in Australia, Brazil and California. Coastal plains and island nations everywhere are at an ever increasing risk of being flooded. Water scarcity and erratic rain patterns cause tensions between herders and farmers and seriously impact livelihoods. The Atlantic hurricane season was so intense this year that we ran out of names for the individual storms.

Large-scale climate events cause displacement, economic decline, food insecurity and social discontent. These circumstances are known as the root causes of fragility and offer fertile ground for instability and turmoil. They leave young people vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups.

Many conflicts have more mundane political root causes. They simmer for a long time before erupting. What new threats, such as climate change, and more traditional threats to peace have in common is that they do not occur in a vacuum. Much like climate events can be a factor of instability, so can inequality or the erosion of respect for the rule of law and international standards. The curtailing of human rights is often an early indicator of tensions. Again, this does not always end in the blatant disregard for international standards like we are witnessing, for instance, in Syria today. But all too often, it does.

Early action is about preventing new conflicts from arising, as well as keeping old conflicts from re-emerging. It is important that the Security Council be systematically alerted to serious tensions and security risks. As the Secretary-General rightly said at the beginning of this year, we still spend far more efforts maintaining peace than preventing it. Risks can arise from climate-related events, pandemics, rising inequalities, economic and food crises, serious human rights or international humanitarian law violations and so on.

In this respect, we encourage the Secretary-General to use his right under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations to “bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter ... which may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security”. Resolution 2532 (2020), for example, requests the Secretary-General to inform the Council on the security implications of COVID-19. The Climate Security Mechanism mobilizes existing expertise from sources within the United Nations system and makes it available to the Security Council. Similar initiatives on other emerging threats could be conceived. Belgium has, during its mandate, advocated horizon scanning briefings” on thematic issues.

But having the necessary information on time is not enough. Ultimately, the relevance of early awareness depends upon the willingness of the Council to discuss the issues brought to its attention and the willingness to act upon them early and in a coordinated manner.

As I said earlier, today’s crises do not occur in a vacuum, and neither should the Council operate in one. As an elected member, therefore, Belgium has consistently pushed the Council towards a holistic and preventive approach. Indeed, the Security Council needs to foster coordination within the wider United Nations system with its partners in a proactive manner in support of early solutions. In that regard, I emphasize the key importance of regional United Nations mandates,

like those of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, as well as the coordinating role of the United Nations Resident Coordinators.

To achieve sustainable peace, we all need to ensure that our actions in the three dimensions of peace and security, sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance become part of a coordinated and coherent approach. As newly appointed Minister for Development Cooperation, I will give special attention to this nexus by addressing the root causes of crises and conflicts, coherently addressing people's vulnerabilities and promoting their resilience before, during and after crises.

We should always prioritize prevention, invest in development, wherever possible, and, whenever necessary, support humanitarian action according to humanitarian principles. Respect for human rights should be at the heart of all such interventions. This October, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations served as a moment to reflect on what we have achieved together since its foundation. Now we need to look at our collective future. The Security Council needs to embrace the full scale of its mandate to ensure that the future is peaceful and that no one is left behind, for the sake of future generations and for its own continued relevance.

Annex 8**Statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia,
Mr. Andres Rundu**

I thank you, Madam President, for organizing today's open debate, which we highly value. Estonia has been continuously advocating for, and contributing to, prevention, post-conflict recovery and sustaining peace initiatives. Conflict prevention in particular is at the core of Estonia's Security Council membership, as well as part of its wider approach at the United Nations.

Estonia has been contributing to peacebuilding, among other things, through the Peacebuilding Fund since 2013 and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs since 2017. We acknowledge the crucial role of the Peacebuilding Fund and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs in conflict prevention, monitoring and assessing political developments around the world.

At the same time with the international community's efforts, I would like to stress the importance of local ownership. For peacebuilding and sustaining peace activities to last, we need political will and support from countries' Governments and local communities. Peacebuilding processes need to be inclusive, while taking into account the views of the local peacebuilders, especially women and youth, who are often the ones most affected by conflict.

Another key factor for success is coordination on the ground. We have to continue working to improve coordination at the country level among the sometimes large number of actors, spanning the spectrum of actors in the areas of humanitarian and development cooperation and peace and security. A holistic approach will help societies become more robust and effectively address the root causes of conflict. When underlying, and often-time long-standing, grievances are actively addressed and human rights respected, communities become resilient, transitional justice is served and peace can be sustainable.

Development and peace are intertwined. On the one hand, an active armed conflict leaves very limited resources for development initiatives that could bring the country out of conflict. On the other hand, countries with very little means to ensure security may be at increased risk of violent conflict. In that regard, the scale of climate-related security risks are underestimated. It is important to emphasize that climate change intensifies important drivers of conflict and fragility and challenges the stability of States and societies.

Estonia was a developing country immediately after it regained its independence. We recognized early on that investing in technology and the digital sphere could help us get back on our feet. Such an approach has helped us create a society with more transparency, trust and efficiency.

This year, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has stolen every headline, wreaked havoc among us and left many of us worried for our health, livelihoods and the well-being of our loved ones. As our President, Her Excellency Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid said during a Security Council open debate on COVID-19 in September,

“technological development is the area that helps us to maintain the coherence of our world and to continue to cooperate with each other.”
(S/2020/953, annex III)

This is the most opportune time for those countries that wish to leap into the new era. There are endless possibilities with digital solutions but, most important, we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and bring about increased prosperity to every single country. However, without political will, it will be difficult, and

nothing will change overnight. We have been working on the same goals for almost 30 years, and it continues to be a work in progress.

Developing digital societies and e-governance is only one possible path in pushing for development gains in any country. The Estonian experience has shown that it does not only work, but that it works very well. From our side, we have been, and will remain, open to cooperation in digital transformation initiatives, sharing our experience and best practices with those eager to take the next step.

Annex 9**Statement by the Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Mr. Niels Annen**

At the outset, I would like to thank Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in particular Prime Minister Gonsalves, for convening this important debate on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. Under the German presidency in July, we put two related topics high on the Security Council's agenda — pandemics and security and climate and security. We are grateful to the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for bringing conflict prevention and sustainable crisis management back to the agenda of the Security Council with today's pertinent open debate.

As The Honourable Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and every briefer highlighted, today's conflicts are driven by complex, multifaceted challenges that require a concerted effort by the entire United Nations system. That must include the Security Council. Unless the Council systematically and effectively considers the security implications of climate change, global pandemics, underdevelopment and violations of human rights, we will fall short of what the international community — and, most of all, those who are most severely affected by conflicts — expects us to deliver.

I am confident that everyone around this virtual table realizes that the challenges of the twenty-first century are not the same as those we faced in the middle of the twentieth century. If we want to live up to our responsibility, we must keep up with these developments and act accordingly. Hurling procedure and tradition at reality might work in a closed system, but the Council does not deal with a closed system. It deals with an ever changing world. And if the Council wants to remain relevant, it will have to up its game and finally grapple with the security implications of pandemics, climate change and all the other pressing global issues the world expects it to deal with. A comprehensive approach to peace and security implies the need to address root causes and anticipate mid- and long-term challenges. We must strive harder to find integrated solutions to interconnected challenges. And we must do more to strengthen prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

In my intervention I will focus on three concrete examples of contemporary drivers of conflict to illustrate this, namely, pandemics, climate change and violations of human rights.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continues to rage across the world. It is a multidimensional challenge that heavily affects health, humanitarian, political, social, economic and environmental developments. As a consequence, it increases insecurity and undermines peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries and countries in transition.

The security implications are crystal clear. In July, the Council explicitly recognized in resolution 2532 (2020) that the pandemic is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security and might reverse peacebuilding gains. We should do more to follow up on this resolution.

As the Deputy Secretary-General elaborated earlier in her intervention (annex 1), the United Nations system as a whole continues to adapt in response to the pandemic. We welcome such efforts and encourage the Secretary-General to fully integrate the impact of the pandemic on security in his reporting. Such reporting would support prevention and early warning, which is key to the work of the Council.

The COVID-19 pandemic has massive, immediate socioeconomic repercussions. It has disproportionately negative effects on people in vulnerable and

post-conflict environments. We must ensure additional support for humanitarian, development, prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Peacebuilding needs are already critically underfunded despite the fact that preventing a crisis is much less costly than addressing it later.

The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund has remarkably evolved and adapted its work and projects to COVID-19 realities and needs. We continue to remain one of its major supporters. That is not good enough, though. We must find ways to secure reliable and predictable funding for prevention and peacebuilding.

Climate change is undoubtedly one of the most relevant threats to stability and security in our time. The year 2020 is likely to be the hottest year on record. The security implications of that can be felt around the world. From the Sahel to the Caribbean and to small island nations in the Pacific, climate change is threatening the stability, security and, in some cases, the very existence of nations.

The Council has discussed the link between climate and security repeatedly, and today's briefings once again make it clear that climate change is a major driver of conflict in the twenty-first century. The Security Council has to live up to its responsibility. More needs to be done to enhance our understanding of this dimension of conflict.

We encourage the Secretary-General to include the climate dimensions of conflict in his reporting and call on all members of the Council to use all available formal and informal forums to contribute to enhancing the information flow to the Council. The informal expert group, which a number of members of the Council are convening, is an important step to anchor climate and security firmly in our agenda.

There is a vicious circle of climate change, environmental degradation and conflict. It increases the risk of violent conflict, displacement and, consequently, humanitarian crises. We see that in different regions of the world. This is most evident in the Sahel region. Two weeks ago, Germany, together with the United Nations and Denmark, convened a conference on humanitarian assistance for the Sahel region. While we were delighted that more than \$1.7 billion was pledged, the humanitarian response is only one part of the puzzle. Only when all Member States and United Nations actors work together to address the root causes as well as the medium- and long-term effects can we hope to build and sustain peace.

Conflicts will always harm the most vulnerable most. Their human rights are most at risk in contemporary conflicts. In the pandemic, gender equality gains are at a risk of being lost as many Governments are diverting funds originally dedicated to supporting women and girls and their participation in peace processes. Through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Germany supported the establishment of its Emergency Response Window and made available \$2.5 million for local women's organizations to support them through the crisis.

Crises and conflicts, whether driven by climate change, pandemics or underdevelopment, have gendered dimensions that need to be taken into account by the United Nations whole-of-system response. The response, including the work of the Council, must be built on respect for human rights and strive for political processes that are inclusive and allow all parts of society, especially women, youth and marginalized groups, to participate in a full and meaningful way. In doing so, we can contribute to building resilient societies that can better withstand the impact of pandemics and climate change and strive for development.

Let me conclude by stressing the need for constructive collaboration — collaboration among Member States as well as collaboration across the pillars of the United Nations system. There are concrete steps that the Council needs to take. We

should further empower and encourage the Peacebuilding Commission to submit specific and targeted advice to the Council, as it holds a unique mandate within the United Nations system to enable integrated and cross-pillar approaches.

We need to ensure that the United Nations and its presence on the ground, especially peacekeeping operations and special political missions, are sufficiently mandated and equipped to address the direct and indirect consequences of the pandemic, climate change and human rights violations. We should keep these complex security challenges firmly on the Council's agenda and work with the other pillars on addressing them holistically. Nothing less will do.

Annex 10**Statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergey Vershinin**

[Original: Russian]

It is a great for honour for me to deliver the following statement from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, on the theme of today's open debate, entitled "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity".

"At the outset, I would like to congratulate Mr. Ralph Gonsalves on the assumption of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' presidency of the Security Council. This event is not only significant for your country, but also for all the other small island States, whose independent voices must be heard on the Security Council.

"The theme of today's open debate reflects the concerns of many countries that are facing the rise in complex security threats in the present trying circumstances. This focus is all the more important as all of us are fundamentally confronting a new challenge — the coronavirus disease pandemic — which has been indiscriminate in its ruthlessness vis-à-vis every country. The pandemic attests to the lesson that history has taught us, namely, that there is no alternative to solidarity, cooperation, responsible behaviour and mutual assistance.

"Regrettably, not all countries share that approach. Some continue to prioritize their own egotistical and mercenary interests. The practice of unilateral sanctions is being applied ever more broadly, hampering other States' efforts to combat the pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences.

"In this context, we would like to once again express our solidarity with the appeal made by Secretary-General António Guterres for a global ceasefire, which includes lifting, or at least easing, illegal restrictive measures. Given the current circumstances, the proposal of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, to establish green corridors, free of trade wars and sanctions, would be of particular importance. It would help ensure that vulnerable populations gain access to basic necessities and medicine.

"Countries facing an uphill battle in transitioning from conflict to sustainable peace are especially in need of the international community's assistance. In granting such assistance, it is necessary to be guided by the principle that it is the primary responsibility of the countries themselves for developing and implementing peacebuilding strategies and priorities in accordance with the needs and requirements of their societies. Every case requires a particular, unique approach without the imposition of automatic one-size-fits-all solutions and policy prescriptions.

"The same applies to efforts to prevent crises. It is alarming that increasingly frequent attempts are being made to establish universal conflict indicators, which create opportunities for abuse and interference in the internal affairs of others with a view to pressuring so-called objectionable Governments.

"I am referring to the attempt to present human rights violations as all but the main prerequisite for crises. We believe that the successful settlement of armed conflicts and the reconciliation of conflicting sides create the foundation for improving human rights, promoting sustainable development and resolving environmental and other issues.

“We do not deny the link connecting these issues in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, we proceed from the premise that economic troubles do not automatically trigger a lack of security, and vice versa. Moreover, we deem it extremely important that, through division of labour among the main United Nations agencies, each one must perform its functions in strict accordance with its mandate.

“That applies, for instance, to the Security Council discussion on the climate agenda. We do not believe that climate change is a universal factor underlying conflict and global instability. In that regard, its impact on the socioeconomic and political situations in a number of countries and regions must be viewed on a case-by-case basis.

“The leading role in that area falls to the relevant United Nations agencies with the appropriate expertise and tools for drafting long-term decisions on effectively countering climate change. We fully share the concerns of our friends from the small island states and intend to actively help them adapt to climate change, both through national development institutions and universally recognized international bodies, including under the aegis of the United Nations.

“At the same time, we support the cooperation and pooling of efforts of various United Nations agencies, when appropriate and agreed to by all Member States. In that regard, we would like to mention the Peacebuilding Commission, which is an advisory platform for developing strategies for the post-conflict recovery of countries based on their priorities. We advocate for the development and strengthening of dialogue with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

“I once again thank the presidency of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for calling attention to the current challenges and security threats. I am convinced that an honest and open exchange of views will facilitate an effective search for ways of responding to such extremely urgent problems”.

Annex 11**Statement by the Deputy Minister of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Mr. Alvin Botes**

I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on the historic occasion of your country's non-permanent membership of the Security Council and for presiding over the Council for the first time ever. South Africa is grateful for the decision that you made to coordinate and work closely with the African members of the Security Council, which has led to the establishment of the historic A3+1. The partnership has strengthened its voice and has firmly solidified the historic and cultural bonds between the Caribbean countries and the African continent. I also take this opportunity to commend you, Mr President, for your sterling leadership of the Caribbean Community.

As a recent report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace by a group of independent eminent persons commissioned by the Secretary-General point out,

“[t]oday's conflicts are multidimensional, marked to varying degrees by persistent exclusion, inequalities and grievances, including refugee flows, internal displacement and humanitarian spillovers of conflict, weak governance and State capacity, and compounded by climate change, violent extremism and the perverse use of new technologies”.
(S/2020/678, annex II, p. 4).

We wish to thank the group of independent eminent persons and the Secretary-General for highlighting those contemporary drivers of conflict. We also wish, in this regard, to thank the Peacebuilding Commission and the co-facilitators of the ongoing formal phase of the third peacebuilding architecture review, New Zealand and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for the commendable work done thus far.

It is indeed necessary that the Council organize more periodic discussions on socioeconomic and other emerging conflict drivers to raise awareness of their destabilizing effects and promote efforts to address such problems. It is important to understand the impact of contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity as we look at the dynamic between peace and security and sustainable development. Indeed, we agree that peace and security are inextricably linked to development, and countries that grapple with armed conflict also face significant challenges to their sustainable development, owing to their institutional and governance capacities becoming overwhelmed.

Equally important is to understand how contemporary drivers of conflict bring about conflict and perpetuate insecurity. We must be cognizant that countries that struggle with underdevelopment also struggle with the maintenance of their own security and may be particularly susceptible to the effects of organized crime, intercommunal violence and terrorism.

In 2020, we have seen how the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has added a further layer of complexity to conflict resolution, peacebuilding and sustaining peace. Our view is that COVID-19, climate change and other such system-wide social and ecological stressors should motivate the United Nations and its partners to work more closely together, including with national and local peacebuilders, to maximize their collective capabilities and resources and focus their efforts where most needed.

Drought, water scarcity, food insecurity and desertification, as well as violent and erratic natural disasters, which are thought to be caused or exacerbated by climate change, increase the risk of violent conflicts. There is evidence to suggest that this is the case in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, as well as the Horn of

Africa and some parts of the Caribbean. Climatic pressures associated with climate change are contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. They escalate tensions and conflict by placing further strain on scarce resources.

Sustainable Development Goal 13, on climate action, together with the other 16 Sustainable Development Goals, remains critical to the effective pursuit by all of humankind of the basic tenets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, namely, the alleviation of poverty by leaving no one behind on the path to sustainable development and by first assisting those furthest behind.

In order to mitigate the effects of the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity, we need to work closely with the relevant United Nations agencies to address the root causes of underdevelopment and draw on the experience of the Security Council in resolving conflict. It is clear that a holistic approach is needed to deal with the ramifications of threats and risk multipliers, which escalate tensions and conflict.

We encourage the Security Council to work closely with other United Nations organizations and processes, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as with relevant regional organizations, such as the African Union. These collaborations will ensure that the Security Council can obtain information on the potential impact of contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.

Coordinated action between the Security Council, its sister United Nations agencies and bodies, as well as relevant regional organizations, will give us the best chance to manage disputes before they occur, resolve conflict when it arises and manage ensuing instability through peacebuilding measures after conflict has been resolved.

Annex 12**Statement by the Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon**

I thank you, Mr. President, and good afternoon to everyone from London. Mr. President, you are a dear friend of the United Kingdom and I thank you for convening today's debate.

It is indeed timely ahead of our adoption vote in the Council, and, indeed, in the General Assembly, of the critical twin resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace — texts that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has so expertly shepherded.

I also, right from the beginning, wish to thank our three briefers, Ibrahim Mayaki, Sir Hilary Beckles and Mr. Munir Akram. And, of course, it is always very heartening to have the expert insights of the Deputy Secretary-General, my dear friend Amina Mohammed, who set an excellent scene with today's update.

As the United Kingdom's Minister for the United Nations and the Commonwealth, I am deeply grateful for countries' close partnership with us, especially in these global institutions.

While power politics, aggression and oppression remain very real factors behind many of today's conflicts, we are increasingly aware of new and emerging threats to our peace. One of the contemporary drivers of conflicts is exclusion — the exclusion of vulnerable communities, religious minorities and women from civil, political, economic and social processes and exclusion that leads directly to poverty, desperation, violence and extremism. And it takes no great leap to understand how the strains placed on societies grappling with public health emergencies or the impact of climate change can exacerbate these threats.

Indeed, 2020 is certainly testament to that very fact. Those strains make violent conflict more likely and threaten to roll back hard-won development and peace gains — especially, but not only, in the poorest countries and those already affected by insecurity and conflict. The sustaining peace agenda has brought home to all of us the importance of understanding that peace, security and sustainable development are not independent; they are interconnected. Based on this agenda, we have begun to refine our collective approach, while building and sustaining peace. And, if I may, I would just like to make three very brief points.

First, tackling the impact of climate change is critical alongside broader efforts to sustain peace. Secondly, good governance and inclusion are fundamental. And thirdly, we must coordinate our collective efforts to build effective partnerships in order to prevent conflict in the first place.

On my first point, climate change creates structural conditions that multiply conflict risks in countries around the world. The erosion of fertile land is increasing food scarcity and intercommunal tensions. In small island developing States, hurricanes and rising sea levels threaten whole communities and the very existence of some countries. I saw this myself as Minister for the British Overseas Territories through our relationship with the Caribbean. We must address the man-made causes of climate change, and the upcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Glasgow in the United Kingdom next year, I believe, presents a great opportunity for all of us to agree collective and real concerted action.

With regard to my second point, I have already referenced the problem of exclusion as a key driver of conflict. Even advanced economies are susceptible to

shocks. Development and peace gains can be undone if large parts of the population are marginalized or if human rights are not respected, sustained or, indeed, strengthened. And let us be absolutely clear. Countries that protect the rights of the most vulnerable — the rights of the socially excluded, the rights of minority communities and the rights of women — are stronger. Those are the progressive nations. It is a sign of the strength and unity of a nation when all rights are equally respected.

Strong and inclusive institutions, respect for human rights, access to services, healthy democracy, the rule of law and the empowerment of women are all essential to building resilience and building sustainable peace.

With regard to my third point, better analysis provides for better national and international responses. Coordinated planning among national stakeholders, the United Nations and other international partners can focus preventive efforts and ensure they are appropriately resourced. This includes the United Nations and international financial institutions working in a more coordinated manner to support peacebuilding objectives.

In New York, the Peacebuilding Commission has increasingly demonstrated its value as a forum for countries and organizations to come together in the pursuit of shared peace and development objectives. It is these approaches that are paramount to more effective conflict prevention and they must be owned by each and every one of us.

The Council can, of course, play an important supporting role, but it also has a key obligation. Where threats to international peace and security emerge, we cannot simply sit back or stand back. The Charter of the United Nations, as we have already heard from other contributors, together with international treaties, places obligations on States to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. And it is the Security Council, which has an obligation to call out violations for what they are — threats to fundamental peace and security around the world.

In conclusion, the need for international cooperation is arguably greater than it has been for a generation. And poignantly, the United Nations, in its seventy-fifth anniversary year, can celebrate the unique role it has played in the past in building, sustaining and strengthening peace. But, most important, we, the Security Council; we, the United Nations; we, who define the United Nations, must look forward to seeing what we can do collectively in building, sustaining and strengthening peace around the world.

Annex 13**Statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Le Hoai Trung**

I sincerely thank His Excellency Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for chairing today's important open debate. As the United Nations celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary, today's meeting takes place at the right time for us to reflect on the contemporary drivers of conflicts and insecurity and strengthen our efforts towards peacebuilding and sustaining peace. I thank the Deputy Secretary-General and other briefers for their insightful briefings.

As we are all aware today, the international community continues to face serious threats and challenges as a result of the lack of respect for and even breach of the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and set out in General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), "The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States", especially those pertaining to the sovereign equality of States, the non-use or threat of use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes. These are the drivers of tensions, conflicts and confrontation. They are manifested in the imposition of one's will on others, interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, as well as complex developments regarding an arms race, especially in the nuclear field, and the violation of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as the significance of seas and oceans to international peace, security and development continues to increase. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a calamitous incidence of non-traditional security challenges.

With that, Mr. President, please allow me to make the following points.

We need to develop friendly relations among nations and build up a culture of upholding the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We call on all parties to conflicts to exercise maximum restraint, endorse a global ceasefire, as called for by the Secretary-General, and observe international obligations in order to ease tensions and resume dialogue towards lasting solutions. We also call for the lifting of unilateral sanctions that adversely affect socioeconomic development and the livelihoods of people in conflict-ridden areas.

Multilateralism should be further enhanced, with the United Nations at the core of international cooperation to harmonize the interests and behaviours of Member States and strengthen partnerships with other regional and subregional organizations. The Security Council should stay united during the decision-making process, make the best use of available tools, particularly preventive diplomacy and mediation, and embark on the reform of United Nations peace operations.

Due attention must be paid to addressing the root causes of conflicts and insecurity rather than solely addressing their consequences. Efforts should be intensified at all stages, from early warning and prevention to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and from post-conflict recovery to sustainable development. Priority should be accorded to the protection of civilians, including the most vulnerable, as well as to dealing with bomb and mine consequences and victim assistance.

Similarly, the coordinated efforts of the international community must focus on a resilient economic recovery, a human-centric approach, a global partnership for development and an efficient functioning of global governance, where developing countries, most of those hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and external shocks, are properly assisted with financing, technology and market access.

Rising from the situation of a poor, less developed country and from the ashes of a war-torn land to become a middle-income country, Viet Nam values

and will remain committed to being a reliable partner for sustainable peace and development. Together with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), we have strived to build an ASEAN community of mutual care, support and sharing — a South-East Asia of peace, security and stability — as well as a regional environment conducive to good neighbourliness, cooperation and prosperity. Viet Nam stands ready to work with all partners and stakeholders to cope with the challenges of the time.

Annex 14**Statement by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Zhang Jun**

[Original: Chinese]

China congratulates Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. We welcome the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to convene today's meeting. We also welcome Prime Minister Gonsalves, who is presiding over today's meeting.

I would like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed; Ambassador Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council; Mr. Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency; and Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, for their briefings.

Humankind will always expect peace and tranquillity but conflicts and insecurity persist. Since the dawn of the twenty-first century, from the attacks on 11 September 2001 to the global economic and financial crisis to the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, humankind has repeatedly endured the impact of global challenges and is now at another important historic juncture. When confronted with myriad conflicts and security risks, identifying their drivers and adopting targeted measures will contribute to the effective maintenance of international peace and stability and ensure security and tranquillity for people in all countries.

We must fully acknowledge that development is the key to solving all problems. Increasing investment in development and eliminating the deficit are paramount in conflict prevention and are the most cost-effective in peace efforts.

Today, there are considerable obstacles to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the North-South divide may further widen. The international community should address development issues with a heightened sense of urgency and promote the comprehensive, rigorous and balanced implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We should focus on poverty eradication and prevent a major reversal of the gains achieved in global poverty reduction.

The prevention and control of COVID-19 remain the top priority for the international community. We must remain committed to prioritizing people and life, through the coordination efforts of the United Nations and the World Health Organization, by implementing international joint prevention and control measures and accelerating vaccine research and development and the production and distribution of vaccines. The States Members of the United Nations should implement resolution 2532 (2020) and actively respond to the challenge posed by the pandemic to international peace and security.

Ultimately, climate change is a development issue. We must continue to uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and build a fair and reasonable global climate governance system that facilitates win-win cooperation. During the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, President Xi Jinping announced that China would endeavour to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060 (see A/75/PV.4). This demonstrates China's resolve and responsible posture in addressing climate change. We hope that all countries, including all members of the Security Council, in particular the developed countries, will take concrete steps to jointly promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

For post-conflict countries, building a solid foundation for sustainable development is key. If development remains at a standstill for too long after a conflict

has ended, it will be challenging to truly build peace. The international community should support post-conflict countries in strengthening Government authority, improving governance capabilities, building social consensus and following a development path suitable for their national contexts.

We must fully acknowledge that strengthening collective security is essential for achieving our own security. In today's world, security issues are increasingly interlinked, transnational and diverse. Given the complex and interconnected nature of international security challenges, no country can act in isolation or be preoccupied with the use of force. Embracing the concept of collective, common and general security is the right choice.

Disputes and differences in State-to-State relations are inevitable. The key is being committed to solving problems through dialogue and consultation. No country can benefit from the difficulties faced by other countries or create stability from turmoil elsewhere. The peaceful settlement of disputes is a cardinal principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and constitutes the right way for countries to engage with one another. We must oppose the relentless penchant for or threat of force in international relations. We must reject the Cold War mentality and exclusive cliques. We must be alert to any attempt to provoke confrontation among groups of countries or start another Cold War. Relentless militarism only exacerbates the security dilemma and advanced weapons cannot guarantee absolute security. The countries with the largest nuclear arsenals have an obligation to shoulder their special high-priority responsibility in nuclear disarmament.

The recent terrorist attacks have again demonstrated that terrorism remains a latent threat and global counter-terrorism cooperation must be strengthened, not weakened. We must be resolute in combating acts of terrorism perpetrated whenever, wherever and by whomever. At the same time, We should not link terrorism to any specific country, ethnicity or religion or practice double standards on counter-terrorism issues. We must adopt deradicalization measures to curb the threat of extremist ideology and eliminate the breeding grounds for terrorism.

Cybersecurity risks are a new challenge to all countries. There is an urgent need to strengthen communication and coordination at the international level to jointly formulate countermeasures. No country can abuse the notion of national security to restrict routine information and communication technology development and cooperation. China recently launched the Global Initiative on Data Security to build a peaceful, safe, open, cooperative and orderly cyberspace. The international community should operate on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, strengthen dialogue and cooperation and make cyberspace a driver for economic and social development, international peace and stability and human welfare.

We must fully recognize that solidarity and cooperation are the most powerful weapons for meeting all challenges. We live in an interconnected global village. The close ties that bind our countries together dictate that humankind shares a common destiny. We must appreciate our converging interests, develop a sense of community with a shared future for humankind, move beyond factions and zero-sum thinking, build a world that is akin to a large family and strive for win-win cooperation.

Global threats and challenges call for robust global responses. The role of the United Nations must be strengthened and multilateralism preserved. China believes that all countries, large or small, have equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules. All countries should uphold the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, safeguard the international system, with the United Nations at its core, and maintain international order based on international law. The Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission

and other bodies should fulfil their respective mandates and complement each other. The United Nations should strengthen its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and form synergies so as to jointly address the risks of conflict and instability.

Major Powers have a special responsibility for the maintenance of international stability and the permanent members of the Security Council should lead by example. At this critical time, as the world faces major risks and challenges, the Security Council should remain united and avoid division. In particular, large countries should play their part and take the lead in promoting international solidarity and cooperation, providing global public goods and helping to cope with global challenges.

This year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Secretary-General Guterres has called for a global ceasefire before the end of the year. It is impossible to achieve peace simply by waiting for it; we need to take concrete action. At this critical juncture, the States Members of the United Nations should recommit to lasting peace and security for all and embark on a new journey to a better common future.

Annex 15**Statement by the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic, José Singer Weisinger**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank the briefers and congratulate Prime Minister Gonsalves on his country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

Today's debate is timely, as threats to international peace and security are more complex, involving cross-border elements and global in nature.

The Charter of the United Nations underscores the central role of prevention as a responsibility of the entire United Nations system. The Dominican Republic interprets Chapter VIII in that sense. We therefore endorse multilateralism as an effective method of addressing conflicts. This principle is particularly effective today, as the only way to combat the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its effects is through joint efforts.

An unconventional threat to international peace and security, with profound implications for everyone without exception, including future generations, is climate change. It has been described as the most important challenge facing humankind. Rising sea levels, natural disasters and disrupted livelihoods are just a few of the effects that many of our countries must face daily.

The relationship between climate and security is undeniable and so too are the links among climate, development and security. That is why the Council, and the United Nations as a whole, must seek ambitious, innovative and joint solutions to prevent climate change from becoming the primary and most complex risk factor for conflict. It requires greater ambition, greater action and greater results.

That said, we recognize that the root causes of conflict are multiple and interconnected. Political, social and economic factors can affect stability. Equitable access to water has emerged as a destabilizing element, contributing to the outbreak of violent conflict and instability within and between societies.

Organized crime and arms trafficking, while not contemporary threats, are executed with such sophistication that they are beyond the capacity of States to address.

People are at the heart of the issues highlighted today. These threats must be depoliticized for them to be viewed as opportunities that improve the quality of life of people and strengthen humankind. To this end, it is crucial that the Council acknowledge intercommunal violence, for example, as one of the main causes of human suffering and the current proliferation of human rights violations, including sexual violence in conflict.

Sustaining peace begins and ends with protecting people from human rights violations. The violation of these rights, in any context, is the antithesis of peace and a denial of our shared humanity. There is no peace in a society where human rights are not protected.

Pandemics, such as COVID-19, bring to the surface the underlying factors that result in violence, such as systemic inequality, discrimination and marginalization. In many conflict zones, contracting COVID-19 is a death sentence. More than 60 million people live in areas outside of Government control. Who will come to their rescue? We must work with humanitarian organizations with access to these populations to help them survive the crisis, including providing them with the vaccine. No one is safe until everyone is safe.

All these factors, individually or in combination, have serious consequences for civilian populations and become breeding grounds for the proliferation of armed groups that incite and increase violence.

Local actors, such as women and young people, must be involved to help develop and lead efforts to raise awareness and respond to all these threats, mitigate conflict, prevent violence, achieve peace and reduce the impact of insecurity on sustainable development.

The United Nations, each one of us and regional organizations have a shared responsibility to respond to those threats and to walk shoulder to shoulder in defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is only with a sense of prevention, multilateralism, early attention and concerted action among the pillars of peace, human rights, development and humanitarian action that we can deliver as one to the most vulnerable and avoid the recurrence of conflict and insecurity.

Annex 16**Statement by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nicolas de Rivière**

[Original: English and French]

I thank all the briefers for their presentations. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has invited us to examine the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. This is an important debate because while the causes of conflicts evolve, the Charter of the United Nations and the responsibilities of the Council are immutable. It is imperative that the Security Council continuously adapt its actions and tools in order to fulfil its principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I would like to emphasize three points.

First, climate change threatens international peace and security. The Council has on many occasions recognized the nefarious effects of climate change in different regions, from the Lake Chad basin to Somalia or Mali, and has called for a better assessment and management of the related risks. It is time to make our action part of a preventive approach by anticipating in particular the humanitarian consequences of environmental disasters. That is why France would like the Secretary-General to be able to present, every two years, an assessment of the threats to international peace and security posed by climate change.

My second point concerns pandemics. The Security Council must anticipate their destabilizing effect more systematically. The role of the Security Council in mitigating the consequences of the coronavirus disease is essential. That is why we firmly support the call of the Secretary-General for an immediate and global ceasefire to facilitate the fight against the pandemic. No effort must be spared to accelerate the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020), which the Council adopted unanimously on 1 July.

Countries in conflict or post-conflict situations are particularly vulnerable. It is therefore indispensable to preserve humanitarian space and to ensure the protection of humanitarian and health workers. Furthermore, pandemics aggravate the deep causes of conflict, in particular by reinforcing inequalities and disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable. Measures taken to stem them can also generate information manipulation and a restriction of public freedoms, thereby undermining confidence in institutions.

That is why, as per my third and final point, we must remain vigilant with regard to human rights. Human rights violations, the breakdown of the constitutional order and the exclusion of women and youth can lead to violence, population displacement and the destabilization of States and entire regions. That is nothing new. The situations on the Council's agenda serve as a daily reminder. That is why the Council demands respect for international humanitarian law, mandates peacekeeping operations to protect civilians and assists national authorities in strengthening the rule of law, security and justice. We have specific mechanisms for the protection of children, the full participation of women and their protection, the consideration of young people and the fights against poverty and impunity.

We must go further to address situations of massive human rights violations. We are in favour of regular briefings by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, just as we are briefed regularly by the High Commissioner for Refugees, for example. We can reinforce synergies with the Human Rights Council while respecting the mandate of each forum. Finally, the Security Council must continue to interact with

human rights defenders, particularly during its visits on the ground, and call for their protection when they are threatened.

Conflicts are also rooted in issues of development and governance, which are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations must adopt an integrated approach, combining security, humanitarian and political actions, that also promotes human rights, sustainable development and the fight against climate change. The Security Council must play its part fully. Let us collectively rise to the challenge.

Annex 17**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

It is an honour and a privilege to have Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and His Excellency Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves presiding over this important meeting this morning. As a fellow archipelagic islander country, we wish Saint Vincent and the Grenadines all the best in this month's historical presidency, as it is the first time in history that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has sat on the Council.

I thank the Deputy Secretary-General, our sister Ms. Amina Mohammed, and the briefers for their comprehensive briefings. Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Sir Hilary Beckles and our brother, Ambassador Munir Akram, have provided us with ample information for a lively discussion.

As we have witnessed, the current pandemic has exacerbated fragility in many conflict-affected countries and may reverse peacebuilding efforts. As members may recall, that was also one of the key takeaways from the open debate on the topic of pandemics and the challenges of sustaining peace held during Indonesia's presidency in August (S/2020/799).

Indeed, the challenges to peace and security are multifaceted and contemporary issues such as the pandemic, environmental and development issues, protectionism, terrorism and extremism may compound that challenge.

It is now more important than ever to strengthen the multilateral system in order to address the root causes of conflict. During many discussions in the Security Council, we often hear about the need for a comprehensive approach to ensure peace and stability that encompasses security, human rights and humanitarian aspects, as well as sustainable development. To that end, the Security Council, as the organ with the principal mandate of maintaining international peace and security, should continue to mainstream such a coherent approach.

Having said that, allow me to highlight three points.

First, it is necessary to strengthen national capacities. Ensuring an effective State presence and the protection and provision of basic needs of populations, as well as combatting poverty and inequality, are key in order to sustainably break the conflict cycle.^[P] It is imperative to build and strengthen the institutional capacities of conflict-affected countries to create environments conducive to peace and security so that national stakeholders can take a holistic approach to addressing the root causes of conflicts. That must include investing in national capacities for conflict prevention. That should continue to be one of the priority mandates of United Nations special political missions and peacekeeping operations.

We must also ensure that the United Nations missions mandated by the Council provide a strong foundation for long-term and sustained socioeconomic development. For that to succeed, we need strong national ownership and the inclusive participation of all local stakeholders, as they have a better understanding of the conflict risks to be addressed. We also need partnership, resources and the sharing of experiences from international stakeholders.

Secondly, we must enhance synergies throughout the work of the entire United Nations system. The United Nations must respond in coherent manner, harnessing the strengths of its different organs. The division of labour and coordination with a clear road map are key.

We have witnessed how current contemporary security challenges are interlinked, from climate change to food security. Addressing the root causes of

conflict and instability requires concerted efforts, including the exchange of information and mobilizing expertise and capacity.

United Nations missions on the ground have the capacity to monitor and identify drivers of conflicts, serving as part of early warning system. Meanwhile, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have technical capacities to address specific conflict drivers. The Council needs to work in tandem with all relevant United Nations bodies, as well as specialized agencies, in order to find solutions to those new challenges.

The Peacebuilding Commission also plays a vital role in coordinating responses across the principal organs of the United Nations and beyond, including by mobilizing regional organizations, international financial institutions and private sectors.

Thirdly, I wish to highlight the role of regional and subregional organizations. Countries in one region often face similar challenges. Such challenges are sometimes also transboundary and interconnected in nature and require strong cooperation among countries in the region.

Regional and subregional organizations have deep knowledge, unique perspectives and strong local connections that are crucial for supporting countries in building lasting peace. That potential should be leveraged to prevent, manage and resolve conflict, as well as to collectively address the drivers of conflict and instability. As we have often reiterated, we believe that neighbours know best.

There should also be a sharing of responsibility and experiences between regional and subregional organizations. The Security Council must continue to support efforts by regional and subregional organizations in that regard.

In conclusion, to quote an old proverb that is known all over the world, including in the Caribbean: “A harvest of peace grows from seeds of contentment.” Peace does not come without hard work.

No single actor alone can thoroughly address the drivers of conflicts and insecurity. But in order to be able to work together, we have to acknowledge that there are clear links between peace and sustainable development and that, without development — from local community to State level to international cooperation — our efforts will be in vain, and peace will be harder to attain.

Annex 18**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

[Original: French]

I would like to congratulate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on its historic presidency of the Security Council. Today's debate is an important one. Our world faces a myriad of crises, many of which are interconnected. New non-conventional threats to global security require our global community to take a new approach so as to address emerging crises more adequately.

First, one of the best ways to secure and strengthen sustainable peace is by investing in equitable development, particularly in fragile States. The majority of the 58 States identified as fragile are also conflict-affected and low-income States. If current trends persist, by 2030 80 per cent of the poorest States will be living in fragile situations, also making them more vulnerable to insecurity and crises. The intersecting crises that characterize fragile situations can also undermine progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

As a result, in fragile situations marked by conflict and instability and, in certain cases, increased population pressure, investment in development is particularly critical. Some studies, for example, have linked poverty and illiteracy with radicalization. Terrorism thrives in the breeding ground of poverty. Young people who are out of school are at a much higher risk of being recruited by armed terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, while girls living in conflict-affected areas are at greater risk of sexual and gender-based violence. They are also half as likely to be enrolled in school than girls living in unaffected countries. Access to education becomes all the more important in regions marked by conflict and instability. Without education, children, already deprived of their basic rights, will face a future without real opportunities or possibilities.

One of the most serious security threats we currently face is climate change. In addition to food insecurity and environmental degradation, climate change has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities with disastrous consequences, including the fuelling of conflicts, thereby undermining the economic growth and development gains of recent decades while exacerbating humanitarian needs. In the Lake Chad basin, for example, the interconnection between insecurity, poverty and climate change is clearly established. The Sahel region is cited as one of the clearest examples of climate-related conflicts, which also impact migration and forced displacement.

Nearly 10 million people depend on humanitarian aid in the Lake Chad region due to armed conflict. More than 100,000 people are displaced in the Diffa region alone, and nearly 250,000 refugees who have fled Nigeria live in the border areas of Cameroon, Chad and the Niger and in other parts of the central Sahel region. The intensifying effects of climate change on ecosystems are exacerbating the precariousness of people's livelihoods, rendering them vulnerable to crises.

Addressing those risks would therefore help to secure and maintain stability. The Niger is working with a group of Security Council members to ensure that climate-related risks are taken into account more systematically. Those efforts must continue in order to take into account gender-related conflict factors, given that women and girls face specific abuses.

Not only would an integrated approach make our interventions more effective, but it could also help to reduce the recurrence of future crises. It would also be more effective in addressing a world that faces serious inequalities between and within

countries. In other words, the climate-related security threat is as much a local issue as it is a global one.

Today, the coronavirus global pandemic has reinforced the idea that collective action is vital, that multilateralism is necessary and that a cross-sectoral approach to emerging global problems is the only way to find sustainable solutions. In the aftermath of this crisis, we owe the world a renewed commitment to genuine and inclusive multilateralism.

As His Excellency the President of the Republic of the Niger recalled during the high-level segment in September, the global pandemic has highlighted the urgency of rethinking our collective security (see A/75/PV.8). It is up to all of us to work together to draw the necessary lessons and reflect on the indispensable reforms of our global governance systems. Today's debate is part of those necessary reflections. The Niger is convinced that the many threats to international peace and security can be resolved not by individual States, but by collective action by the international community.

Taking all of the abovementioned points into account, my delegation would like to make the following recommendations.

First, there is a need to better understand the intersectional nature of security threats, including through robust analysis that would provide key information and data to better adapt our work and interventions to the evolving situation.

Secondly, there is a need to close the funding gap for the interventions that would jointly address the challenges facing the security and development problems in areas affected by conflicts and fragile situations.

Thirdly, the role of regional organizations must be supported and strengthened, given that many crises transcend national borders.

Finally, we must place people at the heart of our interventions and reflections. It is also important to strengthen the role and participation of women and youth in peacebuilding.

Annex 19**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

I thank you, Prime Minister Gonsalves, and your team for organizing this high-level discussion today. We welcome Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' first Security Council presidency and we are so excited to work with you and your team here in New York.

I would also like to thank our briefers today — Ms. Amina Mohammed, Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Sir Hilary Beckles and Mr. Munir Akram — for the work that they and their teams have done to make our world a safer place.

Sadly, we are living in a world where violent conflict is now increasingly common after years of decline. We know that violence begets more violence. It distorts social norms, undermines institutions and destroys countries and lives. Fragile States are particularly susceptible to destabilizing violence and armed conflict, and it is everyday citizens who pay the price.

We know that conflict and violence are often exacerbated by environmental factors. The exploitation of minerals, including precious metals and gemstones, timber and wildlife often finance conflict, and the associated environmental degradation and social upheaval can undermine prospects for peace.

In Venezuela, for example, the illegitimate Maduro regime is complicit in, and profits from, the illegal gold mining that is devastating the environment and indigenous populations across the southern part of the country. Armed criminal groups, including some from Colombia designated as terrorists, are stripping the land of its resources in an attempt to propagate the conflict and exacerbate the deprivation faced by the Venezuelan people.

Fragile States are also susceptible to destabilizing threats because of the interference of external malign actors. We have expressed increasing concern about some States using their influence in fragile States, gained by sovereign loans and debt obligations, to promote undemocratic governance practices. The resulting corruption, diminished respect for the rule of law and authoritarianism further raise the risk of violent conflict and instability in those countries over the long term.

One of the greatest offenders is Iran, the world's leading state sponsor of terror. Iran has used its malign influence to propagate violence throughout the Middle East. Through its own direct military role and that of its proxy, the terrorist organization Hizbullah, in supporting the murderous Al-Assad regime, it has played a central role in creating the refugee crisis. It has also played a central role in the humanitarian tragedy and extended conflict in Yemen, due to its arms transfers to the Houthis, and in unrest in Iraq, thanks to its support of Shia militias. It exports arms to its partners, proxies and terrorist organizations that destabilize the region, in contravention of United Nations arms embargoes. Iran is deepening, widening and extending those conflicts. We must not allow this to continue.

The Trump Administration remains committed to thwarting the attempts of malign actors like the regime in Iran, which crushes dissent in its own country while creating instability in others. Our sanctions programmes are designed to constrain the ability of bad actors, like Iran, to take advantage of our financial system or threaten the United States, our allies and partners and civilians. Despite the false accusations from some members of the Council, our sanctions do not target humanitarian-related assistance or activity. Rather, we often exclude this type of activity, and in many circumstances proactively, from our sanctions programmes.

The United States Government also utilizes targeted foreign assistance as a tool to thwart the drivers of conflict. Roughly 50 per cent of all United States foreign assistance today goes to fragile states, including 70 per cent of the United States Agency for International Development's assistance. In the past five years, the United States has spent approximately \$30 billion in foreign assistance in the 15 most fragile countries as indicated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The United States also continues to lead the world's contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations, contributing 25 per cent of the United Nations peacekeeping budget — a key tool in advancing international peace and security and addressing the root causes of conflict.

President Trump reaffirmed the United States' commitment to conflict prevention and addressing vulnerability when he signed the Global Fragility Act of 2019. Among other things, that important United States legislation places local solutions, ownership and accountability at the heart of the United States' approach to building resilience.

We know that countries with higher rates of gender inequality are more vulnerable to conflict. The United States prioritizes the meaningful participation of women in efforts to prevent and resolve conflict while promoting the safety of women and girls in conflict and crisis. Our global leadership and commitment to this issue was demonstrated when President Trump signed the United States Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, followed by the Administration's release of our bold and innovative United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security in June 2019.

The United States remains actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to resolve conflict worldwide. Just a few weeks ago, President Trump hosted a historic signing ceremony where Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Foreign Ministers of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed the Abraham accords declaration and formally agreed to normalization with Israel — the first such agreements between Israel and Arab countries since 1994. On 23 October, the Sudan, which has renounced terrorism, followed suit, taking the historic step to agree to normalize relations with Israel and begin economic and trade relations. The Abraham accords provide a foundation for further advances toward regional peace. Those leaders are boldly choosing a future of mutual understanding, coexistence and prosperity for their people — they are endorsing a culture of peace.

As one of the co-chairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group addressing the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, the United States is working with the parties to the conflict towards the cessation of hostilities and an urgent resumption of dialogue without preconditions in order to reach a political settlement through a negotiated solution.

In Syria, the political process outlined in resolution 2254 (2015) remains the only legitimate way to address the brutality of the Al-Assad regime that started the conflict a decade ago. The United States remains fully committed to the implementation of resolution 2254 (2015) to secure a future of peace and prosperity for the Syrian people.

The United States is committed to conflict prevention and mitigation and we will continue to use all available diplomatic and economic tools to address the drivers of conflict that make fragile States susceptible to destabilizing violence and armed conflict. We hope that all United Nations Member States will join us in making our world safer and more peaceful. Our job, the job belonging to all of us at the United Nations for the past 75 years, has been “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. Let us double our efforts to make that vision come true.

Annex 20**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, Yashar Aliyev**

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and on convening this meeting.

The concept note (S/2020/1064, annex) raises an important question as to what can be done to strengthen and mainstream an integrated approach to promote solutions. Over the 75 years since the establishment of the United Nations, a great deal has been accomplished to settle international disputes, resolve conflicts, eradicate colonialism and restore hope in those affected by war, violence and instability.

However, conflicts, prolonged foreign occupation and the lack of accountability continue to endanger peace and security. Racist ideologies and the incitement of ethnic and religious hatred, often coupled with fake historical narratives, have an undermining effect on the eruption or protraction of conflict. The coronavirus disease pandemic and the hazards of climate change aggravate and exacerbate the challenging security environment.

Coherent global responses and common efforts are the most effective ways to address conflicts, fight climate change and the coronavirus disease, combat terrorism, manage forced displacements and migratory flows and achieve the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all. The United Nations is a critical pillar of multilateralism, and the purposes and principles of its Charter constitute the foundational normative framework in international relations.

First and foremost, all States must strictly comply with their international obligations, particularly those relating to respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders. Effective solutions necessitate the implementation of the decisions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations. Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations is clear about the obligations of Member States in that regard. It is also important to work on addressing all the root causes of conflict, taking into account that peace, security, development, human rights and the rule of law are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

Azerbaijan's consistent position with regard to the issue under consideration is well known and stems, among other factors, from its experience of facing armed aggression and its devastating consequences. In its resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), the Security Council acknowledged the fact that acts of military force were committed against Azerbaijan, that those acts were incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and that they constituted a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

However, the Security Council demands for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan have not been unimplemented. On the contrary, Armenia has continued to enjoy impunity, which, as an immediate corollary, has generated a sense of permissiveness among its authorities, freed their hands for new acts of aggression and hate crimes and led to the situation that we are now facing.

Peace, security and development are achievable only if the consequences of Armenia's aggression are removed, thereby ensuring that its armed forces are completely withdrawn from the occupied territories, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is restored and the right of internally displaced Azerbaijanis to return is implemented.

Annex 21

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations

Brazil is thankful to the presidency of Saint Vincent and Grenadines for organizing this high-level open video-teleconference on “Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity” in the context of peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohammed, and all the other briefers for their insightful considerations.

Brazil takes this opportunity to reaffirm its support for peacebuilding. In many aspects, the sustaining peace agenda coincides with long-nurtured values of Brazilian foreign policy, especially the peaceful resolution of disputes, the interdependence between peace and development and the primacy of prevention. With a view to continuing to improve United Nations peacebuilding efforts and capacities, Brazil would like to put forward three brief considerations.

First, our collective experience with peace efforts has taught us that the conditions that may lead a society to the paths of peace or conflict are often extremely complex. The analysis of the root causes or potential drivers of conflict and instability always requires a comprehensive exercise aimed at achieving a broad understanding of the interplay among various social, economic, political and cultural aspects of any specific situation. We should therefore refuse simplistic arguments that elevate one single factor as the main driver of instability and recognize that there is no single template to prevent conflict or build peace.

Secondly, peacebuilding and sustaining peace are cross-pillar endeavours, realized only on the basis of respect for sovereignty and national ownership. This means that much of what we want to accomplish with peacebuilding has connections with topics that interest the whole United Nations membership and should be discussed and implemented under the leadership of other political forums, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective mandates.

Furthermore, we should reject interpretations suggesting that sustaining peace could be seen as an all-encompassing framework. Recognizing the interdependence of the different United Nations pillars requires us to acknowledge each pillar’s intrinsic value and specific mandate. Promoting development, protecting human rights and preventing conflict may all contribute to peacebuilding, but our efforts in each of those domains should also be assessed by their own merits.

Lastly, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is uniquely positioned to bridge discussions across the various United Nations pillars. In order to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations peacebuilding efforts, the PBC should continue to enhance its advisory capacities with a view to providing recommendations to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as it deems necessary.

To conclude, Brazil wishes to reiterate its appreciation for the opportunity to take part in this discussion. We welcome the decision of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to convene this meeting in a transparent and inclusive manner, open to the participation of the whole United Nations membership. We believe that this is a good practice worth replicating and encourage the Security Council members to ensure full inclusivity in all future discussions about cross-cutting matters related to peacebuilding.

Annex 22**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde to the United Nations, José Luis Fialho Rocha**

It is my pleasure to salute you, Madam President, on your assumption of your country's presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. The sovereign principle of equality of rights among nations speaks loudly, as I see a small island developing State, following the momentum that represented your election, take the lead of this prominent organ of the United Nations. I would like to congratulate you and say that you can count on the support of my delegation as far as a non-member State of the Security Council can be of some assistance in that context.

I also commend you, Madam President, for the choice of the topic for the signature event of your presidency to debate the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity and thank you for the invitation to submit written statements on the issue. It is a timely discussion as we look at the global picture and see how the world, while running across so many crises, is now being hit by the coronavirus disease, adding to the pre-existing conditions, the consequences of the pandemic and its overall impact, which open up an ocean of uncertainty for the next years.

To combat the pandemic, one can say, and agree, that we need to respond rapidly against the health threat, save lives, recover economically and socially by protecting businesses, affected people and jobs and, finally, build back better and place ourselves on the track to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Galvanized as we are by the spirit of the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 75/1), we call for a reinvigorated multilateralism to act together and better and a renewed resolve for solidarity to make the difference in favour of more inclusive and tailored assistance, especially for the poorest and the most vulnerable. We are also driven to mobilize more resources and towards increased coordination.

The response to the coronavirus disease, while urgent, is a top-down approach that, in order to be efficient and effective, needs to be anchored in, and supported by, bottom-up solutions that can address, in a structural manner, the drivers of conflict and insecurity that pre-exist, surround and may ultimately undermine the chances for an adequate response to the pandemic and the way forward.

Let us take it from the beginning. The legacy of the founders stands in their determination "to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war", and their decision to "establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations". It received the mandate to take appropriate measures to "maintain international peace and security", "to achieve international cooperation" for economic and social progress and "to promote and protect human rights and the fundamental freedoms".

Furthermore, the United Nations would be "the centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends", which attributes the primary responsibility to Governments, on the one hand, and to their multilateral action, on the other hand.

Over the 75 years since the creation of the United Nations, the world has not experienced a global outbreak. However, it has not been spared from countless conflicts arising from unresolved national or regional political discontent and other causes, such as illicit economic gains and a climate-induced shortage of resources, among others. They are also due to several conflict accelerators, from poor governance, poverty and social injustice, ideological, faith- and ethnic group-based

terrorism, the arms race and the proliferation of weapons, including cybercrime and insecurity, to xenophobia, racism and hate speech.

For the purpose of our debate, I welcome the most recent report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (S/2020/773). The report is based on a clear description of the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity, while elaborating on the “comprehensive cross-pillar approaches to building and sustaining peace” and “the work of the United Nations to promote ... coherence ... in support of national Governments and their people” (S/2020/773, *para. 10*).

It is an accurate demonstration of the nexus, dear to the Secretary-General, between sustaining peace and sustainable development, highlighting the importance of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, interacting with humanitarian, development and human rights.

In conclusion, Cabo Verde, my own country, supports this debate and any other initiative that contributes to less conflict and more security in the world and invests in drivers for peace and more appeased societies as foundational conditions for the stability and progress of all.

Annex 23**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations**

Spreading violent conflict, growing economic insecurity and the increasing impacts of climate change disproportionately impact fragile and conflict-affected situations. These challenges have been exacerbated and multiplied by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

A coherent, collaborative, coordinated and efficient whole-of-United Nations response is crucial to safeguarding and strengthening development gains, addressing the risk factors that give rise to conflict and building more peaceful, resilient societies.

While Canada has long been a supporter of United Nations peacebuilding efforts, our experience as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission during 2020 has crystalized a few critical understandings for us.

COVID-19 has laid bare the fact that the peacebuilding success stories of the United Nations are often more fragile than we like to admit. Even after decades of international peacebuilding support, many countries are only one or two shocks away from falling into deep crisis. And we are only beginning to understand the ways in which climate change exacerbates conflict drivers and increases vulnerability.

That requires us to fundamentally rethink our approaches and to put livelihoods, economic security for citizens and inclusive economic development at the heart of peacebuilding. It also means sharpening our capacity to jointly assess and respond to the multiple and overlapping risks that increase the likelihood of violent conflict.

None of that can happen without sustained, predictable financing and strong partnerships. Countries affected by conflict are already the furthest behind in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, and this pandemic risks setting them back even further. They need predictable, sustainable, coordinated support.

That is why Canada voluntarily supports the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and today we announced our intention to co-host the PBF replenishment conference in January. We encourage all Member States to do what they can to contribute to the PBF and to maximize the scale and duration of their pledges.

However, extrabudgetary funding is only a band-aid for a systemic problem. Voluntary financing can catalyse short-term results in the United Nations system, but we also need to look at longer-term solutions.

Work across the United Nations system to build and sustain peace should be financed through assessed contributions. These activities are fundamental to achieving the United Nations mandate and our shared peacebuilding goals. Until we agree on a collective approach, Canada will continue working with others to make progress on an iterative, case-by-case basis.

We must also examine the overarching global financial architecture and ask ourselves if it is fit for purpose. The growing body of evidence emerging, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, shows us that for most fragile and conflict-affected countries it is not.

A growing number of countries are having to choose between channelling scarce public resources to servicing their debt and remaining solvent or to taking measures to counter the effects of the pandemic. No country, particularly those emerging from conflict, should be forced to have to decide between insolvency and the health of its citizens.

It was in recognition of those kinds of challenges that Canada and Jamaica joined with Secretary-General António Guterres to lead the Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond and develop a series of recommendations for how to overcome such unprecedented challenges.

We are encouraged by the Secretary-General's commitment to ensuring that missions have sufficient programmatic funding to support mandated peacebuilding activities as priority peacekeeping budget requests. We call on the Security Council to take up these recommendations, particularly in the context of mission transitions, and we encourage Security Council members to continually see through the mandates and priorities of which they have agreed to the financing and implementation stages.

Finally, we urge the Council to make better use of the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission as the only United Nations body mandated to play a bridging role across the principal organs so as to ensure integrated, coherent and coordinated support to national efforts to build and sustain peace.

As more countries and regions make use of the PBC's convening power, it has also strengthened this bridging role, enabling it to address a broader range of challenges and risks to peace — from gender equality in the Great Lakes region to climate security in the Pacific islands. The PBC can be a critical platform to support United Nations reform efforts at the country level in order to strengthen the capacity of United Nations country teams to jointly analyse and respond to risks.

We encourage the Security Council to increase the frequency with which it seeks the Commission's advice, including on peace operation mandates and mission transitions, and in particular its advice on longer-term peacebuilding challenges. Thematic debates such as this one would be strengthened by formal Peacebuilding Commission advice on how to strengthen coherence of United Nations efforts to address root causes of conflict and sustain peace.

Annex 24**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the opportunity, through this debate, to consider how some dimensions of peacebuilding and sustaining peace can be addressed as global threats from the perspective of the functions of the Security Council, as well as to highlight the importance of maintaining coherence among the efforts of other parts of the system, in particular development and humanitarian agencies, including health organizations, to identify how phenomena such as pandemics and others challenges may impact, or are impacting, societies in conflict or in peacebuilding processes.

In our view, as expressed on previous occasions, it is crucially relevant that the Security Council address such issues within its own areas of responsibility, since, in times of crisis, we need strong multilateral organizations, with all their bodies responding adequately given their respective mandates and functions to any major challenge.

That is why we believe that the inclusion of youth, women, civil society and all relevant actors is key for establishing resilient and cohesive societies, which is why we are grateful for the contributions of such high-level briefers today.

The Secretary-General's appeal last March for a worldwide ceasefire, which Chile supported, remains relevant as the global health crisis continues to pose a risk due to its devastating impacts on societies, especially for the most vulnerable people and those disproportionately affected, such as women and girls.

Moreover, the women and peace and security agenda provides important tools to ensure a gender perspective in all entities linked to peace processes. Furthermore, we believe that this approach must not be neglected when addressing the impacts of the pandemic or other crises on conflict or peacebuilding settings, including as related to sexual and gender-based violence. Preparedness and response capacity-building and evaluation processes should also be used to enhance the gender perspective, both in addressing impacts and in promoting women's participation in decision-making at all levels.

Given the current multiplicity factors driving conflict and insecurity today, the Security Council cannot be detached from discussion thereof, particularly when the impact of these drivers can lead to global crises and devastating consequences on the ground. In this regard, we stress in particular the experience of the multidimensional crisis caused by the coronavirus disease, which has revealed the importance of institutional and multilateral preparedness in responding coherently to new global challenges and threats.

In this regard, we welcome the reflective exercise involving the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretariat, as well as the review of the peacebuilding architecture, geared towards sustaining peace, with a view to evaluating, for instance, the impact of the current pandemic on both the geographic and the thematic situations under its consideration and identifying areas of weakness requiring action in the responses thereto, as well as to identifying, through the sharing of experiences, successful field-level processes applicable in different contexts, such as quick-impact projects implemented in peace operations, which promote the involvement of local communities in peacebuilding and sustaining peace, strengthening the principle of national ownership.

This is all done with a view to building the preparedness and response capacity within the multilateral system as a whole for cases of conflict and peacebuilding in the face of future pandemics and other challenges and threats. To that end, we believe that a key element is reliable, flexible and robust information channels, focused on early warning and evaluation of the impact on tensions and development processes. Combating misinformation and the dissemination of hate speech is essential in promoting and building peace.

Finally, I wish to reiterate that a peaceful environment is an essential condition for combating pandemics and other global challenges, as well as for neutralizing today's drivers of conflict and insecurity. In an interconnected world of complex challenges, we believe it is important that the Security Council contribute, within its own sphere of action, to efforts to tackle the great challenges of our time, as well as to efforts to strengthen global capacities in prevention, preparedness and response.

Annex 25**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Colombia warmly congratulates Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on this, its first presidency of the Security Council. We welcome the organization of this debate against the backdrop of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the third review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a public health emergency. It also impacts the global economy, affecting the most vulnerable. Solidarity, inclusivity and human rights must therefore be at the heart of our response.

In Colombia's view, we must tackle all possible triggers of new cycles of violence. In recent years, we have seen the adverse impact of climate change and its consequences in terms of security in various regions of the world.

We welcome the holding of this debate during a crucial year, which marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, amid the immense efforts our Governments are devoting to ensure that the pandemic recovery is sustainable and inclusive.

This decade is crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and for taking the urgent action we need to tackle climate change in a decisive and coordinated manner. Otherwise, it will be impossible to achieve the goals we have set ourselves in the multilateral arena for 2030.

The science is clear and confirms that nationally determined contributions, pursuant to the Paris Agreement, are not enough to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2030, and that countries located in the tropics and the subtropics of the southern hemisphere will be hit hardest by the consequences of climate change in terms of economic growth.

Colombia is a country of astounding diversity, home to 50 per cent of the planet's heathlands, which are vital for generating fresh water and maintaining balance in the high-mountain ecosystem. These spaces are under threat from the horrific impacts of climate change, which have global, if varying, consequences around the world. The region of Latin America, including Colombia, is highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of this harsh reality.

Adaptation is the only way to reduce vulnerability to climate change. Nature-based solutions are our priority. It is essential that we strengthen implementation in developing countries with a view to boosting mitigation and adaptation responses and solutions.

My country take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of the work of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. In our view, the General Assembly, as a universal body providing for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that takes into account the intrinsic links between climate change and social and economic issues, is the proper context for debating and taking decisions relating to the causes and impacts of climate change.

In conclusion, we would like to underscore the threat posed to climate change in Colombia by unlawful armed groups involved in trafficking drugs and illegal mining. These criminal actors include unreintegrated members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, the Ejército de Liberación Nacional terrorist group and other groups linked to transnational organized crime.

International cooperation and collective responsibility are more important today than ever and crucial for tackling this problem comprehensively.

Annex 26**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, Pedro Luis Pedrosa Cuesta**

[Original: Spanish]

We convey Cuba's warmest greetings and support to the Security Council presidency of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We are confident of the leadership and substantive support it will bring to the work of this organ as a worthy representative of the States of Latin America and the Caribbean.

We are seeing today a constant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and an increasing resort to the use or threat of use of force in international relations. It is impossible to any longer sustain an international order that is unequal, unjust and anti-democratic — one that replaces solidarity with selfishness and the legitimate aspirations of millions of people with the interests of a minority.

The irresponsible behaviour of the United States is the major danger to international peace and security. It promotes conflicts as well as unconventional and trade wars in all regions of the planet. It sponsors the forceful overthrow of sovereign Governments. It encourages terrorism, promotes racist and supremacist views and imposes severe unilateral coercive measures while completely ignoring international law.

With unprecedented power, it maligns and attacks multilateralism, withdraws from international bodies such as UNESCO and the World Health Organization in the middle of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and uses financial blackmail against agencies of the United Nations system. It walks away from important international treaties, such as the consensual agreement with Iran, as well as international disarmament and arms control instruments and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, while at the same time producing unsustainable and irrational production and consumption patterns that destroy the planet's equilibrium.

It accounts for 38 per cent of global military spending — exceeding \$1.917 trillion in 2020. It is militarizing cyberspace and modernizing its nuclear arsenals. In its race for weapons, it is squandering resources essential for the sustainable development of our peoples, while at the same time refusing to cooperate to confront the multiple global crises brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its drive to reimpose the Monroe Doctrine, it is undermining the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, by threatening and carrying out aggression against countries that do not bend to its will.

It has taken new steps against Cuba to tighten the long-standing genocidal, economic, commercial and financial blockade, even in this time of pandemic. With absolute cynicism, it is determined to discredit the medical cooperation extended by our country and threatens those Governments that opt to exercise their sovereignty in soliciting our help.

Achieving a world of peace, justice and development requires addressing the root causes of conflicts. As the historic leader of the Cuban Revolutions stated,

“From the dawn of humankind, wars have arisen for fundamentally one reason: the desire on the part of some to strip others of their wealth. Once the mindset of plunder disappears, the mindset of war will vanish as well.”

We reiterate the Secretary-General's urgent call for an “end to the sickness of war” and “an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world”, along with

the “waiving of sanctions that could harm the capacities of countries to respond to the pandemic”.

We cannot put off ending the imposition of unilateral coercive sanctions, which have been rejected by the United Nations. The unpayable foreign debt that is threatening the survival of the peoples of the South — now aggravated by the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic — must be forgiven.

Against that complex backdrop, it is the duty of all countries, and especially of the members of the Security Council, to defend multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereign equality of States and their political unity, independence and territorial integrity, as well as the peaceful resolution of conflicts and refraining from the use or threat of use of force in international relations.

We should seek to ensure that the Security Council meets its overriding responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and respects the mandates entrusted by the Charter to other organs of the Organization, especially the General Assembly.

Let us strive for the promotion of peace, solidarity and development. Let us build an international order that is democratic, fair and sustainable.

Annex 27**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations, Martin Bille Hermann, on behalf of the Nordic countries**

I have the pleasure to submit this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Today's important debate comes at a time when many countries are working tirelessly to navigate new waves of the pandemic. We have seen that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) constitutes a potential conflict driver. This is also the case with other global challenges such as climate change, rising inequality and food insecurity, human rights violations and abuses, and sexual and gender-based violence. These risk triggering or exacerbating conflict, displacement and irregular migration, and reversing peacebuilding and development gains.

This year also marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and its Charter. Today's threats to international peace and security are different and more complex than those in 1945. Climate change is but one of these new threats. The Security Council needs to recognize this.

To address complex transnational challenges, such as pandemics and climate change, and mitigate their potential impact on conflict and insecurity, a renewed, collective commitment to multilateral solutions is required. Allow us to make three proposals.

First, solutions must be coherent and integrated across the United Nations humanitarian, development, peace and security, and human rights work, taking into consideration that root causes and drivers of conflict and instability often are deeply interlinked. We know that efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace are more effective when they go hand in hand with sustainable development, including concerted climate action, and represent the whole population, including women and men, girls and boys. From the ground up, joined-up approaches must be the default way of working — from comprehensive analysis and policy frameworks through streamlined funding modalities to collective action and outcomes, all including a gender lens.

We also know that societies are more resilient when all human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled. Advancing the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda must be a priority. Ensuring women's full, equal and meaningful participation across the peace continuum is not just desirable but necessary. Women, youth and marginalized groups have the right to a seat at the table where decisions are made.

Secondly, we strongly support the United Nations reforms and are committed to the follow-up of the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 75/1). We therefore need to maintain momentum on the implementation of the sustaining peace agenda, the repositioning of the United Nations development system, the Action for Peacekeeping agenda as well as the cross-cutting emphasis on conflict prevention.

These reforms need to be translated into tangible results on the ground through joined-up prevention and peacebuilding efforts in non-mission settings, under the leadership of the newly empowered Resident Coordinators and through effective integration between peace operations and United Nations country teams, in mission settings. Ensuring sustainable, coherent and adequate financing for sustaining peace is critical, in line with good peacebuilding donorship.

The Nordic countries have committed unearmarked contributions to rapid and flexible funds such as the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The PBF's work is an example of bringing the United Nations system together, and we urge new donors to support its activities. It is to the benefit of the Security Council to increase its interaction and cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). The PBC is a unique platform that gathers together a diverse set of actors, enabling closer cooperation and coordination across the United Nations system and together with local actors on the ground on a broad range of complex and emerging challenges to peace and security.

Thirdly, and lastly, it is essential that we draw on all tools, capacities and expertise at our disposal. To that end, we need a networked and inclusive multilateralism in which the entire United Nations family, the World Bank and other international financial institutions, regional organizations, civil-society organizations and the private sector work together. In that regard, it is vital for the Council to listen to, and further engage with, civil society, not least women's organizations.

In conclusion, while the COVID-19 pandemic has tested multilateral cooperation and its institutions, it has also simultaneously proved our joint purpose and interests in sustaining a strong multilateralism. The Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, with strong support from States Members of the United Nations and civil society, is evidence of the potential of our collective efforts to act and turn the tide on conflict and insecurity. We — the Nordic countries — reiterate our call on all warring parties, State- and non-State actors alike, to heed that appeal and put an end to hostilities. In line with the commitments undertaken in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations, we must catalyse our power for reinvigorated multilateralism, increased cooperation and global solidarity. As we continue to respond to the crises that unfold across the world, this is our opportunity to build back better and greener for a sustainable, climate-resilient and peaceful future, in full support of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Decade of Action.

Annex 28**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, Cristian Espinosa Cañizares**

[Original: Spanish]

Let me begin by congratulating Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on having organized this debate. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the presentations made by Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves; the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed; the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Munir Akram; the Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency, Ibrahim Mayaki; and the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Sir Hilary Beckles. I will touch on three elements central to this debate.

First, how can the Security Council best contribute to overcoming the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic? In that regard, it is important to recall that, although the Security Council, by adopting resolution 2532 (2020), on COVID-19, joined the global efforts to combat the pandemic, it took four months for it to do so. Several calls had to be made by the Secretary-General and States Members of the United Nations, including a joint communiqué by 172 countries — Ecuador had the honour of being one of its initial proponents — before the Council finally devised a series of measures relevant to the efforts to mitigate and combat the coronavirus pandemic. But the Security Council can make up for lost time if it focuses on promoting and ensuring the effective implementation of the resolution, and, if possible, extending it so that the general cessation of hostilities in all situations as well as the humanitarian pause can last indefinitely, until the end of this global health crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be a vector of insecurity, exacerbating conditions on the ground not only in conflict zones but throughout the world, owing both to growing social unrest and violent extremism, including by terrorist groups.

Secondly, climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time because it affects the ability of all countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Goal 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions. Rising global temperatures, loss of biodiversity, desertification and drought, rising sea levels and natural disasters are harming well-being, livelihoods and ecosystems. Their adverse effects lead to food insecurity, unemployment, inequality and social tensions, with devastating humanitarian consequences.

Combating climate change requires the increased provision of means of implementation — adequate financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer — to developing countries. Impacts on ecosystems, overexploitation and the illegal trade in wildlife can amplify the transmission of zoonotic and infectious diseases, which brings me to my third, and final, point: prevention as a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding.

Peace and security are not isolated elements but, rather, the result of efforts to counteract, and in particular to prevent, the root causes of conflict. That requires capacity-building as well as early-warning mechanisms based on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

The Security Council has the responsibility to support such prevention mechanisms. It must also promote and implement resolutions 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security. Finally, in

coordination with the Economic and Social Council, it should take account of the economic dimensions of armed conflicts and promote initiatives aimed at ensuring stable contexts for the involvement of civil society, academia and the private sector, so that the fabric of society in crisis areas can be rebuilt and made stronger and societies become more resilient.

Annex 29**Statement by the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

El Salvador reaffirms its commitment to peacebuilding and sustaining peace as a fundamental part of the work of the United Nations. We would highlight the close linkages that exist among peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and international cooperation.

El Salvador believes that the current crisis resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exposed existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Beyond its impacts on health, it has had profound social, economic and political consequences. It has given rise to major challenges in terms of peace and security and has the potential to trigger or intensify violence and conflicts, which could reverse the achievements registered in recent years in terms of peace.

In that respect, El Salvador believes that the persistent contemporary challenges to international peace and security, including as inequality and climate change, have made clear that the best way to prevent conflicts is through the effective implementation of commitments on sustainable development and the protection and promotion of human rights.

Based on the experience it gained in its peace process and the challenges it currently faces, El Salvador recognizes the importance of implementing coherent, coordinated and multidimensional responses to current challenges. In that context, El Salvador believes that the main challenge facing the United Nations peacebuilding architecture is to tackle factors of instability and conflict. Current tensions and the potential increase in the number of conflicts in States and societies as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic require a focus on the need for a stronger peacebuilding architecture. To that end, El Salvador wishes to emphasize the following aspects.

First, coherence and complementarity among the principal organs of the United Nations are seen as essential to peacebuilding. It is vital to strengthen the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and ensure its closer cooperation with other United Nations bodies, while abiding by their respective mandates. Likewise, we deem it relevant to support efforts to ensure greater flexibility in the PBC's methods of work and an increase in the number of countries, regions and issues under its consideration.

Secondly, we consider it necessary to accelerate and intensify the implementation of the resolutions on women and peace and security and on youth, peace and security — issues that, from El Salvador's perspective, should remain on the Security Council's agenda. Initiatives and solutions must be inclusive and people-centred, which implies the systematic inclusion of women and young people in peace processes and decision-making processes.

Thirdly, El Salvador believes that ensuring that peacebuilding processes have sufficient, predictable and sustained resources remains the greatest challenge. In the context of the global economic recession, which is putting considerable pressure on the system for coping with the pandemic and its effects, we run the risk of seeing peacebuilding initiatives being weakened. In that respect, we consider it relevant to strengthen the commitment of Member States to maintaining and increasing their investments in peacebuilding initiatives in order to contribute to post-pandemic reconstruction.

El Salvador believes that, in order to achieve all of the goals I mentioned, we must strengthen the linkages between peacebuilding architecture review processes and the repositioning of the United Nations system, with the objective of ensuring that those processes can mutually reinforce one another and allow progress to be made through a more coherent and holistic approach to peacebuilding, while laying out a clear and concrete path towards fulfilling the commitments that remain pending.

Finally, in the context of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization and the beginning of the Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals, political will on the part of Member States is key to translating commitments into concrete and tangible results, in line with our promise to leave no one behind set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is the Organization's most important instrument for conflict prevention.

Annex 30**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations**

While there has been an overall decline in violent conflicts over the past two decades, peacelessness has prevailed. Today fissiparous tendencies, fuelled by ethnic and religious tensions, increasing socioeconomic divisions and the marginalization of “we the peoples”, underdevelopment, scarcity of resources, international instability, climate change and now the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, are the most recognized contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.

But unjust global governance and lack of political will also contribute to peacelessness and conflict. When States are denied an equal voice, when the rule of law is violated with impunity and internationally agreed agreements are not respected or implemented, States are forced to find solutions elsewhere. When the United Nations abrogated its responsibilities at the behest of the Powers at the time, the Eritrean people were forced to wage a bloody 30-year armed struggle for independence.

When the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and the United States refused to shoulder their moral and legal obligations as witnesses and guarantors of the Algiers Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, or to enforce the final and binding delimitation and demarcation decisions of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, Eritreans were forced to defend their nation, hence the prolonging of the national service programme. Today Eritrea and Ethiopia enjoy warm and cordial relations in spite of the international community’s silence and abrogation of responsibility, because the current leadership of Ethiopia decided that it was time to abide by its treaty obligations and the rule of law.

The unjust nine-year-long Security Council sanctions against the State of Eritrea, from 2009 to 2018, also contributed to the prolonging of the conflict and to the peacelessness that held back development and peace in the region. A mishandled global war on terror exacerbated peace and security in the Horn region; lives were needlessly lost and opportunities, too. The illicit flows of arms and overall global militarization also have their consequences. The hopeless and the poor have been lured into transnational criminal networks that have wreaked havoc in societies everywhere.

The current pandemic has forced us all to pay heed to our vulnerabilities and structural flaws. Social justice remains the only response to the growing economic inequalities within countries and regions. Our interconnected and interdependent world requires an invigorated multilateral system that is responsive, one that will leave no voice unheard.

As we enter the Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals, it is imperative that we all work together and redouble our efforts to mitigate the setbacks due to COVID-19, in order to fully realize the aspirations of our peoples as envisioned in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Today, 25 years after Beijing, we are faced with stark reminders that women still bear the brunt of most calamities; with COVID-19, it is no different. But without peace, there can be no development.

The Security Council must not be used to advance the agendas of the powerful against small and vulnerable nations; it should serve as the moral voice for all and work to preserve and promote peace.

Annex 31**Statement by the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

Modern patterns of violent conflict are fundamentally different from the wars that led to the establishment of the United Nations and informed the organization of its work. The drivers of conflict are continuously changing, and in order to effectively prevent and respond to violence we will have to continue to revise our understanding and adapt our approach. Therefore, the European Union (EU) fully supports the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in holding this highly topical meeting on “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity”.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and its potential implications are a tragic reminder of what constitutes a threat to collective security. The pandemic should be an occasion for us to take an unbiased and dispassionate look at new collective ways of addressing these implications.

In the past, the Security Council dealt with health crises with great potential impact for the security of fragile communities — such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 2000 or the Ebola outbreak in 2014 — by declaring that the spread of the virus was a “threat to international peace and security”. The pandemic situation in which we find ourselves today is therefore not new. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is not yet fully understood.

When Secretary-General António Guterres first called for a global ceasefire in response to COVID-19, on 23 March, fighters in numerous countries expressed their support. But none of them followed through and stopped fighting. We know now that the security impact of the pandemic will not come from voluntary ceasefires. Rather, it will come from the devastating impact it will have on the economy, health structures and social protection. While the levels of political violence and conflict worldwide have remained roughly stable until now, the economic impact of the disease could lead to a global recession or depression that will especially hurt poor States, which may prove more disruptive than the initial health effects of the pandemic.

In addition, pandemics, climate change and environmental degradation exacerbate situations of fragility and vulnerability. When they are laid upon pre-existing crises, additional layers of complexity are added to already fragile systems; this is a fact that has long been recognized by the Security Council. In 2017, the Security Council adopted resolution 2349 (2017), on the need to address climate-related risks to tackle conflict in the Lake Chad basin.

Challenges to peace and security, be they social, developmental, political, economic, health-related or environmental, are interconnected. To address these challenges, we have to move beyond the understanding of conflict that underpinned the establishment of the structure of the United Nations 75 years ago, and in doing so deliver responses that are coordinated and integrated across the agencies and pillars of the United Nations.

The Security Council is the guarantor for collective peace and security, but to deliver on its mandate and address today’s core drivers of conflict and instability, it has to engage with a wide range of actors and understand a complex range of issues. This is ongoing work, and a number of models have already been tested, including horizon-scanning meetings, field trips to, and meetings with, all United Nations agencies and briefings by the heads of development agencies. These approaches should be strengthened and explored further.

The demand for humanitarian aid and post-COVID pandemic relief is increasing, but focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must not be neglected during crises and disasters. The Secretary-General's call for spending 20 per cent of development assistance on conflict-affected peacebuilding should also be heard.

Furthermore, existing centres of expertise can be better utilized. The Secretariat's Climate Security Mechanism, which brings together the expertise of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and covers the pillars related to the environment, development, conflict and peace issues, is an excellent source for cross-sectoral analysis. This analysis should feed into reporting on the security impacts of environmental degradation and climate change for both the General Assembly and the Security Council. We may need more centres of this kind to organize expertise from different areas and achieve effective early warning, prevention and reaction. An example of this is the One Health approach, which brings together experts on human, animal and environmental health.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a useful platform for discussions among a wide range of actors that can inform the work in the Security Council. Lately, the Commission has addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in such areas as the Lake Chad basin and Burkina Faso and delivered advice on the next mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. This has demonstrated its capacity to translate the knowledge on the ground into inputs for the Council's decision-making.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the EU continues to deepen its involvement in combating the root causes of instability and conflicts, in close cooperation with all parts of the United Nations system as well as regional and local partners. In a situation where conflicts caused or exacerbated by climate change and new pandemics threaten to wipe out decades of development achievements, causing countries and their people to fall back in poverty, the EU remains a solid and reliable partner for peace and development.

Annex 32**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations**

I wish to begin by extending my heartfelt gratitude to the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines presidency of the Security Council this month for organizing today's important debate.

Today the international community is facing a global crisis unprecedented since the establishment of the United Nations. The coronavirus disease pandemic has already claimed more than 1 million lives, shattered societies and plunged the global economy into a deep recession. Furthermore, by exacerbating the underlying root causes of armed conflicts, placing limitations on existing peacebuilding action and putting additional pressure on already fragile security, political, socioeconomic and humanitarian environments, the pandemic has left its lasting imprint on all three pillars of the United Nations. At the same time, the climate-change-related crisis has continued to aggravate hitherto fragile situations, including by heightening competition for such scarce resources as land and water, depriving populations of their livelihoods and inducing forced displacements.

Preventing looming calamity must be placed at the very heart of our global peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts. While Governments have the primary responsibility for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the United Nations system can do more to build more peaceful and resilient societies. In this context, we recognize the particular role that the Peacebuilding Commission plays in providing support for peacebuilding efforts and in fulfilling a bridging function across the United Nations system. Preventing and addressing overlapping and interconnected threats can be successfully accomplished only through coordinated actions across all three pillars of the United Nations system. Accordingly, marshalling effective relations between the main organs accountable for peace and security, development, human rights and the rule of law must become a primary task for the United Nations system today.

Overlooking the hazards triggered by the ongoing crisis will indisputably cause greater instability, particularly in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries, where already-fragile security, humanitarian and social situations can easily explode. Georgia is among those countries that have themselves experienced the grave consequences of the newly emerging global threats. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, our sovereignty and territorial integrity have been systematically targeted by one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Indeed, during the pandemic, the Russian Federation has heightened the scale of its provocations directed against Georgia, in blatant violation of its international obligations and commitments and despite the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire.

Together with military exercises and a military build-up, persistent fortification of the occupation line, the illegal practice of arbitrary detentions, kidnappings, violations of the basic human rights of the conflict-affected people and denial of humanitarian access to Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, the Russian Federation has intensified its use of hybrid warfare tools against Georgia and has been fabricating propagandistic myths to target one of the laboratories of my country's National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health — the Richard Lugar Centre — which plays a central role in the fight against the spread of the coronavirus in Georgia. Notwithstanding this harsh reality, Georgia remains committed to doing its utmost to show care and ensure humanitarian relief for the conflict-affected people who have been carrying the heavy burden of Russia's illegal occupation and its grave consequence in the time of the pandemic.

Let me conclude my remarks by once again calling on the international community to urge the Russian Federation to immediately start fulfilling its international obligations pursuant, first and foremost, to the European Union-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement. Moreover, Georgia stands ready to contribute to the global efforts aimed at strengthening the implementation of the United Nations peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda.

Annex 33**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations**

Guatemala would like to thank the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines presidency of the Security Council during the month of November 2020 for convening today's high-level open video-teleconference on "Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: Contemporary Drivers of Conflict and Insecurity". We would also like to thank all the briefers for their briefings.

Guatemala is a long-standing supporter of efforts aimed at peacebuilding and sustaining peace, calling for a more comprehensive approach among the pillars of peace and security, development and human rights, in order to achieve greater coordination and coherence within the work of the United Nations system and to better fulfil the Organization's mandates. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been a clear reminder that we are not a mere collection of isolated nations; rather, we must work together to ensure a better life for all our peoples. In this regard, it is the clear need for a comprehensive response from the United Nations system in pursuit of a sustainable recovery that must lead the way towards more peaceful and resilient societies.

As a result of our own experience, Guatemala understands the importance of strengthening institutional and governance capacities and of implementing national development priorities, so that we may contribute to the attainment of international agreed goals and consolidate long-lasting peace. But there are still gaps that we need to fill in order to stop the existing drivers of conflict that undermines social and economic resilience. Preventive diplomacy must be at the centre of our efforts. Investing in prevention and peacebuilding efforts provides tangible benefits when responding to a crisis and helps to avoid the damaging and long-lasting effects of conflicts. In this regard, the relation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission is fundamental.

Such contemporary risk factors as extreme weather events, the spread of diseases, humanitarian crises, displacement, increasing poverty, drought and hunger are just some examples of the serious consequences that climate change and environmental degradation can bring to hamper sustaining peace in our societies. Disasters may also exacerbate existing conflicts, alter their shape and duration and even lead to the outbreak of new conflicts and further fuel divisions. For example, during this COVID-19 pandemic, Guatemala and its region have been affected by tropical storms, which has proved how these weather events can subvert achievements and further increase the existing pressure on livelihoods, national budgets and governance.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. When we discuss climate change and security, we are talking about an intrinsically symbiotic relationship; one threat exacerbates the other. That is why the magnitude of the challenge of climate change is becoming increasingly apparent and requires its thorough consideration by all members of the Council, permanent and non-permanent.

We highlight the need for the Security Council to continue exploring ways to strengthen prevention, early-detection systems and operational action so as to avoid conflicts resulting from climate change, extreme weather events and poor natural-resource management, taking into account community tensions and governance.

Annex 34**Statement by the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, T.S. Tirumurti**

While the absolute number of war-related deaths has been declining globally since 1946, incidents of conflict and violence are still on the rise, with many conflicts today becoming far more fragmented and waged between such non-State actors as political militias, criminal entities and international terrorist groups. While varying widely across regions, organized crime and gang violence have killed far more people than armed conflicts have.

Technological advances are also contributing to the changing nature of conflict. There are concerns about the potential for artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to worsen cyber, physical and biological attacks, for example, by making them more precisely targeted, harder to attribute and easier for small groups—perhaps even “lone wolves” — to carry out. Terrorist and radical extremist groups today have unprecedented access to the general public through the Internet, which allows for more efficient and effective recruitment, incitement, and propaganda, as well as for easier purchase of weapons and illegal money transfers. Both State and non-State actors can use AI-enabled deep learning to create “deep fakes” that have the potential to fuel misinformation, division and political instability.

Emerging technologies are also lowering the barriers to the acquisition of biological weapons — toxic substances or diseases used to harm or kill humans, livestock and crops. There are concerns that advances in AI and 3-D printing could facilitate attacks by automating the development and deployment of weapons and weapon systems, thereby transferring responsibility over life and death from human moral systems to complex data systems, devoid of any ethical compass.

In addition to the foregoing, breakdowns in the rule of law, the absence of State institutions, illicit economic gain and the scarcity of resources have also become drivers of conflict. Moreover, in recent times, conflicts have become longer, more protracted and less responsive to traditional forms of resolution. Finally, terrorist forces continue to be relentless in their pursuit of fomenting terror and insecurity.

While the United Nations was designed 75 years ago as an institution to manage relations among States as the world reeled from the horrors of two world wars, today’s new, complex and more sophisticated drivers of conflict require a holistic, innovative, inclusive and multi-stakeholder response. It is in this context that India views peacebuilding as a powerful deterrent to violent conflict. India recognizes the primacy of national Governments and authorities in identifying and driving priorities, strategies and activities for sustaining peace at all stages of conflict and emphasizes that inclusiveness is the key to advancing national peacebuilding objectives.

As one of the largest troop-contributing countries in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations, India is proud of the accomplishments that the United Nations has made in peacekeeping. We are also proud to have contributed to that success. Nevertheless, peacekeeping alone is not sufficient to sustain peace and security. Peacekeeping ably aided and supplemented by peacebuilding will help transition to sustainable peace and development.

Inadequate financing for peacebuilding activities has so far remained a stumbling block. For peacebuilding efforts to be more effective, there is an urgent need for predictable and sustainable financing.

Bringing about social cohesion in divided societies and building trust in Government is easier said than done. Ensuring that conflict-ridden countries do not

slip back into chaos will require the creation of strong governance structures that enhance trust between citizens and Governments, guarantee delivery of essential services and increase avenues for citizen participation in governance. As the world's largest democracy, we are convinced that effective and strong governance structures will help stabilize peace, safeguard fundamental rights, protect the rule of law and make governance representative, transparent, responsive and people-centric.

India's contributions in the area of people-centric peacebuilding in the post-conflict reconstruction work of Afghanistan is well known. Even in the face of repeated terrorist attacks, India has persisted and invested in grass-roots and impactful development partnership projects worth over \$3 billion, covering all provinces of Afghanistan. For instance, in the sphere of education, training and capacity-building, India has assisted the Government of Afghanistan in setting up the Afghanistan National Agricultural Sciences and Technology University in Kandahar. It is the first of its kind in Afghanistan.

India's fundamental approach to peacebuilding efforts is to respect national ownership and to be guided by Member States' development priorities. For example, last year, 25 senior civil servants, including the Solicitor General and Legal Secretary, Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries from key governmental ministries of the Gambia, trained at India's National Centre for Good Governance to understand best practices in field administration and good governance. The programme was conducted under our flagship Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme, which annually assists more than 160 countries through scholarships in the area of capacity-building.

Going forward, India will continue to be a force multiplier for peacebuilding with an emphasis on the people-centric approach, not just in its neighbourhood, but also in Africa, the Pacific, the Caribbean Islands and beyond.

The twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) is taking place in a world where 2 billion people live in countries affected by conflict. In those conflict-ridden countries, women are working against tremendous odds to build and sustain peace. Ensuring a gender perspective and women's participation in peacebuilding is critical, including in prevention, disarmament, protection in displacement settings, peacekeeping, policymaking and reconstruction.

The Council will recall that the United Nations first-ever all women formed police unit (FPU) was from India and stationed in Liberia. Due to their dedication, professionalism and motivation, the all-female members of the FPU proved to be strong, visible role models, gaining world-wide attention and illustrating the significant contribution that women can make towards the provision of security. Today, India's female engagement team members are also playing an important role in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Lastly, the enablement of youth as an active agent in peacebuilding cannot be considered without considering such challenges that they tend to face, owing to conflict situations resulting in loss of education opportunities, a lack of employable skills and the destruction of a stable family environment. The wider socioeconomic needs of young people are often ignored in post-conflict contexts, as they are not seen as a vulnerable group. With their youthful energy, capabilities and ability to adapt to new technological trends, it is important to provide youth with training opportunities, especially in the digital space, so that they can take an active part in peacebuilding.

We are convinced that people-centric, gender-sensitive and technologically primed solutions and democratic institutions of governance that give all stakeholders

a say in creating a better future is the biggest guarantee for success of peacebuilding and for sustaining peace.

Annex 35**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Majid Takht Ravanchi**

I would like to begin by highlighting this principled assumption that conflicts can be resolved comprehensively and permanently only when all their root causes and drivers are addressed justly, properly and in a comprehensive manner, particularly through an enhanced national ownership over related peace and political processes, with the broadest possible participation of all parties, as well as wider regional and international facilitation and support.

This must be the guiding principle in dealing with conflicts, and, accordingly, all drivers of such situations, whether new or old, must be taken into account proportionate to the roles they play in the emergence or escalation of conflicts. In this context, due attention must be paid to addressing the contemporary drivers of conflicts, such as the impacts of climate change or pandemics where there is credible evidence that they are among the risk factors deteriorating the conflict.

At the same time, the unique nature of contemporary drivers of conflicts require new approaches and innovative measures to address them in an appropriate and realistic manner. For instance, it does not seem that the effects of climate change in terms of the emergence or escalation of conflicts can be properly addressed through the application of traditional measures such as sanctions. Rather, such effects might be better addressed through extending economic and financial assistance to the societies concerned. These are exactly the areas where the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council can play an effective role in the amelioration of the situation.

Among the new factors escalating and prolonging conflicts, one can refer to the imposition of unilateral coercive economic measures. Such acts, applied extensively in recent years, have played an important role in certain cases in deteriorating and protracting conflicts through obstructing the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, hampering reconstruction efforts, disrupting the peace and reconciliation processes, and accordingly delaying the settlement of conflicts, thus, leading to the further suffering of afflicted peoples.

Unfortunately, the effects of unilateral coercive economic measures have become more devastating and horrible when combined with other new elements, such as the coronavirus disease pandemic. They worsen the economic situation of the conflict-torn societies concerned and prevent access to humanitarian goods, particularly food, medicine and medical equipment by the peoples in need. And the result is crystal clear — those who are most vulnerable unfortunately suffer the most.

We also draw attention to impacts of sanctions imposed by the Security Council in certain situations where no action was even necessary. As a result, such measures have not only seriously violated the sovereign rights of the State concerned, but also lead to effects detrimental to its security and stability.

While the new drivers of conflicts require proper attention by the Council, that must not be at the price of neglecting or underestimating traditional drivers of conflicts, such as acts of aggression, foreign occupation, external interference and the like, which continue to play an important role in the emergence, escalation and prolongation of conflicts in many parts of the world.

Lastly, the Security Council's efforts in resolving conflicts can be effective only when, in addition to adopting realistic approaches in addressing them, they ensure the non-discriminatory application of laws to all parties to conflicts.

Annex 36**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations**

As we mark 75 years since the founding of the United Nations, we celebrate what has been achieved while reflecting on what we have learned. With the intersecting global crises of the coronavirus disease and climate change impacting in myriad ways our societies, we are once again reminded that our nations and our lives are deeply interlinked, and of the need for coherent and concerted multilateral action to tackle our common problems.

The challenges we are facing today are great and complex, driven by unsustainable growth and development, or the devastating interaction of virology and globalization. We must respond to those challenges in a holistic way, taking full account of the complex interconnected reality of our contemporary world.

With this in mind, we believe that the Security Council must not simply apply twentieth-century definitions and parameters when addressing threats to peace and security in the twenty-first century. Such an approach, which fails to take account of the wider picture, leads to partial responses and subpar outcomes.

The Security Council has a clear mandate under Chapter VII to decide on action with respect to threats to peace. Unfortunately, too often we fail to agree on a common understanding of what constitutes a threat, and this can undermine the Council's ability to take meaningful action.

The vicious cycle of conflict is both a driver and result of poverty, food insecurity, inequality and displacement. It is no coincidence that the biggest humanitarian emergencies of our time — in Yemen, the Sahel and Syria — are also home to some of the most protracted conflicts. Responses under Article 39 must take account of these key drivers of conflict.

Addressing these drivers, supporting gender equality, promoting and protecting human rights and building resilience in our communities and countries to the impacts of climate change can prevent conflict, including, Mr. President, in Caribbean island communities like your own. By taking full account of these issues, the Council can more effectively contribute to building sustainable peace, using a comprehensive approach to preventing and resolving conflict.

We are not suggesting that the Security Council should reinvent itself as a body that focuses on sustainable development or climate change. The United Nations is a complex system, and different parts must rightly lead on different aspects as mandated under the Charter of the United Nations, but, as with any complex system, it is how the different elements function in unison that makes it effective. When the Council meets to consider specific situations or thematic concerns, it cannot do so in a vacuum.

Too often, the three pillars of the United Nations work — peace and security, human rights, and development — are portrayed as parallel tracks with no intersection, rather than three columns that together bear the weight of the world's aspirations. Thankfully there are notable examples of when we have collectively overcome this false narrative.

The Peacebuilding Commission's success in bridging the gaps between the organs and entities of the United Nations and other international and regional actors is to be commended. The agreement in 2016 of the symbiotic Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262, on sustaining peace

“at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions”, was a landmark moment, although its potential has yet to be fully realized.

And the agreement in 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, under Irish and Kenyan stewardship, charts a complex course towards a world transformed through the Sustainable Development Goals, predicated not on a narrow understanding of progress, but on the three dimensions of sustainable development and an acknowledgement of the interplay among our economies, societies and environment.

People-centred and responsive action by the Security Council, and by the United Nations system more broadly, can support Governments in their efforts to build social cohesion and address inequality, which can help build and sustain peace. Those efforts can and should contribute to addressing the contemporary challenges we face, be it climate change, a global health pandemic, conflict or humanitarian need, and, vitally, the connections linking them.

Ireland, as an incoming member of the Security Council, will not lose sight of this understanding as we seek to support the United Nations collective efforts towards building and sustaining peace.

Annex 37**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations**

Italy thanks the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for organizing this open debate, which offers the opportunity to discuss crucial topics for the future of the United Nations.

Giving substance to the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda means looking in a thoughtful way at the future of the United Nations. The United Nations capacity is unparalleled and must be fully exploited by improving synergy and coordination among all its actors at Headquarters and on the ground. Italy believes that increasing its support for the most vulnerable countries remains an absolute priority, and it will also promote such priority in the context of the upcoming Italian presidency of the Group of 20 (G-20) in 2021.

The unprecedented challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) must be transformed into opportunities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace at all levels, as well as informing the ongoing review process of the peacebuilding architecture to which Italy remains committed to contribute. We must avoid that hard-won gains in the areas of peace, security, developments and human rights be reversed.

In this framework, we should stress, among other things, the importance of further strengthening the existing partnerships between the United Nations and various international financial institutions and regional organizations to develop coherent and comprehensive responses to complex and interrelated challenges.

In this effort, it is crucial to involve local communities and the private sector, as well. Only a truly concerted effort at the global level will be effective in dealing with the consequences of the current crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic shows us the need to promote the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda through a coordinated and multilateral response in different areas.

Global health remains a fundamental precondition for peace, stability and prosperity and interacts with the tripartite peace-humanitarian-development nexus. This is the reason why, from the very beginning of the global emergency, Italy has strongly supported international solidarity, actively advocating for an international alliance to advance the research on a vaccine against COVID-9.

As the incoming President of the G-20 and in the framework of our partnership with the United Kingdom in hosting the twenty-sixth United Nations Climate Change Conference, we will strive to ensure that climate action be the foundation of the post-pandemic recovery. We firmly believe that climate change is another key factor that interacts with the peace-humanitarian-development nexus. Climate change did not pause because of Covid-19.

Next year there will be the opportunity to build international momentum on climate action through additional major events, including the Food Systems Summit and the World Health Summit, which Italy will host together with the European Commission. In both cases, specific attention will need to be paid to the strong interrelations among climate change, food systems and public health.

The pandemic must further push our research towards developing a whole-of-system response based on coordination, partnerships and the flexible use of existing platforms. The Peacebuilding Commission has proactively adapted its programme of work in order to address the challenges of the current situation, and a better-financed Peacebuilding Fund has a crucial role to play in supporting a conflict-sensitive

international response to the pandemic, supporting efforts by local communities and fostering a coordinated peacebuilding response to COVID-19.

There are several priority areas in which Italy stands ready to contribute. In a state of emergency like the one we are experiencing, it is of the utmost importance that everyone has access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food. In this spirit, Italy is committed to support the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme and all relevant United Nations actors in their efforts to prevent a global food crisis, and has been promoting the Food Coalition through the FAO to mobilize expertise, provide policy support, establish a space for dialogue and promote initiatives focused on the creation of more resilient and sustainable food systems.

The pandemic has reminded us of the importance of fully implementing the women and peace and security agenda, as well as the youth, peace and security agenda. Women and girls have been particularly exposed to sexual and gender-based violence and to the unequal sharing of responsibilities. We must redouble our commitment to achieving gender parity and ensuring that women participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

Annex 38**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ishikane Kimihoro**

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Your Excellency Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for convening this open debate. It is very timely for the Security Council to discuss multifaceted challenges to peace and security amid the intergovernmental process of the 2020 peacebuilding architecture review, co-facilitated by the Permanent Representatives of your country and New Zealand.

I wish to share Japan's views on the questions posed in your concept note (S/2020/1064, annex), namely, the lessons from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the climate crisis, closer collaboration among the United Nations bodies and the integrated approach across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to tackle contemporary challenges to peace and security.

Japan regards COVID-19, climate change and other persistent development challenges through the lens of human security. They are threats of another nature compared to armed conflicts but have adverse effects on regional stability and eventually on peace and security by imposing a burden on people's survival, livelihood and dignity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put to the test the resilience of national health systems in many countries, and its socioeconomic impacts will inevitably hit the most vulnerable people. Nationally owned measures supported by effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are the key not only to combating the virus, but to earning people's trust in Government, which is a precondition for building and sustaining peace.

This is the first lesson learned and the reason why Japan emphasizes the importance of institution-building throughout this year's peacebuilding architecture review process. We call on others to take advantage of the quinquennial opportunity to strengthen the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) by promoting focused discussion on institution-building support.

Climate-related natural disasters are compromising human security, and in places where the communities lack resilience, they become a multiplier of conflict risk. Our response must be people-centred, context-specific and prevention-oriented and aim to protect and empower all people and communities. Our actions must be comprehensive, breaking down silos and taking full account of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. This is the second lesson we draw from another contemporary driver of conflict and insecurity — climate change.

How can we strengthen the United Nations peacebuilding architecture so that it facilitates system-wide collaboration capable of proposing integrated actions across the United Nations system? In Japan's view, the PBC has much to offer and improve itself.

“The main purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies” (*General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 98*).

These are the words of our Heads of States and Governments, who decided to establish a Peacebuilding Commission in 2005.

The PBC should deepen substantive discussions on critical components of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, such as institution-building, and become the primary platform for exchanging good practices and lessons learned, engaging with

countries willing to discuss their priorities, raising awareness, mobilizing technical and financial support and strengthening partnerships within and beyond the United Nations system.

Japan, as the Vice-Chair of the PBC for 2020, looks forward to a fruitful outcome of the peacebuilding architecture review process.

Annex 39**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Minister of Kenya to the United Nations, Michael K. Kiboino**

I commend the Security Council presidency for the month of November for convening this open debate. Noting that the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity are increasingly of a political, socioeconomic, health and environmental nature, we are confident that this debate will serve as a platform to exchange views on the security implications of contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity, as well as the role of the Security Council in fostering an integrated and coherent whole-of-system response approach.

The Charter of the United Nations envisions a preventive diplomatic strategy that would require the Security Council to work in coherence with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, under Chapter IV, Article 11 and Chapter X, Article 65, respectively, to enable “the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations”.

Consequently, for the Council to effectively fulfil its mandate, it is necessary to consider the relevant economic, political and social dimensions of conflict. The various briefings given earlier have further reminded us that building and keeping peace is a shared responsibility. They underscored the need for strengthened coherence and collaboration among the Security Council, Governments, subregional and regional organizations, local peacebuilders, civil society and academia in order to ensure the sustainability of peace, security, development, human rights, the rule of law and justice.

In keeping with the spirit of African-owned and -led peacebuilding efforts, my delegation particularly welcomes the Council’s engagement with the African Union Development Agency, which continues to identify development and peacebuilding priorities and coordinate regional projects under Agenda 2063.

With regard to development, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, underdevelopment and insecurity are intricately linked, particularly in developing countries. We therefore appreciate the Secretary-General’s ongoing three-track call for reform in greater collaboration across the United Nations peace and security pillar, the development system and management.

Indeed, the three founding pillars of the United Nations system — peace and security, human rights and development — recognized that these elements were mutually reinforcing and envisaged an operational strategy, whereby addressing the root causes of conflict would take a comprehensive approach, including the eradication of poverty and building resilient and inclusive governance institutions with tangible results for the people on the ground without leaving anyone out.

The year 2020 inaugurates the Decade of Action to accelerate our delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals. In Kenya, we continue to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals in various sectors inter alia, the formulation of our national action plan on women and peace and security, and peace operations training curricula.

With regard to pandemics, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, global health emergencies, such as the Ebola crisis, have had significant adverse impact on social cohesion, food security and economic development, leading to a reversal of gains made in peacebuilding processes particularly in West Africa and the Sahel.

Although the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected big and small economies, there has been a greater impact on the work of local peacebuilders and peacekeeping missions particularly in regions already experiencing fragility and conflict, as well as in refugee and internally displaced persons camps.

The Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2532 (2020) were an important step in recognizing that conditions of violence and instability in conflict situations can exacerbate the pandemic and that inversely the pandemic can exacerbate the adverse humanitarian impact of conflict situations.

In Kenya, we saw the value of collectivizing the response to the impact of the pandemic through the pooling of resources and working with multiple levels of stakeholders to address those challenges. Our COVID-19 national task force consists of a team of experts cutting across the fields of health, law, safety and security, not to mention economists and communication experts.

Concerning climate change, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, studies have shown that the majority of regions impacted by climate change also host a substantive number of multilateral peace operation missions, including the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. In the Horn of Africa, pastoralist communities have become increasingly vulnerable to climate variability — a situation that has proved to be both a root cause of and exacerbator to conflict within the context of dwindling pastures and reduced water sources.

With rising sea-levels, climate change constitutes an existential threat among small island and developing States, as it touches on the very existence of statehood and territory. The Council needs to show its commitment to addressing the impact of climate on security through drawing relevant advice and specific data from key international and regional instruments, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Environment Programme.

In the area of climate action, the Government of Kenya has established policies and legal climate-change frameworks, including the National Climate Change Action Plan, to mainstream climate actions into our development planning processes.

Annex 40**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations, Christian Wenaweser**

Liechtenstein is grateful to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for continuing Security Council discussions on the contemporary drivers of conflict in an open format. The systematic negligence of human security in the Council's work limits its ability to meaningfully implement its mandate, even on the most restrictive reading, and makes the Council an irrelevant actor in increasingly prevalent crises of human security. Attempts by some members to restrain the Council to the so-called "hard" security issues of war and armed conflict point to an outdated paradigm of peace and security with a myopic focus on militarized causes and solutions.

The Council first considered the link between climate and security in 2007 (see S/PV.5663). Yet, the five years since the conclusion of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change have been the hottest on record, and it is increasingly possible that the next five will see the world's temperature rise by 1.5°C — a threshold deemed the point of no return during the Paris negotiations. Liechtenstein is pleased that the Council increasingly recognizes the value of addressing the secondary impacts of climate change, such as involuntary migration, poverty, the loss of livelihoods and tensions between farmers and herders.

Liechtenstein also continues to support efforts to tap into expertise across the United Nations development system, such as the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs-United Nations Development Programme-United Nations Environment Programme Climate Security Mechanism. Systematic references to the impact of climate change on Council situations, particularly those outside of the African continent, are necessary and long overdue. But the Council must also address the root cause of these impacts. A small number of its members combined are responsible for more than half of global carbon dioxide emissions, and must urgently work to reduce them.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has led to wide-ranging human rights restrictions and increased risks of mass poverty and hunger, massive negative impacts on education, rising inequality and heightened social tensions — and, as such, generated a considerable human security cost. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are our blueprint for building back better and a road map for sustaining peace based on international law, human rights, cooperation, solidarity and multilateralism. Liechtenstein is pleased that the Council has addressed COVID-19, albeit in a limited manner, and encourages it to build on this precedent by taking on a human security-centred approach. This could include a Council contribution to system-wide discussions on the negative security impacts of the pandemic, including, but not limited to, the areas of climate and biodiversity, poverty and hunger, health, education, gender, freedom of expression and information and privacy.

The pandemic has exacerbated what the Secretary-General has identified as the main threat to our societies — eroding trust in our institutions. Challenges to the rule of law and attacks on democratic processes, even in societies with long-held democratic traditions, must be met with responsible leadership, long-term policy thinking, stronger commitments against corruption and organized crime and an honest discussion about information and the role of social media. The fulfilment of SDG 16 is key to achieving sustainable development and ensuring that the Council lives up to its mandate.

Annex 41

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations

Malta thanks Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for holding today's open debate on the topic "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity". We also thank today's briefers for sharing their invaluable insights and experiences.

The concept note (see S/2020/1064, annex) states that no nation is an island unto itself, and, as an island State, we could not agree more. The coronavirus disease pandemic was unforeseen and unexpected and further underlined the fact that certain challenges do not recognize national borders. Such situations call for more cooperation and a collective response, not isolationism.

Unfortunately, the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic is likely to be with us for years to come, and we must focus on ensuring that results achieved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development do not suffer major setbacks. Negative impacts need to be mitigated insofar as possible. The development and security nexus is stronger than ever, and our actions today will determine the results we achieve tomorrow. In this context, we once again echo the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire.

The multilateral system is more important than ever before, but its efficacy depends on our willingness to continue to invest in this system. Just few weeks ago, we adopted the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 75/1). It outlines our achievements, but also warns against complacency. We are not here to celebrate, but to take action.

Let us never forget that the scope of the United Nations, born from the ashes of two devastating global conflicts, was to achieve peace and security. Multilateral institutions do not survive without political will, and it is up to us to redouble our efforts to strengthen this system. The international community needs to have all the right tools to ensure that it continues to adapt to an ever-changing world. This, too, applies to the Security Council — and, as the organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, it must be quick and sufficiently nimble to identify and tackle new challenges.

The Peacebuilding Commission continues to play an important role in developing and promoting peacebuilding good practices, and this year's review will serve as an opportunity to continue to build on what has already been achieved. Furthermore, this year marks the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. We again take this opportunity to highlight the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in all stages of peacebuilding. Malta launched its national action plan on women and peace and security on 30 October.

Climate change will have a devastating impact on us all if we do not address it in an urgent and holistic manner. The clock is ticking. This pressing issue cannot be left on the back burner, as any further delays will continue only to aggravate an already worrisome situation. In just a few decades, we have moved from a healthy, green planet teeming with life to a less vibrant place that is losing its natural beauty and biodiversity at an alarming rate. A lack of action in the field of climate change will have serious repercussions on peace and security caused by competition over increasingly limited resources, the loss of agricultural land, crippled health systems and mass displacement due to rising sea levels and the lack of opportunities.

It is our duty to identify and act on these new and evolving challenges in a timely manner. We live in an era in which scientific knowledge is growing at an exponential rate, and in which the transfer of information can happen within seconds. We must use this to our advantage by strengthening cooperation and improving the sharing of knowledge. By doing so, we will be better placed to predict and prevent new challenges — or, at least, be adequately prepared for them. We owe all of this to our citizens and to future generations.

Annex 42**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico welcomes today's debate, which is particularly timely, as it coincides with discussions surrounding the twin resolutions on the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (General Assembly resolution 70/262 and resolution 2282 (2016)), during which the Security Council and the General Assembly will endorse the five-year review. Given that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a facilitator in the process, we welcome the fact that today's debate dovetails with the General Assembly process.

International security is multidimensional. The threats faced by States are not only military and political; they are also related to economic and social development challenges and other phenomena, such as pandemics and environmental challenges, among others. Therefore, these threats cannot be addressed in isolation and should not necessarily be overcome in that manner. While the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, other principal organs of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), also have a key role to play in preventing development challenges from becoming a threat to peace.

The pandemic has demonstrated the need to strengthen global governance based on international law, cooperation and solidarity. The Security Council bears special responsibility in the quest for global solutions. If the Security Council is slow to respond or is paralysed and, in addition, takes no action on the ground, the narrative projected affects the entire Organization and multilateralism as a whole. The members of the Security Council, in particular its permanent members, must shoulder their responsibility, with strict adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is an extremely critical juncture for conflict-affected countries and for building and consolidating peace. Our Organization is currently assessing how the pandemic will exacerbate already dire situations, such as violence, challenges to gender equality, poverty, weak Government institutions and other shortcomings that could constitute the structural causes of conflict or lead to a relapse into conflict.

The Security Council must ensure that its solutions for conflict areas, as well as its definitions of preventive peacekeeping or peacebuilding and special political missions, include contributions to, and support for, development and the implementation of a coherent approach to conflict prevention and resolution that follows the common thread of sustaining peace, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/262 and resolution 2282 (2016), and advances the implementation of national goals and priorities.

The Security Council should continue to build on the advisory role of the PBC and establish clear and effective communication channels among the peacebuilding architecture, in particular the PBC, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations development system.

Annex 43**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Omar Hilale**

[Original: French]

First of all, allow me to congratulate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. I thank the presidency for convening today's debate and for its selection of the topic for discussion.

I would also like to thank the briefers for their comprehensive statements.

Morocco welcomes the topic of today's debate, which allows us to go beyond our usual discussions and incorporate into the peacebuilding equation elements that, regrettably, are inadequately addressed, such as climate change and health risks, food insecurity and the impact of the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Today's debate also enables us to reaffirm some of the cardinal principles of peacebuilding, including the need to work together, while demonstrating coordination and consistency.

As a fervent supporter of the principles of peacebuilding, while adhering to the instructions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Morocco is committed to providing targeted support for friendly countries and prioritizing South-South cooperation within its foreign policy.

Morocco believes that peacebuilding cannot be successful without a holistic vision. First and foremost, prevention must be the priority. In that spirit, Morocco provides political and financial support to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to assist in its prevention activities, through both mediation efforts and the good offices missions of its regional offices.

Secondly, Morocco was swift to adopt the concept of the peace, security and development nexus, while promoting the holistic vision in its cooperation efforts. Morocco is proud to be able to support several countries, in particular in Africa, by providing experts in agriculture, electrification, water management and other areas, commensurate with the most pressing needs of the countries concerned.

In its capacity as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Morocco adopted an identical approach — focusing its work on supporting the political process, the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan 2017-2021, which is an ambitious socioeconomic recovery plan, and the rule of law.

Morocco has also been a pioneer in improving cooperation among the PBC, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. For the third consecutive year, the configuration just adopted Security Council recommendations for the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. Capitalizing on its dual role as Chair of the configuration and of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment of the Economic and Social Council, Morocco organized the first joint meeting of the PBC and the Economic and Social Council in 2019 on the sidelines of the high-level event of the Humanitarian Affairs Segment.

Lastly, for decades, Morocco has also been committed to combating the adverse effects of climate change. This commitment increased tenfold following the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Marrakech, and the adoption of our new national energy

strategy, which aims to achieve more than 60 per cent of the country's energy consumption through its own resources. The Kingdom of Morocco is now cited as a model for responsible management of the environment. Expertise developed in this area is also shared with several partners in Africa and beyond.

Several other factors have a critical impact on peacebuilding processes. However, by building on the One UN principle, the United Nations can assist its Member States in identifying the main challenges and areas that need to be prioritized.

In conclusion, taking into account the considerable impact of the pandemic, I would like to stress that the joint efforts of the international community must now be focused on mitigating its negative consequences, the extent of which will be known with certainty only in the coming years. We must ensure that the root causes of conflict are not further exacerbated by this crisis and that, insofar as possible, hard-won peace dividends are not put at risk.

Annex 44**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations, Neville Gertze**

I congratulate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November, and I thank the presidency for organizing today's very relevant and timely open debate on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. I would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and the other briefers for their incisive remarks.

Since the creation of the United Nations, 75 years ago, the international community, the United Nations and its Member States have gained a better and more in-depth understanding of the common drivers and root causes of conflicts. They include, but are not limited to, social, economic and political inequalities, economic downturns, rising levels of unemployment and poverty and weak governance structures. As the world continues to expand and advance, new drivers of conflict have emerged, including climate change, health crises and cyberthreats. Further new challenges are likely to emerge.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has rapidly brought to light the peace and security implications that a global health crisis can have on our world. In the mere eight months since COVID-19 rapidly spread around the world, the pandemic has caused a global financial and employment crisis. It has also widened the gap and created greater social, economic and political inequalities. Those living in conflict zones have become even more vulnerable. The Secretary-General warned in his statement before the Council on 2 July that

“[a]s pre-existing grievances and vulnerabilities become more accentuated and entrenched, the potential for instability and violence only grows” (S/2020/663, *annex 1*).

This pandemic is therefore exacerbating already well-known drivers of conflict and instability.

As I noted in my statement to the Security Council in September during the open debate on the humanitarian impact of environmental degradation on peace and security (S/2020/929, *annex 29*), armed conflicts and violence, their causes, dimensions and their resolutions can be intimately linked to climate change in some instances. Furthermore, climate change threatens to reverse the economic growth and development gains countries have made over the years. Therefore, climate change has been recognized as a threat multiplier, whereby it aggravates pre-existing risks and challenges. The present situation in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin are concrete examples. As the lake continues to shrink, communities that relied on it are bound to struggle. There is growing competition for dwindling resources, and more and more people are migrating to bigger cities. This vicious circle contributes to tensions and, ultimately, the eruption of conflict in the region. Climate change also presents a real threat to coastal States, including our beautiful country, through rising sea levels, which threaten both lives and development progress.

As highlighted in the concept note for today's open debate (S/2020/1064, *annex*), in a presidential statement on behalf of the Security Council dated 11 February 2011, the Security Council reiterated that

“in order to support a country to emerge sustainably from conflict, there is a need for a more comprehensive and integrated approach which incorporates and strengthens coherence between political, security, development, human rights and rule of law activities, and addresses the underlying causes of each conflict.” (S/PRST/2011/4, *third paragraph*)

That statement also highlighted the Council's support for the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and noted the contributions that the Economic and Social Council could make.

The Council should make greater use of the expertise and insight that both the PBC and the Economic and Social Council can provide on their respective focus areas. Such collaboration would serve only to benefit those who are seeking to build peace and security and ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Development. As the world becomes more interconnected and faces multifaceted interdependent challenges, so too should the United Nations system adopt an integrated and coherent whole-of-system approach.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-growing climate crisis have served only to reinforce the idea that the Security Council must tackle and address the multiple root causes of conflicts. The Council should also invest more in prevention mechanisms, including developing, implementing and monitoring early-warning systems. We, as Member States, must also work harder to address these issues nationally and regionally.

In his pre-recorded general debate address to the General Assembly this year, Mr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, underscored that, as we face the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating effects, we should reaffirm our collective commitment to cooperate in a world governed by international law and a multilateral system in which no one should feel left out (see A/75/PV.6). While not perfect, multilateralism and the rules-based order are essential tools in strengthening governance and protecting civil liberties and the fundamental rights of the people we serve in our respective countries. An effective, rules-based multilateral system is our insurance policy against existential threats such as wars, nuclear proliferation, pandemics and climate change. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we continue to defend multilateralism at all costs.

Annex 45**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Yoka Brandt**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands congratulates Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. In addition, the Kingdom of the Netherlands expresses its gratitude to the presidency for convening today's timely and important meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, with a focus on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.

As we know, there are myriad of drivers for conflict and insecurity — and all of these drivers are exacerbated by the impact of the coronavirus. Besides a tragic loss of life, the pandemic heightens tensions in already fragile areas, puts additional pressures on human rights in certain societies, increases public discontent and puts gains made in the area of peacebuilding at risk. Now more than ever, we need an effective and strong United Nations. For the Kingdom of the Netherlands, three elements are of crucial importance for the discussion today: first, United Nations reform; secondly, financing for peacebuilding and, thirdly, mental health and psycho-social support.

First, with regard to United Nations reforms, there is a clear need for increased cross-pillar cooperation, including on the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, to achieve sustainable peacebuilding goals. Operational coherence and parallel progress on development, security and human rights are essential to achieving sustainable peacebuilding goals. Along this line, United Nations actors in the field must pursue cooperation and partnership under the guidance of the Resident Coordinator. The effectiveness of joint coordination is illustrated by the Peacebuilding Fund, of which the Kingdom of the Netherlands is one of the largest donors.

Secondly, regarding financing for peacebuilding, the Kingdom of the Netherlands appreciates that this is a key issue when it comes to peacebuilding efforts. Unfortunately, peacebuilding efforts remain greatly underfinanced, although needs continue to rise. We must come together and take action to ensure sustainable and robust financing in the area of peacebuilding.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the recommendations set out in the 2020 report of the Secretary-General on building and sustaining peace (S/2020/773), and specifically supports the importance of financing mechanisms that, when appropriate, ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. There is value in new funding initiatives such as an annual pledging conference, as well as further action-based discussions on financing and good peacebuilding donorship. Tangible follow-up to the Secretary-General's proposals could also be introduced in those discussions.

Finally, and importantly, it is key to highlight the element of mental health and psychosocial support. As also becomes clear from the worldwide impact of the pandemic, mental and psychosocial distress at the individual and community levels make sustaining social cohesion and peace increasingly challenging. Structurally integrating mental health and psychosocial support into the building and sustaining of peace is of crucial importance in mitigating and avoiding cycles of conflict, countering disintegration and increasing the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts. We cannot build peace on broken minds and broken communities.

We look forward to continuing to work with Member States, actors of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, civil society organizations and other partners to make progress on these important topics.

Annex 46**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, Samson Itegboje**

Allow me, at the outset, to thank the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, His Excellency Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, and the Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for organizing today's open debate. Our appreciation also goes to Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General; Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency; Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies; and Mr. Munir Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council, as well as the other briefers, for their insightful briefings.

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace focus on political processes and political solutions with strategic frameworks to address the complexity of conflict in today's world. Such frameworks are meant to address the fragmentation that exists both within the United Nations system and among Member States. Policy actors have concluded that the best approach to determine the pathway for sustaining peace, after decades of top-down peacebuilding efforts, is bottom-up, which is more inclusive and able to address the grievances that give rise to conflict and those that result from war. Peacebuilding actors need to identify ways to navigate competing demands through integrated response strategies that address the root causes and drivers of conflict and insecurity.

However, contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity include poverty, inequality, terrorism, violent extremism, irregular migration, intercommunal violence, organized crime, the forceful acquisition of natural resources and, recently, the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the ever-growing threat posed by climate change. Those factors contribute significantly to the sustained and challenging security situation, with a cumulative impact on individuals and societies.

Insecurity is also increasingly driven by the reoccurrence of conflicts in certain countries, rather than by the emergence of new ones. Those conflicts are deeply rooted in social, economic and political inequalities, coupled with weak State capacity and bad governance, in addition to various demographic factors such as increased population growth and rapid urbanization. The sum of those factors creates opportunities for violence that has persisted over time and further changed the global security architecture. According to the World Bank and the United Nations, countries experiencing violent conflict are unlikely to make significant progress for a generation, putting the Sustainable Development Goals out of reach for millions.

The COVID-19 pandemic represents a specific and immediate threat to the very survival of the world population, made increasingly difficult owing to the vulnerability of the world's socioeconomic infrastructure. The effects of increasing population, changing demographics, urban crowding and a dynamic geopolitical landscape have further challenged mitigation efforts aimed at the ravaging pandemic.

Nigeria, like many African countries, is more vulnerable to the economic impact of climate change, particularly in relation to the depletion of natural resources, which has long-term environmental implications. Given the importance of agriculture as a main source of livelihood for a sizeable number of people on the continent, such climatic issues often lead to socioeconomic and political exclusion, which tend to aggravate pre-existing tensions within marginalized communities. Those developments explain why conflicts are prevalent on the African continent.

It is also worth knowing that, in conflict-affected countries, where populations already suffer from multiple risks associated with the pandemic, the situation is further worsened by lack of access to markets and the disruption of supply chains and mobility restraint leading to the closure of markets. The inability to maintain social distancing among populations where health and sanitary facilities are inadequate, especially in camps, also presents a challenging security risk scenario, with the potential for high rates of infection to spread easily to communities within proximity. The COVID-19 pandemic has therefore unmasked the varying shades of inequality as well as impacted prospects for resilience and recovery.

The Security Council should therefore rise to the occasion, with cross-cutting engagement in the Peacebuilding Commission's strategic advisory capacity and the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund. That will help to address essential governance gaps and initiate projects and programmes that stimulate socioeconomic and political participation designed with respect to local customs and values of Member States in order to address the root causes of conflict.

International and regional initiatives also play a significant role in addressing conflict and insecurity in the world. The Security Council and the United Nations system, in tandem with States, regional organizations and other stakeholders, must be proactive in preventing conflict from emerging in the first place. However, when conflicts do emerge, all mechanisms must be rolled out to respond and resolve them quickly. To that end, the Council should draw upon all the mechanisms of the United Nations system to address, prevent and respond to conflicts and threats to international peace and security.

My delegation is of the view that an effective long-term strategy needs to be put in place to tackle such issues as a matter of priority. That includes addressing youth unemployment, the marginalization of women, social exclusion, inequality, respect for human rights, creating gainful employment opportunities and building a society based on the rule of law, sustainable growth and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to leave no one behind.

We agree that we must address climate change and its consequences, including the degradation of the ecosystem. The issue of climate change must be integrated into peace efforts, which must in turn be adapted to changing climates and environments. That will, no doubt, require a holistic approach and joint and collaborative effort to tackle the problems of conflict and insecurity.

In conclusion, there is no denying the fact that tackling the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity in the world is a collective responsibility. The entire United Nations system must support national and regional efforts to combat the threats that continuously lead to conflict and insecurity among Member States.

Annex 47**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We welcome the holding of this open debate, which invites us to reflect on the contemporary factors that underlie the emergence of new conflicts or the exacerbation of existing ones. In the current fragile circumstances, this issue takes on even greater significance. We wish to thank the briefers for their lucid presentations.

Throughout its participation in the Security Council as a non-permanent member, Peru had opportunity to closely follow the dynamics of poverty and insecurity affecting various developing countries and to recognize the urgent need to address them. At the same time, we note that there is no one-size-fits-all formula, but that the specificities of each situation, respective national development priorities and the voluntary nature of any process must be taken into consideration.

It is clear that the global challenges imposed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic extend to the field of international security. We have observed how the impact of the disease translates into greater levels of poverty and marginalization, the erosion of confidence in public institutions, loss of political legitimacy due to the postponement of electoral processes, new violations of human rights and the stagnation of peace processes promoted by the United Nations.

Those realities should lead us to strengthen dialogue, prevention and mediation actions and international cooperation. We wish to highlight the validity of the tools for peaceful solutions contemplated in the Charter of the Organization to sustain and develop the collective security system, thereby preventing the emergence of new threats to peace.

The challenge underlying this critical juncture is to register tangible progress in the fight against the disease, while affirming multilateralism as the most appropriate instrument for concerted and supportive action by States and other actors involved, at both the national and international levels, in order to achieve fair, balanced and inclusive results.

In the immediate future, there must be urgent compliance with the global ceasefire called for by Secretary-General António Guterres, which Peru has supported from the very beginning. It is an essential measure to prevent and mitigate the devastating effects of COVID-19 and to strengthen diplomatic action.

Peru also believes it is essential to understand that the growing socioeconomic and environmental impacts of climate change are producing humanitarian crises and conflicts that, due to their scope, may result in threats to international peace and security. Consequently, we believe it necessary for the Council to strengthen and systematize its coordination with the United Nations system, especially with those bodies directly involved in preventing and mitigating the negative effects of climate change.

We stress that such coordination should take into account the competencies and mandates of the various entities of the system while promoting favourable synergies to address the particular needs of and risk, crisis or conflict situations faced by various Member States. We believe that, from the Council's perspective, this implies having timely information on the impact of climate change, regarding both the situations on the Council's agenda and those where it is necessary to act preventively to maintain international peace and security.

I wish to conclude by stressing the importance of greater involvement in these issues by regional and subregional organizations, financial institutions, the private sector, academia and civil society. The Peacebuilding Commission has played a crucial role in that regard, which the international community must acknowledge and support.

Annex 48**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations, Enrique Manalo**

The Philippines congratulates Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November and welcomes today's open debate on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity under the agenda item on peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

According to pundits on international relations, since the end of the Cold War overall levels of conflict have been declining in view of countries' increasing commitments to international norms for dispute settlement and economic interdependence, as well as declining trends in conflict triggers such as social exclusion and ethnic polarization.

Yet the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the climate crisis, two of the main drivers of contemporary conflict and insecurities, are considered to be "developments in reverse," undermining outcomes under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These so-called drivers are context-specific and multidimensional, with direct, indirect and legacy effects on a broad range of important peace and development outcomes.

Given the current realities, the Philippines submits the following views for today's discourse.

With regard to COVID-19, the pandemic has unleashed an unprecedented crisis that has exposed the fragility of societies, and in particular threatened the gains already achieved in finding just and lasting peace in conflict-affected areas.

Recognizing the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work to achieve peace, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte declared a unilateral ceasefire with the Communist Party of the Philippines and its affiliates from 19 March to 15 April, days before the Secretary-General issued his appeal for a global ceasefire on 23 March.

Recognizing that initiative, the Secretary-General said that "upholding these commitments will be crucial to enabling an effective response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 crisis", while encouraging "both sides to build on this momentum and translate these expressions of goodwill into a lasting political solution". The ceasefire demonstrated the Philippine Government's commitment to the swift and unimpeded provision of public health assistance, especially the safe movement of health-care workers, to stricken communities in dire need of immediate medical care.

The impacts of COVID-19 are also disproportionately felt by vulnerable groups in conflict situations, especially women and migrant workers. Institutions accountable for protecting the human rights of women and girls before, during and after conflict situations and for preventing incidents of violence against women must therefore remain fully operational to ensure that gender-responsive, culture- and conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting approaches continue to be observed.

Regarding the climate crisis and food security, the annual report of United Nations agencies *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World* in 2017 and 2018 showed that conflict and climate variability and extremes undermine efforts to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. In 2019, the report showed that economic slowdowns and downturns also undercut these efforts. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the unprecedented desert locust outbreaks in East Africa

are obscuring economic prospects in ways no one could have anticipated. The situation may only get worse if we do not act urgently and take unprecedented action.

Much recent food insecurity can be attributed to the greater number of conflicts, often exacerbated by climate-related shocks. Even in certain peaceful situations, food security has deteriorated as a result of economic slowdowns, threatening access to food for the poor. The increasing frequency of extreme weather events, altered environmental conditions and the associated spread of pests and diseases over the past 15 years are factors that contribute to vicious circles of poverty and hunger, particularly when exacerbated by fragile institutions, conflicts, violence and the widespread displacement of populations.

In response, the Philippines Department of Agriculture has adopted a survive, reboot and grow approach, and is earnestly focused on enhancing food availability, accessibility, affordability, price stability and self-sufficiency. The Department has proposed a major initiative — the Plant, Plant, Plant Program — aimed at ensuring food security, raising the productivity of our farmers and fisherfolk and pushing for higher growth and incomes in the agriculture sector.

To bridge the gap between today's crises and the future we want, we must address the vulnerabilities that COVID-19 and the climate crisis, *inter alia*, have exposed, by forming sound strategies with a clear political vision and integrated into a culture of accountability.

What does that mean for the work of the Security Council? On 14 May 2018, a Security Council presidential statement (S/PRST/2018/10) stressed that political solutions should guide the design and deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations, which are the cornerstone of mandate implementation and remain key to reaching sustainable peace and security. In the fifth paragraph of that statement, the Council recognized

“the need to weigh the full range of responses, when addressing a situation, which may endanger international peace and security, and to deploy United Nations peacekeeping missions and pursue peacebuilding efforts only as an accompaniment, not as an alternative, to a political strategy that addresses, among other elements, the root causes of conflict.”

Despite overall support for that concept, Council members have struggled to make it operationally coherent. Perhaps it is time to render operationally coherent, given the twin challenges of COVID-19 and the climate crisis.

In the light of the multidimensional risks to sustaining peace, global leadership and cooperation are needed more than ever to combat the biggest test that the world has faced since the Second World War.

Annex 49**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations**

As this is the first official meeting under your leadership, Mr. President, we would like to congratulate Saint Vincent and Grenadines on its assumption of the Security Council presidency for November and to wish you every success in your work. We also commend the presidency for organizing this timely debate on the contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity.

Today's conflicts have become more complex, protracted and fluid, spreading across borders to affect broader regions. The activities of non-State armed groups, terrorism and violent extremism, cyberthreats, intercommunal violence, internal displacement and refugee flows, the degradation of the environment, climate change and food insecurity are just some examples of our daily challenges. We need to address not only each and every one of them but also their mutually reinforcing dynamics.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is an unprecedented test of national and international capacities to manage those compound risks. It has only deepened the pre-existing vulnerabilities of conflict-affected and fragile countries, threatening to reverse development and peacebuilding gains.

Therefore, now more than ever, we need to apply an integrated and coherent approach to advance the agenda on sustaining peace. The challenge lies in developing policies that will address not only the pandemic itself but also potential collisions with other regional or global crises, such as climate change. Both the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are likely to aggravate inequalities in human development and exacerbate existing drivers of conflict.

Climate change is another of the global threats that exerts an enormous impact on people's security and livelihoods. It acts both as a contributor to and a catalyst for destabilization. Comprehensive solutions to peace and security must take into account threats such as water stress and competition over natural resources.

Poland closely follows the Security Council's discussions on the impact of climate change on global security issues. We know that the consequences of climate change will mostly be felt in those countries and regions that struggle with poor governance and other socioeconomic challenges. That is why stabilization efforts and peacebuilding must be climate-sensitive and why greater emphasis must be placed on the prevention agenda.

Risk-assessment and -management strategies, knowledge- and experience-sharing and capacity-building will be crucial in building resilience. We believe that, with effective early-warning systems based on reliable data on climate-security risks, we could improve forecasting in order to better prevent crises. Therefore, we are in favour of addressing this issue as part of the Security Council's work as well as peacekeeping operations' mandates.

The link between development, health, the environment and peace and security is inseparable. Our economic recovery packages should therefore be designed to build back better and greener, with a special focus on sustainable development, climate change and inclusiveness, in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In that vein, both women's empowerment and youth participation are crucial.

Four years after the adoption of resolutions 2310 (2016), 2312 (2016) and 2331 (2016), on the maintenance of international peace and security, we can observe the progress that has been made in terms of a more holistic and cross-pillar approach

towards conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The peace and security pillar has become more coherent, and its capacity to support all stages of the peace continuum has improved. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done with regard to our commitment — both in spirit and in practice — to preventive policies.

In order to effectively mitigate threats, it is pivotal to foster risk-assessment capacities within various United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and United Nations missions in the field. Reducing the risk of conflict requires resilient and accountable State institutions, good governance and social cohesion, as well as inclusive and sustainable development anchored in the protection of human rights.

Finally, Poland commends the Peacebuilding Commission for its work on bringing together international, national and local stakeholders to examine and address complex peacebuilding challenges, including after the outbreak of the pandemic. We strongly support the close collaboration of the PBC with various United Nations bodies, including not only the Security Council, the General Assembly and United Nations missions in the field but also the Economic and Social Council.

We also underscore the importance of mediation and the need for more consistent support from the Security Council for the mediation initiatives of the Secretary-General. Conflicts can and should be prevented or mitigated by early and well-suited political and diplomatic engagement. We firmly believe that the Security Council has a critical role to play in that regard.

Annex 50**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, Francisco Duarte Lopes**

Let me start by congratulating Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for convening this timely debate.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (annex 31) and would like to convey the following additional remarks.

As per Article 39 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council is mandated to “determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression”. As the threats that we face change and evolve, so must the scope of the threats considered by the Security Council, so that it may carry out its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Climate change, for instance, is not only a sustainable development issue but also a security issue. It is at the intersection between those areas, where the threats exacerbate each other, that we should focus our collective action. Portugal, a member of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security, welcomes the fact that these issues are being debated in the Security Council.

Countries that are most in need, as well as populations in situations of vulnerability, are already aware of the impact on their security posed by emerging and complex challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, food insecurity, biodiversity loss, pandemics, hate speech, disinformation, terrorism and organized crime, among others. That is evident when persistent drought or erratic climate patterns cause food insecurity, when underdevelopment hinders responses to pandemics, when sea levels rise and when people are faced with threats to their very livelihoods. Even if these are not the direct causes of intercommunal violence and conflict, they are certainly drivers of conflict and insecurity. It is also true that countries that are already in conflict situations or in contexts of fragility cannot properly address these challenges on their own.

It is not enough to adopt a reactive attitude towards international security. In line with the Secretary-General’s preventive agenda, early action mechanisms such as the Climate Security Mechanism are good practices, and their work should inform the work of all relevant United Nations entities, including the Security Council.

A holistic approach to peace and security that bridges information, analysis and practices across the whole United Nations system is of critical importance. The Charter of the United Nations stands the test of time as the Organization was built upon three interdependent pillars of equal importance — human rights, peace and security and development. A cross-pillar approach is therefore truly necessary.

Having the United Nations deliver as one will be essential in the efforts to recover from the global impacts of the current pandemic. Building back better must mobilize the whole of the international community in a spirit of genuine cooperation, without silos or turf wars and without overlapping and wasteful duplications.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change clearly outline the road ahead. We should ensure that the process is inclusive, particularly with regard to women, and collectively strive for their full implementation by developing partnerships and mobilizing resources to that end.

The ongoing review of the peacebuilding architecture also confirms the importance of the holistic approach of reforms undertaken and the need to focus on implementation.

Through its convening and advisory roles, the Peacebuilding Commission presents a unique framework to ensure that our collective action is sensitive to these contemporary challenges and the need to bridge the action of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

We have the architecture, the plans and the foundations. We have multilateralism as the most reliable cement. What we mostly need now is to pool our work and resources together and act.

Annex 51**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani**

[Original: Arabic]

I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your country's presidency of the Security Council, and I thank you for convening this meeting. We appreciate the valuable briefings given by Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and the other speakers.

The three pillars on which the United Nations is founded reflect the international community's need for sustainable peace, security, development and human rights. Accordingly, peace is a fundamental pillar of Qatari policy. As a country in a region that has paid a heavy price as a result of crises and conflicts, we fully grasp just how vital peace and security are.

As part of its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, Qatar has supported the peaceful settlement of disputes as a means of achieving peace. My country's efforts have contributed to resolving a number of conflicts peacefully through mediation; it most recently facilitated and hosted the Afghan negotiations in Doha, which were hailed by the Security Council. This is in addition to the significant contributions made by Qatar to human development, in particular, providing education in conflict zones as a key peacebuilding tool.

Given the essential role of youth in achieving peace, in May 2021 Qatar will host the High-Level Global Conference on Comprehensive Peace Paths for Youth, which is aimed at enabling young people to play an active part in peace processes in conflict-ridden areas, support reconstruction efforts and sustain post-conflict peace. The conference will be held in collaboration with the United Nations, Finland, Colombia and the Qatari Education Above All Foundation.

As part of the partnership to address the repercussions of the coronavirus disease pandemic, Qatar has provided \$89 million in medical assistance to nearly 78 countries, \$10 million to the World Health Organization and \$20 million to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. It has also provided \$50 million in support of efforts to address the impact of the coronavirus crisis on and improve the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.

The protracted tensions and conflicts in the Middle East constitute a major challenge to peace. It is concerning that the region is in the grip of destabilizing new crises that make sustainable peace an elusive prospect.

The unjust blockade against Qatar, now in its fourth year, flagrantly violates the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of friendly relations among States. The international community is therefore duty-bound to ensure respect for international law and to maintain international peace and security.

Committed to upholding the Charter of the United Nations, Qatar has supported all initiatives based on the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes to resolve the Gulf crisis. His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar, has called for serious and constructive dialogue based on common interests, neighbourly relations, mutual respect for the sovereignty, independence and integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. He conveyed to his Highness the late Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, his commitment to mediation and to the efforts of our friends and allies.

In conclusion, Qatar renews its commitment to continue its efforts to build a sustainable peace and to support the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security.

Annex 52**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, Burhan Gafoor**

Allow me to express my appreciation to you, Madam, and your delegation for convening today's open debate on this important and timely topic.

This year has demonstrated all too clearly that many of the modern threats we face are multifaceted and interconnected. Contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity, such as environmental challenges and pandemics, pose an existential threat to all humankind. Such challenges demand the collective and sustained attention of the international community. But to build sustainable peace requires more than addressing traditional security issues. It calls for tackling both long-standing and longer-term challenges at the national, regional and global levels.

Peace and security are inextricably linked to development. At the national level, States must develop the foundations for global peace and stability through national policies and actions that promote sustainable development. We urgently need to focus on reducing poverty and inequality by formulating inclusive national policies, adopting a multi-stakeholder approach in our decision-making processes and focusing on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups in our societies, including women and children.

Beyond what States can achieve through national policies and action, it has become increasingly clear that countries cannot tackle transnational challenges alone. Many countries continue to struggle with conflict and violence, and the emergence of contemporary threats like the coronavirus disease pandemic and climate change have exacerbated the struggles that those countries face.

In that regard, regional organizations are important actors in building and sustaining peace and security, as outlined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Strengthening regional frameworks to support greater cooperation, economic integration and conflict prevention will reinforce national efforts, build resilience and enable countries to be better prepared to respond to common challenges. In Southeast Asia, for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has promoted peace, stability and prosperity in the region over the past five decades. ASEAN and the United Nations have worked together to combat threats such as climate change and terrorism. The second Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations for 2021-2025, adopted last month, will further enhance the dynamic partnership between the two organizations. Similarly, collective action and cooperation are needed at the global level to confront increasingly complex and intersecting challenges.

It is in the interest of every State to uphold a universal, rules-based multilateral system. A rules-based system is essential not only for the survival of small States, such as Singapore, but it is also fundamental to the creation of a more peaceful and stable global environment that benefits all States. Such institutions as the International Court of Justice play a key role in contributing to peacebuilding and promoting the rule of law at the international level. This has been borne out by the Court's facilitation of the peaceful settlement of disputes for over 70 years.

As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it is timely to reflect how we, as States Members of the United Nations, can strengthen the Organization's role in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In this context, I would like to thank Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and New Zealand for co-facilitating the 2020 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture this

year. It is imperative that we take an action-oriented, forward-looking approach, so as to ensure a peaceful and sustainable future for the generations to come. Singapore remains committed to the future of the United Nations and the values and ideals enshrined in its Charter.

Annex 53**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations, Michal Mlynár**

I thank the President for organizing today's important debate on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity, under the agenda item "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace", in these unprecedented and challenging times for us all. I also wish to thank Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of New Partnership for Africa's Development; Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies; and Mr. Munir Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council, for their insightful briefings.

The world is changing rapidly and fundamentally, while contemporary conflicts have become more complex and protracted. Around 2 billion people, circa one third of the world's population, currently live in countries affected by conflicts. These conflicts are often linked to global challenges and are no longer defined by national borders.

We are witnessing the direct and secondary consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic as it interacts with pre-existing humanitarian crises, adding another layer of complexity to already fragile situations. The most vulnerable populations, who experience lack of access to basic services and health care, are disproportionately affected by weak governance and fragile health systems, which also has an impact on their livelihoods and social protection. The pandemic has put the gains of countries in transition and post-conflict countries in the areas of sustaining peace and development at the risk of being reversed.

The identification and understanding of conflict are crucial in determining the potential areas for intervention and for the formulation of measures and policies for conflict prevention, management and resolution. The international community should work together in support of peace processes to prevent conflicts and resolve crises with a view to building and sustaining peace.

I would like to reaffirm Slovakia's support for the Secretary-General's reforms aimed at making United Nations peace operations a more effective tool in promoting peace and security and in bolstering political processes in host countries. We highly commend the Secretary-General's leadership in this domain, including the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative, which has garnered a strong sense of ownership among the Member States.

Slovakia fully supports the 2020 review of United Nations peacebuilding architecture, which offers a timely opportunity for adapting to the immediate challenges to sustaining peace that the various threats pose. It underscored the need for stronger partnership with international and national health and financial institutions and reaffirmed the advisory, convening and bridging roles of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), in support of a coordinated and coherent international response to the crisis.

In the 2020-2021 PBC term, Slovakia is serving as a member of the Commission, which plays an important role in advising the Security Council. Priorities for our membership can be summarized into three Ps and three Cs: "participation, partnerships and people" and "coherence, coordination and complementarity". Slovakia is ready to promote partnerships and synergies with other transition processes.

We need to achieve an enhanced interlinkage of peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions for the more effective use of instruments promoting peace, security and stability, including integrated planning and implementation and

assessment to ensure consistency and coherence. The COVID-19 pandemic, in combination with pre-existing drivers, reinforces the need for effective, agile and responsive United Nations peace operations.

While acknowledging the importance of ensuring that the needs of all segments of society are taken into account, national ownership and leadership should continue to be at the heart of all efforts. The international community needs to focus on partnering with national and regional actors to reinforce national capacities and institutions. Partnerships with civil society, including women- and youth-led organizations, could help to adequately measure impact on the ground. Slovakia strongly supports the equal and full participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security and calls for the complete implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions that address this issue.

Slovakia is convinced that multilateral cooperation is key for an effective response to drivers of contemporary conflicts. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture has come to play a crucial role in enhancing the integrated cross-pillar approach and in bringing together political, security and developmental partners.

Reviews of existing mandates must consider the adopting exit strategies that help to lay the foundations of the long-term and sustainable peace. Member States increasingly view security sector reform (SSR), as embodied in resolution 2151 (2014), as an important priority for peacekeeping, including for timely conclusions of peacekeeping missions. For years, Slovakia has identified SSR to be one of the key elements of effective conflict prevention and successful post-conflict rebuilding and stabilization. The direct experience of many United Nations peace missions and operations clearly shows that nationally-led and inclusive SSR is key to developing security sector institutions that are non-discriminatory, representative of the population and capable of effectively responding to specific security needs.

The United Nations peacebuilding architecture needs to adapt to the new type of challenges that the world is facing, such as climate change and environmental degradation. Particular attention needs to be placed on how the COVID-19 pandemic is creating new problems and amplifying such existing ones as socioeconomic divides, gender inequalities and increased insecurity for women and girls and other vulnerable groups.

Slovakia strongly supports the Secretary-General's call for cessation of all hostilities and for the implementation of a global ceasefire, as well as his call for an urgent and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic through three lines of action: tackling the health emergency, focusing on the social impact of the crisis, including the economic response, and working to build back better.

Annex 54**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations, Darja Bavdaž Kuret**

Slovenia would like to commend the organizers for convening today's timely debate. It is my great pleasure to present Slovenia's observations.

The increasingly complex, interconnected and protracted nature of today's conflicts calls for a better understanding of its drivers and for appropriate responses. As the most urgent challenge facing humankind today, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) not only threatens hard-won development and peacebuilding gains, but, despite the call for a global ceasefire call, also risks exacerbating conflicts or provoking new ones.

The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are clearer and more widespread than ever. They act as a risk multiplier. Climate change effects, such as rapidly changing weather patterns, more frequent and stronger droughts, floods and a higher sea level, can lead to humanitarian disasters, conflicts, food shortages, population movements and economic, social and demographic shocks. Every day we are crossing a human tipping point. The consequence is an increase in climate-related risks to human security, development, violent conflicts and peacebuilding efforts. Communities and countries affected by armed conflict tend to be especially vulnerable to the effect of climate change. Hence humanitarian emergencies increasingly face cumulative risks and impacts.

Humanitarian needs are the highest in history. The gap between needs and available finances is still widening with each year and, on the top of that, COVID-19 has impacted developing countries and countries affected by humanitarian disasters more than we could imagine. For that reason, it is more important than ever to focus on preventive and anticipatory action, as well as resilience-building, which could help to lower humanitarian needs when disasters hit.

Slovenia has pledged to earmark at least 10 per cent of its long-term humanitarian funding for those activities, which we successfully provide each year. In addition, we have reprogrammed entire portfolios of bilateral development assistance projects to ensure that at least 20 per cent of this year's development and humanitarian projects focus on assisting partner countries in confronting the COVID-19 pandemic. A special focus of the reprogramming has been on assistance to vulnerable groups.

In the coming years, climate change will continue to amplify drivers of violence, displacement and inequality, with the risks becoming more prevalent and affecting a growing number of countries.

It is a known fact that one of the most critical consequences of climate change is water scarcity. Forty per cent of the world's population is already affected by water scarcity, with the prediction that water demand will rise more than 50 per cent by 2030. In armed conflicts, water resources and installations are increasingly being attacked and used as weapons of war. That demands a comprehensive approach to water supply, sanitation, water management and cross-border cooperation.

Inequality and exclusion feed frustration and marginalization. Respect for all human rights — not only civil and political, but also economic, social and cultural — is an essential element of prevention. Human security needs to be central to early action and the prioritization of the most vulnerable. We also know that gender equality is closely linked with resilience and that women's participation is crucial to success, from conflict prevention to peacemaking and sustaining peace. That needs to be underscored as we mark the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000).

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations brings an important opportunity for collective reflection on ways to adapt the operational nature of its entities to cope with the rapidly changing and increasingly complex world, breaking silos and introducing more holistic approaches, and increase the evidence base, incorporating risks into sustainable development, humanitarian and peacekeeping operations.

We therefore call for an enhanced role of the Security Council in emerging situations, the expansion of its toolbox, increased resources for early warning and prevention and a more systematic approach to preventing conflict and sustaining peace. Action is urgent and needs an immediate response.

Annex 55**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

We would like to congratulate the Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month and on convening this high-level debate on the drivers of conflict and insecurity.

Since gaining its independence, the Sudan has endured a number of internal disputes and conflicts. The complexity of conflicts in the Sudan is a result of their multiple dimensions and the historical and modern-day factors that have sparked and inflamed them. These conflicts have adversely affected the overall humanitarian and economic situation in manifold ways.

What has happened in the Sudan is an instance of the types of conflicts and civil wars that have befallen other African nations. Such conflicts have erupted for various reasons. A large proportion of those conflicts are the legacy of colonialism, while others are the result of the political manipulation of small-scale tribal and ethnic disputes, as well as of disputes over how to organize national elections or whether to accept their outcomes. Some are linked to struggles over State authority, while others are driven by disputes over natural resources and the benefits thereof. The effects of the desertification and drought that have ravaged the Sahel region have led to conflict over water and pastures. In certain situations, such as that of Darfur, conflicts arise between farmers and pastoralists. In the same vein, some regions of Africa continue to grapple with conflicts over identity that undermine national cohesion.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons amplifies the spread of these conflicts. Therefore, the only way to eliminate the challenges arising from conflicts and their drivers is to address the widespread proliferation of weapons and ammunition in developing countries, by taking three actions, namely, establishing good systems for managing weapons stocks, controlling their movement and destroying excess weapons.

In spite of that bleak picture, the future does look brighter, in view of the progress made in achieving peace and security in Africa in recent decades, especially since 2004 with the contribution of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. Consequently, the goal of putting an end to wars in Africa is an achievable one, as the continent has a judicious plan to promote peace, security and stability. The plan's other aims include making progress in the areas of good governance, respect for human rights and the rights of peoples, commitments not to attack Constitutional arrangements, early warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and resolution, and the use of traditional and civil mechanisms to resolve disputes, drawing upon the significant and effective social heritage of those mechanisms. These efforts are reinforced by the political will of African States to address the causes and roots of conflicts; political will is a basic prerequisite for that process. A few weeks ago, the Sudan was able to reach a peace agreement that ended decades of war and silenced the guns in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

A final observation I would make is that, in order to assess the causes and drivers of instability and conflict, it is essential first to understand the nature, dimensions and political and cultural contexts of each individual case. Such an approach makes it possible to develop a comprehensive and suitable strategy that incorporates formal and informal mediation mechanisms at the community, national

and continental levels and that consolidates the efforts of all stakeholders, including the United Nations, in a more effective manner.

Annex 56**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations, Pascale Baeriswyl**

[Original: French]

Switzerland would like to thank Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for organizing this debate and the briefers for their contributions.

The situations on the Security Council's agenda are witnessing the negative impact of current challenges, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and climate change, on international peace and security. It is necessary that the Council recognize such linkages and strengthen its engagement as part of a holistic approach that engages the three pillars of the United Nations in order to be able to address the root causes of conflicts and insecurity.

The following three areas of action call for greater engagement by the Security Council.

First, the effects of climate change threaten peacebuilding efforts and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in various contexts where high levels of inequality and vulnerability are present within the population. Climate change and natural disasters can result in the displacement of people and contribute to heightened tensions among different communities. We need to prevent such disasters and food insecurity. That is why, for example, Switzerland is assisting communities in Somalia in the implementation of an early warning network. A systematic analysis of climate change-related risks must inform the Security Council's decisions, particularly in relation to the mandates of peace missions. To that end, we call on the Council to make full use of existing resources within the United Nations system, including the climate security mechanism, which brings together the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and field-level structures. Switzerland commends the commitment of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security and the establishment of the informal expert group of the Security Council on that issue.

Secondly, as the Security Council affirms in its resolution 2532 (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to reverse the peacebuilding and development gains made by countries in transition and post-conflict countries. An inclusive and human rights-based approach must guide efforts to build back better in the aftermath of the pandemic. The Peacebuilding Commission is ideally positioned to promote a coherent and coordinated response between the three pillars of the United Nations system and its principal bodies in line with the priorities identified by Member States at the country level. We call on the Council to fully take into account the Peacebuilding Commission's contributions in its work.

Thirdly, the common challenge posed by the current crises also opens up opportunities. The Blue Peace initiative launched by Switzerland is such an example. The joint management of shared water resources can reduce tensions and promote stable relations among the various States and stakeholders. Several specific programmes have been implemented on the ground in the Middle East, Central Asia and West Africa. The Security Council's support for preventive diplomacy, through United Nations special political missions and in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, is based on the same approach and has significant further potential for development.

The linkages between peace, development and humanitarian action are central to Switzerland's foreign policy, including in its role as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission next year and, if elected, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period from 2023 to 2024.

Annex 57**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations**

Ukraine highly appreciates the initiative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to hold this important debate and expresses its gratitude to all the briefers for their presentations.

The idea of addressing the contemporary risk factors and their implication for the entire security context, which is already overburdened with unresolved problems, is worth supporting. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has explicitly shown how dramatically newly emerging challenges could complicate our efforts to address the long-lasting threats. Health emergencies, food insecurity, environmental degradation, climate change and cyberthreats are only a few of those new challenges that could be turned into conflict triggers.

Given the fact that most of those triggers take no notice of national borders or economic growth rates, we fully agree with the assumption made in the debate's concept note (S/2020/1064, annex) that new challenges to international peace and security must not be addressed in isolation of each other. Regrettably, the practical effect of the international efforts to respond to the contemporary threats and challenges remains insufficient.

One explanation is that, along with meeting the new challenges of the twenty-first century, we are still compelled to confront the threats of past times — armed aggression against sovereign States, occupation and attempted annexation, as well as violations of international law.

We all know that the coronavirus poses a higher risk to people with other health problems, and prevention, as well as treatment, must also address accompanying and often complicating diseases in order to be effective. That is similar to what we are experiencing at the global level. COVID-19 has attacked the international order at a time when its immune system — international law — has been weakened by regular and flagrant violations.

It is therefore clear that an effective remedy to the pandemic, as well as other contemporary drivers of insecurity, such as climate change, would hardly be possible without a proper and adequate response to the security threats stemming from armed aggression and the attempted annexation and militarization of occupied territories.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned threats, one of the main drivers of international instability is the ongoing erosion of the international rules-based order. That is our common problem, which requires the unified efforts of all nations. Consequently, it is in our mutual interest to address this issue so as to prevent some countries from exploiting such a situation in pursuit of their aggressive policies on the international arena.

That is particularly the case for Ukraine, which is facing Russian armed aggression and illegal occupation of a part of its territory for the seventh year. Ukraine has on its hands an international armed conflict, which was spawned as a result of outdated geopolitical reflections of the past and the aspirations of a State making a conscious decision to completely ignore the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The readiness of the aggressor to violate international law for political, economic and territorial gains remains the most dangerous and disastrous driver of conflicts. The number of killed and wounded in the Russian aggression against

Ukraine, illegally detained and missing people in occupied Crimea and Donbas are all but testimony to that.

We fully share the concerns mentioned in the debate's concept note about the possible forced displacement of as many as 250 million people due to climate change by the year 2050. In that regard, it is worth recalling that 1.5 million Ukrainian citizens have already been forced to flee their homes as a result of the illegal occupation of Ukrainian territories where they resided.

As the conflict in Donbas is of a completely artificial nature, a wide range of instruments have been used by the aggressor to instigate it and further fuel it. The devastating impact of inciting hatred and hate speech, including by disseminating fake news and disinformation, and the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms have been widely recognized by the international community. These should be further addressed until a solution based on respect for international law is found.

The violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the occupied territories should also be seen as a deliberate action by the occupying Power to undermine the prospects for a peaceful resolution. The situation in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine is further exacerbated by the persisting repressive policies against Ukrainian citizens, in particular Crimean Tatars.

In that regard, it must be clear that a human rights violator and abuser of the fundamental norms of international law could hardly be a reliable partner in addressing pressing problems on the global agenda, including the pandemic and environmental issues.

That is why we are convinced that now more than ever we need strong institutions protecting international law, where all members are responsible and reliable contributors to safeguarding the rules- and values-based international order. Only strong institutions, in particular the Security Council, can safeguard international security and address the contemporary drivers of conflict.

Annex 58**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations**

The United Arab Emirates would like to thank Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for bringing the Security Council's attention to the need for holistic approaches to conflict and insecurity, integrating the three pillars of the United Nations. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and climate change demonstrate that silos do not apply in the field, as both affect the conditions that lead to and amplify conflict and violence, from hunger to the disruption of basic services, unemployment, competition for resources and displacement.

A core element of the domestic and foreign policy of the United Arab Emirates is prevention and future preparedness. We believe that constant horizon scanning is critical to understanding contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity. These threats add an additional layer of vulnerability to many communities already facing persistent challenges, including poverty, extremism and organized crime.

As we all commit our political efforts and resources to build forward better, it is important to take this opportunity to shape our institutions' practices so that they are fit for purpose in a world where phenomena like climate change and pandemics are blurring the lines between different arms of the international system.

We would like to share four recommendations on how the Council and its partners can work towards holistic approaches to peace and security and contribute to more equitable, more resilient and more inclusive societies.

First, we welcome the Security Council's greater engagement with other entities of the United Nations and encourage growing synergies. In recent years, the Peacebuilding Commission has provided increasingly substantive input ahead of Security Council mandate renewals and the Economic and Social Council has engaged on several issues on the Security Council's agenda on an ad hoc basis. Those relationships should be strengthened, and we look forward to the recommendations of the 2020 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, particularly on enabling collective outcomes.

Secondly, while it is critical that coordination take place at the headquarters level, it is also essential at the field level. We want to emphasize the importance of the United Nations delivering as one and incentivizing coordination and information-sharing, particularly in the field. A key area of potential development is improving the Security Council's relationship with field-based actors beyond the leadership of peace operations, notably including resident coordinators and representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

Thirdly, health crises and the impacts of climate change have one thing in common. They are often predictable. We would like to reiterate our call for further development of the United Nations anticipatory action capabilities. Increasing awareness about emerging threats can help us all adapt mandates and budgets to prevent conflict and its drivers. We commend the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme, the World Bank and other partners for their investments in modelling and analytics to drive disbursement of funding in advance of credibly predicted disasters and stresses. The initial results show that anticipatory action saves both lives and money.

Lastly, unless there is national ownership, little of what we discuss here will deliver tangible results. The multilateral system is only as strong as its Member States, since they are the ones spearheading the policies and programmes that will help us all shoulder our collective responsibility. As one small example to that end,

the United Arab Emirates has been proud to support both preventative and reactive work against COVID-19, contributing more than 1,500 metric tons of medical aid to 118 countries, many of them on the Council's agenda. The pandemic, like climate change, underscores that with a growing range of insecurity drivers, no one is safe until everyone is safe.

We look forward to strategizing with Member States and the United Nations so that the institution's many branches are working together to maximize value for peace and security.
